In December 2021, Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt announced he would not renew the hunting and fishing compacts with tribal governments after they expire at the end of 2023. These compacts, which provide for a cooperative management of wildlife, have been in place since 2015 and generate revenue and improve the quality of life for Oklahomans.

In a press release published through his office on December 30, Stitt stated, “I appreciate the Choctaw Nation working with my office and the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation on a one-year hunting and fishing compact extension.” This compact continues the partnership between the State of Oklahoma and the Choctaw Nation to cooperate in the conservation efforts across our state while promoting hunting and fishing opportunities for citizens of the Choctaw Nation.

The landmark compacts were the first state-tribal agreements of their kind in the country and captured millions of federal dollars for wildlife management. Over their lifetime, the Choctaw compact accounted for $3 million, while the Chickasaw compact generated more than $31 million. The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation dedicated that funding for wildlife management planning and operations, law enforcement and conservation efforts, benefiting all Oklahomans, Native and non-native.

Tribes have inherent hunting and fishing rights on their reservations. Yet, these rights have been recognized by various treaties with the United States. The compacts allowed for a coordinated, intergovernmental system that provided hunting and fishing opportunities for tribal citizens while generating revenue and federal funding for wildlife management programs across the state.

On December 13, 2021, the Five Tribes issued a joint press release addressing the issue. "Under previous administrations, compacts regarding hunting and fishing licenses were a routine matter. They clearly provided great financial and cultural benefit to both the state and tribal members. Under Governor Stitt, the legal interpretation has strayed far from the intent of the compacts. This has led to the personal concerns outlined in this statement for the people he was elected to represent, which is putting conflict above cooperation," said Choctaw Nation Chief Gary Batton. "We let his personal concerns outweigh what is best for the people he was elected to represent – both the state and tribal members. Unfortunately, Gov. Stitt has once again decided to destroy the benefits that the Chickasaw Nation Fish, Game and Animals Code provide for the state and the Choctaw Nation.

"We believe in the treaty rights of tribal nations," said Mungoerence Nation Principal Chief David Hill. "The state’s decision to ruin the hunting and fishing Compact with the Chickasaw and Choctaw Nations is disappointing especially in that it only hurts the state of Oklahoma, but the true intent is to doom tribal sovereignty. "Chickasaw people have long had a close relationship with the land and a strong commitment to responsible stewardship of our natural resources," said Chickasaw Nation Governor Bill Anoatubby. "Wildlife conservation is an important aspect of our duty to protect and preserve our environment for future generations. Therefore, the Chickasaw Nation is joining the Cherokee, Choctaw, Creek and Seminole Nations in a collaborative effort to protect the hunting and fishing rights of our citizens while also preserving Oklahoma’s abundant wildlife for the benefit of our children and grandchildren.

"The Treaty of 1866 between the United States and Seminole Nation guaranteed the Seminole possession of their land and protection against encroachment for exchange for pensions," said Seminole Nation Governor Cheif Louis Jean. "The Seminole Nation has never and will never be required to pre-purchase tags, but a tag number may be required which is consistent with what we’ve seen from the governor since the Supreme Court’s McGirt decision. Whenever there is an opportunity to cooperate with tribes – whether on keeping our wildlife out of the streets or on hunting and fishing rights – the governor has instead sought to pare down and weaken the McGirt-created chain of title. I promise the citizens of the Cherokee Nation that I will continue to aggressively defend our treaty rights and sovereignty against these assaults."
American Heart Month

February is upon us, which means we’ll be celebrating Valentine’s Day. But while you’re out purchasing items to express your love to your significant other, let’s be mindful of other things.

Anxiety

Anxiety is reaching a high level in our society today. With the global outbreak of viruses and political demonstrations of different views, society is facing a period of apprehension and anxiety. And what does the word anxiety actually mean? The Apostles defined it in Philippians 4:6, “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.” The term, “be careful for nothing,” is the closest biblical translation to the English meaning of anxiety. The root meaning is, “to draw in different directions or distract”; that is to have distracting care or undue thought. The dictionary defines anxious as “trouble in the mind respecting some uncertain matter.” Apprehension and fearful would be synonyms. Worry means to be “uneasy in the mind; to feel anxiety about something, to fret.” If you need training or services and meet the following criteria, you may be eligible to undergo vocational rehabilitation.

• You are a U.S. citizen or a national of the United States.
• You are an individual with a mental or physical disability that results in a substantial loss of gainful employment.
• You are able to benefit in terms of an employment outcome from the provisions of this Act.

To contact the Choctaw Nation Health Services Authority call 800-322-6710.

Chocataw Nation Health Services

Choctaw Nation Vocational Rehabilitation

The program provides opportunities for Choctaw students from area colleges or career academies at Choctaw Nation offices throughout the state. The CNHA office is temporarly closed, so applications are currently available only by appointment. If you live in the area and need to apply, please contact the nearest office to schedule an appointment.

Deadline to apply: March 31

For all internship opportunities, visit careers.choctawnation.com

Envionment Center

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance

- Free Basic Tax Preparation for Tribal Members
- By Appointment Only (Call to schedule)
- Virtual Tax Preparation available
- What tax forms are we able to prepare: W-2, W-3, 1099, 1099-A, 1099-C, Earned Income Credit
- If you are 70 or older and low-income you may be able to prepare: Itemized deductions, Schedule C, Schedule D, Self Employment

Enviornment Center 403 CHAHTA CIRCLE | P.O. BOX 231 | HUGO, OK 74743

Oklahoma Flag Day – our inaugural Choctaw National Flag Day took place on October 16, 2021. The Choctaw Nation proudly raised the Oklahoma Flag at its headquarters in Durant, the Flag Center, and at its Talihina Residency and Specialty Clinic. The Choctaw Nation also added to its Tribal Prosecution Department by hiring its first full-time District Court Judge.

First Chocta Flag Day was declared in 1948 by the Choctaw Nation, the Chickasaw Nation, and the Muscogee (Creek) Nation.

The term, “be careful for nothing,” does not mean thoughtlessness, but rather awareness or sound thought. The dictionary defines anxious as “troubled in the mind respecting some uncertain matter.” Apprehension and fearful would be synonyms. Worry means to be “uneasy in the mind; to feel anxiety about something, to fret.”

The Choctaw Nation also introduced its strategic goals and strategies through the year 2025, which are as follows:

• Support service delivery to improve quality of life
• Building of 120 homes in fiscal year 2021
• New construction – the Choctaw Nation successfully opened a 39,000-square-foot Child Care Center in Durant, the Flag Center, and at its Talihina Residency and Specialty Clinic. The Choctaw Nation also completed the building of 120 homes in fiscal year 2021.

Chief Gary Batton

Chief Gary Batton is the choice of the Choctaw Nation’s 120,000 members as the new tribal chairman. He is the 29th chairman of the tribe.

BISKINIK2

February 2022 Crane Month – Watonlak Hvshi

Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.

BISKINIK2

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February 2022 Crane Month – Watonlak Hvshi

Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.
Johnson-Jennings corresponds back to community

By Chris Jennings

Washington, D.C. – Dr. John-

son-Jennings has always de-

scribed his childhood as a time

when he was away from his

community. “I was always away

from home,” he said. “I was al-

ways going to work, and I was al-

ways away from my family.”

Johnson-Jennings was born

in Oklahoma and grew up in

the rural area of the Choctaw Na-

tion. His mother was a nurse and

his father was a farmer. Johnson-

Jennings has a brother and sis-

ter who are both lawyers.

Johnson-Jennings grew up in a

rural area of the Choctaw Na-

tion. He attended the University

of Wisconsin-Madison and

received his Ph.D. in counseling

psychology from the University

of Washington, D.C. He is now

a Senior Lecturer in Music and

as Theory Coordinator.

Johnson-Jennings has a daugh-

ter who is currently attending

the University of Colorado at

Boulder. He is also a father to a

son who is in high school.

Johnson-Jennings is currently

the dean of the College of Arts

and Sciences at the University of

Wisconsin-Madison. He has

published numerous articles and

books on the subject of Choctaw

music.

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Chickasaw Nation announces new entertainment & resort development in Hochatown, Okla.

Hochatown, Okla. (January 14, 2022) – The Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma announced today that it will be opening an entertainment and resort development in Hochatown, Okla. The development is a brand new concept with a design and experience that will reflect the rich culture of the Chickasaw people.

The four-story, 202,000 square-foot development will include 101 hotel rooms, 40 slot machines, eight table games, several restaurants and bars, a pool, an outdoor venue with an amphitheater, beer garden and a family-friendly game zone.

In addition to the resort, a 1,128-square-foot market will adjacent the property offering a small market, convenient food options and a full-service bar with 24 taps. Guests will experience the Chickasaw culture through the design of the facility, authentic art and will be able to shop authentic Chickasaw art in the Mercantile.

“This development will be an economic driver not only for southeastern Oklahoma but the entire state. The project will create more than 2,000 new construction jobs and an economic impact of more than $211 million during the building period,” said Chickasaw Nation Chief Gary Batton. “We are proud to be a part of this project and look forward to providing more opportunities and activities, plus gaming and a beautiful new amphitheater, beer garden and a family-friendly game zone.

During the December 2021 Tribal Council meeting, the Choctaw Tribal Council unanimously supported the new Chickasaw Casino & Resort – Durant expansion project. The project will include a four-story, 202,000 square-foot expansion of the existing casino complex.

“During the building period, the Chickasaw Casino & Resort – Durant expansion will bring more than 400 ongoing hospitality jobs to the Choctaw community, with an expected completion date of fall of 2023. The new building will provide us the means to provide more services to our tribal members, our guests and our communities. The Chickasaw Casino & Resort – Durant expansion will offer elevated dining, outdoor and indoor activities, plus gaming and a beautiful new amphitheater, beer garden and a family-friendly game zone.

The four-story, 202,000 square-foot development will include 101 hotel rooms, 40 slot machines, eight table games, several restaurants and bars, a pool, an outdoor venue with an amphitheater, beer garden and a family-friendly game zone.

We are thrilled to add a new entertainment venue to the region that is unlike any other in the state. From parents to children, this will offer something for everyone in the family,” stated James Eldridge, Senior Executive Officer for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. “This modern entertainment venue will encompass the rich heritage of the Chickasaw people and offer elevated dining, outdoor and recreational activities, plus gaming and a beautiful new hotel. I cannot wait to experience this with my family and friends to see all that this will offer when it opens in 2023.”

Building upon a history of successful collaboration, Manhattan Construction Company and JCJ Architecture are the lead partners on this project. Manhattan Construction Company and JCJ Architecture have worked with Chickasaw Nation on several other projects including the Chickasaw Cultural Center and Choctaw Wellness Center. JCJ Architecture has worked most recently on the Choctaw Cultural Center and Choctaw Wellness Center. The Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma anticipates breaking ground in the spring of 2022 with an anticipated completion date of fall of 2023.

The Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma is a sovereign nation within the state of Oklahoma. For more information about the Chickasaw Nation, please visit choctaw4.com.

The development is a brand new concept with a design and experience that will reflect the rich culture of the Chickasaw people.

We are thrilled to add a new entertainment venue to the region that is unlike any other in the state. From parents to children, this will offer something for everyone in the family.
Southeastern Oklahoma micro-loans, available for emergency home
The Choctaw Revolving Loan Program offers To Be Eligible to Apply:
- Must possess a CDIB card from the Choctaw Nation
- Choctaw Revolving Loan Fund
- Articles are solely those of  the author and do not neces-
- You are receiving more than one BISKINIK or
- Material which it finds inaccurate, profane, offensive
- You are interested in applying for a loan
- Email: biskinik@choctawnation.com
- 924-8280  •  800-522-6170.
- Material for publication must be under 150 words.
- We require full contact information. Only the writer’s
ters chosen for publication must be under 150 words.
- Articles are solely those of  the author and do not neces-
- All couples may send announcements of  silver wed-
- Couples may send announcements of  silver wed-
- New from graduations of  higher education only and
- News from graduations of  higher education only and
- We welcome all letters from Choctaw tribal mem-
- We welcome all letters from Choctaw tribal mem-
- Kellie Matherly, Content Development Director
- Kendra Wall, Content Development Manager
- Assistant Chief
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David Williams
David was born on July 25, 2022.

Charles Edward Lewis

Louiejo Jo Baker

Silas McKinney Jr.

Michael Joe Dunbar

Leroy Hudson
Leroy Hudson, 96, passed away on June 26, 2022.

Lorrie Hudson
Lorrie Hudson, 54, passed away on July 19, 2022.

Britten Romy Cocy
Britten Romy Cocy was born sleeping Nov. 27, 2022.

Charles Edwards

Ruth Davis
Ruth Davis, 84, passed away on Jan. 13, 2022.

Wayne Allen Dine

Lloyd Allen James
Lloyd Allen James, 74, passed away on Nov. 30, 2021.

William Robert James
William “Bill” Robert James, 52, passed away on Dec. 11, 2021.

Corey Lee James
Corey Lee James, 59, passed away on Nov. 22, 2021.

Claire Davis
Claire “Star” (Sammons) Davis, 70, passed away on Jan. 30, 2021.

Jerald Green
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J.E. Dillard

William Green
William Green, 69, passed away on March 25, 1925.

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Leroy Hudson
Leroy Hudson, 96, passed away on June 26, 2022.

Lorrie Hudson
Lorrie Hudson, 54, passed away on July 19, 2022.

Britten Romy Cocy
Britten Romy Cocy was born sleeping Nov. 27, 2022.

Charles Edwards

Ruth Davis
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Wayne Allen Dine

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James Wallace Gross Sr.  
He was preceded in death by his parents; sister Shirley Adam; brother William John; and maternal grandmother Caroline James.  
For the full obituary, please visit Funeral Home.

James Anthony Mc-Cusker  
James Anthony Mc-Cusker, 52, passed away Nov. 25, 2021.  
He was born on Feb. 18, 1969, in Wiesbaden, Germany, to Joseph and Rachel Gross.  
For the full obituary, please visit Funeral Home.

Theresa Foy Shomo  
Theresa Foy Shomo, 65, passed away Nov. 27, 2021.  
Shomo was born on Sept. 14, 1956, in Oktaha, Okla., to James Shutts and Betty Gross.  
For the full obituary, please visit Funeral Home.

Theresa Ann Sam  
Theresa Ann Sam, 56, passed away Sept. 20, 2021.  
She was born on Sept. 6, 1965, in Fort Smith, Ark., to John and Tamra Jan (Turner) Tushka.  
For the full obituary, please visit Funeral Home.

Gloria Jean Perry  
Gloria was born on Aug. 12, 1950, in Oklahoma City, Okla., to Emmett and Ada Perry.  
For the full obituary, please visit Funeral Home.

Clarence Eugene Anderson  
Clarence Eugene “ Bugs” Anderson  
Bugs was born July 26, 1936, in Sulphur, Okla., to John and Lula Belle (Phillips) Anderson.  
He was preceded in death by his parents; twin brother John; and sister Mary Jo.  
For the full obituary, please visit Funeral Home.

Patricia Marie Wade  
Patricia Marie Wade, 68, passed away Dec. 4, 2021.  
Patty was born Aug. 29, 1953, in Tuscaloosa, Ala., to Samuel T. and Annabelle (Frazier) Fobbs.  
For the full obituary, please visit Funeral Home.

Jocelyn and Kaylee White, Maleah Guinn, and baby Eli Lott.  
For the full obituary, please visit Funeral Home.

Molly and Rob Reed.  
For the full obituary, please visit McCarr Funeral Home.

Ronald Ray Russell  
Ronald “ Rod” Ray Russell, 68, passed away Nov. 28, 2021.  
Ron was born Jan. 25, 1953, in Sulphur, Okla., to Lor- rence and Reba Russell.  
He was preceded in death by his parents; twin brother Ronnie Russell; and brothers Freeda Russell and Avery Russell.  
For the full obituary, please visit Funeral Home.
Bryson Jones earns black belt

Bryson Jones is a Choctaw tribal member, and the great-great grandson of Choctaw Code-Talker Ben Curry. He has been taking Taekwondo for 12 years as a form of cognitive behavioral therapy for Tourette Syndrome. He tested and received his black belt at Full Circle martial arts in Tulsa on December 8, 2021. Bryson has completed and won first place in forms and sparring in many tournaments in Texas. Bryson will turn 12 years old in July and he is older than Bryson plans to open his own dojang.

Bergeron graduates from OU-TU

Taylor C. Miller of Fanshawe, Oklahoma, is Choctaw Nation educational honors student. She graduated from New Mexico State University in Las Cruces, New Mexico in December 2021. She credits the Choctaw Nation educational scholarships for making her graduation dreams come true. Kyler received his undergraduate degree in Anthropology. He is the son of Keeping Rodgers of Carlsbad, New Mexico and Stephanie Nash of Lewiston, Maine. Kyler is a descendant of the Reebeon and Hickam Choctaw families.

Miller graduates from ECU

Taylor C. Miller of Tupelo, Oklahoma graduated East Central University (ECU) Saturday, December 11, 2021, with a bachelor's degree teacher's certificate, and has also been selected into the Master of Education program at ECU to Yakothee to the Choctaw Nation for supporting educating Choctaw!

Miller says “yakoke”

My name is Bravonne Elizabeth Miller and I am the great grandaughter of original enrollee Mary Elizabeth Roberts and Jesse Edward Wilson. I want to thank the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma for all of their financial support while getting my Bachelor of Sciences in Interdisciplinary Studies, so I can follow my dream of being an elementary school teacher. With this support I was able to graduate debt free. Again, I want to thank the Choctaw Nation for all their help.

Bryonne Miller

Elliot gives thanks

My name is Bravonna Elliot. I received funding through the Choctaw Nation Higher Education Program through the Choctaw Nation Educational Scholarship as well as the Choctaw Career Development Program for financial assistance in obtaining my certification. I am so grateful for the Choctaw Nation and their contribution they have made to preserve our freedoms and the way of life we hold dear.

Bryonna Elliot

Rice turns 60

Frankie Rice celebrated a milestone birthday, turning 60 on Dec. 8, 2021.

Rodgers graduates from NM State

Kyle M. Rodgers graduated from New Mexico State University in Las Cruces, New Mexico in December 2021. He credits the Choctaw Nation educational scholarships for making his graduation dreams come true. Kyler received his undergraduate degree in Anthropology. He is the son of Keeping Rodgers of Carlsbad, New Mexico and Stephanie Nash of Lewiston, Maine. Kyler is a descendant of the Reebeon and Hickam Choctaw families.

80 years for Smeltzer

Hugh David Smeltzer of South Amana will celebrate his 80th birthday on Feb. 15, 2022.

Cayden Steel Reed

Cayden Steel Reed was born on March 21, 2003, in Jackson, Mississippi, weighing 7 pounds 9 ounces. Cayden’s parents are Cream and Justice Reed of Flowood, Mississippi. Cayden’s paternal grand parents are Coleman and Oliva Reed of Wesson, Mississippi. Material grand parents are Dell and Dawn of Muskogee, Oklahoma and Maternal great-grandparents are Alton and Carolyn Moss of Muskogee.

Hutto competes for Team USA

Team USA fencer Mitchell Huth placed 7th out of 248 fencers in his first international event in Budapest, Hungary. Huth, a 10-year-old high school junior, is currently ranked 4th in the nation in cadet men’s foil. Huth’s most recent tournaments in San Jose, California and Paris, France, and he will also compete at the Junior Olympics in Salt Lake City.

Mitchell is the son of Brandon and Cheryl Huth and grandson of Jerry and Dianna Crons.

February 2022 Crane Month – Watonlak Hvshi

BISKINIK8

February 2022 Crane Month – Watonlak Hvshi

BISKINIK8

Visit the Veteran’s War Memorial of Texas

Cold Frank Plummer turned 65 on Nov. 5, 2021. He served for 12 years in his passion playing baseball across in McAllen, Texas, into a world-class veteran’s memorial. Located at 328 Cabana Street, McAllen, Texas, the memorial honors Texas veterans that lost their lives serving and protecting this country’s freedom. The beautifully landscaped lawn also features the soldiers’ names etched on black granite walls. The names are divided into each branch of the military and a massive American Spire of Honor in the middle of the five acres, landscaping and structures. Return of service also affects the park.

Recent additions are collaborations with elementary school children who wrote in letters inscribed on granite about what service members meant to them.

For more information, visit https://www.mcallen.net/veterans/index.html.

Visit: CHOCATWONATION.COM/FATHERSHIP

TO Receive breaking news and important updates STAY INFORMED WITH CHOCATWONATION TEXT HALITO TO 888777 PARTICIPANTS WILL BE PROMPTED TO REPLY TO THE WELCOME TEXT WITH THEIR ZIP CODE TO RECEIVE LOCAL ALERTS. MESSAGE AND DATA RATES MAY APPLY.
In honor of our Choctaw Firefighters

This month Iti Fabvssa is taking a brief intermission from “A New Chahta Homeland: A History by the Decade” series to honor our Choctaw Firefighters. Since time immemorial, Choctaw people have had a relationship with fire, a force in land. Like many other Indigenous communities across North America, Choctaw people have used fire for land management to create open, fire-adapted environments that lead to better habitats for animals and edible plants. The decline in traditional fire management combined with climate change has increased the risk for dangerous fires throughout North America. Nevertheless, Choctaws have found new avenues to carry on that relationship.

In response to the Great Depression, the Civilian Conservation Corps Indian Division was established to create new employment opportunities and recruited Native people as firefighters in the 1930s. These men were trained and deployed to assist in large-scale fires. Federal and State agencies utilized those crews throughout the United States when the need arose. For example, Aaron Baker and Robert Baker, the adopted son of the late Melvin Baker from the Shoal Creek, Alabama Reservation consulted the U.S. Division of Forestry for the State of Oklahoma for 30 years (Robert Baker, personal communication, 2020). The Forest Service divides its fire crews into three types, each crew having 18 to 20 trained members. Type 1 Crews, also known as Interior Hayden Crews, function as a highly trained, skilled and qualified crew. The Type 2 Initial Attack Crew could be divided into several individual squads, each with their own incident commander, to strategically attack fires. Lastly, the Type 2 Crew has one incident commander and worked as a 20-person unit. These crews are responsible for creating fire lines that help stop the spread of fires using a variety of tools and equipment.

During the 1980s, the Choctaw Nation was facing unemployment rates as high as 46%. Many Choctaw men and women did not have opportunities to work due to the lack of infrastructure in southeastern Oklahoma. The USFW worked with Choctaw Nation Forestry to host one-week trainings at our Capitol Ground in Tuskahoma. After the training, each firefighter was given money to purchase a specific type of boot. Most Choctaw firefighters have this boot now. At eight pounds, this boot required a 1” Vermeer sole with a 2” heel. This was their first piece of firefighting equipment and without it, they could not go fight fires (Ernest Baker, personal communication, 2020).

Choctaw Nation Forestry partnered with the United States Forest Service (USFS) in 1989 to train and deploy Type 2 Fire Crews (Tom Lowry, personal communication, 2020). At the Annual Idaho Fire Chiefs Association Conference, all the wall-mounted plaques on the room were empty except one. The USFS marked the 10 years since the Choctaw BMF earned a reputation as being one of the best Type 2 crews that could be fielded. At the Annual Idaho Fire Chiefs Association Conference, the all the wall-mounted displays honored each Type 1 Crew and One Type 2 Crew, the Choctaw Buffalo Mountain Firefighters.

A Tradition of Excellence

At eight pounds, this boot required a 1” Vermeer sole with a 2” heel. This was their first piece of firefighting equipment and without it, they could not go fight fires (Ernest Baker, personal communication, 2020). Choctaw firefighters would commonly work alongside other Native firefighter crews. If Choctaw Nation had extra firefighting personnel, they would assign them to other Native Crews to meet the 18–20-person minimum. They slept side by side in two large canvas tents at night. They had access to all different types of foods and fruits and a commissary and adze that would assist them in building and clearing fire lines. On average, The Pulaski is a specialized tool used by firefighters that combines both an axe and an adze.

Choice was the key to the Choctaw BMF. As part of the Choctaw Nation revitalized sovereignty, Choctaw Nation Forestry partnered with the United States Forest Service (USFS) in 1989 to train and deploy Type 2 Fire Crews (Tom Lowry, personal communication, 2020). Choctaw fire crews were temporary work. As the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma was no longer able to field 20-person crews but continued to work with other Tribes by combining their crews together. In 2020, the USFS terminated its firefighting contract with the Choctaw Nation, partly because there were only a handful of firefighters available through the tribe but also because of the future of firefighting is changing.

The history of our Choctaw Firefighters is still recent. If you have family members who served as Choctaw firefighters, we would like to encourage you to reach out to them and record their stories. If you need help getting started, a “Guide to using time at home to record oral family histories” is available online at https://www.choctawnation.com/sites/default/files/2020-08/ITI%20FABVSSA%20SH-2020.pdf. If you would like to share your stories with the Choctaw Nation Historic Preservation Department, we can store them digitally for future access for your family members. For example, Robert Baker has recorded a story about his father, Aaron Baker. To hear his story please visit, https://www.choctawnation.com/iti-fabvssa-2022-10.

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January nationalized as Recognized as National Birth Defects Prevention Month

OKLAHOMA CITY - Oklahoma City Indian Clinic (OKCIC, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit)- clinic providing health and wellness services to American Indians in central Oklahoma—has celebrated Jan. 17, National Birth Defects Prevention Month. The Oklahoma City Indian Clinic is a member of the National Birth Defects Prevention Coalition. Each year January to bring awareness to the prevention of birth defects and many can be prevented. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), one in every 20 babies in the United States is born with a birth defect. The CDC notes that birth defects are the leading cause of infant death and can be the cause of lifelong disability. In 2017, there were an estimated approximately 31,000 birth defects which included 6,710 deaths and 3,710 hospitalizations. By taking simple steps in advance of becoming pregnant and during the first trimester of pregnancy, most of these defects could be prevented. The Oklahoma City Indian Clinic encourages all women planning to become pregnant to visit the clinic for more information. Each clinic location can provide you with essential information that could potentially save a baby's life.

- Visit a local Oklahoma City Indian Clinic for more information.
- Women who are pregnant and men who will be fathers should get the flu vaccine.
- Avoid alcohol and tobacco use.
- Get the hepatitis B vaccine if you need it.
- Take vitamin/mineral supplements or prenatal vitamins.
- Stay healthy by following a nutritious diet and getting regular exercise.
- Talk to a health care provider about whether you need a tetanus shot.
- Practice safe sex to prevent sexually transmitted infections.

The Oklahoman Indian Clinic has been working in the community to increase awareness of the importance of getting the flu vaccine, and awareness of the importance of getting the flu vaccine is crucial to preventing the spread of the flu. The clinic has been working with local physicians and nurses to educate pregnant women and their families about the importance of getting the flu vaccine. The flu vaccine is important for pregnant women because it can protect both the mother and her baby from the flu. The flu vaccine is also important for women who are thinking about becoming pregnant. Getting the flu vaccine while you are planning to become pregnant is important because it can protect both you and your future baby from the flu.

Preparation:
- Ensure all vaccinations are up to date.
- Get a flu shot in the fall or winter.
- Maintain proper hygiene, including hand washing.
- Avoid close contact with sick individuals.
- Wear a mask when in public places.
- Seek medical attention for any flu-like symptoms.

For more information, please contact the Oklahoma City Indian Clinic at 405-948-4900 ext. 546 or visit www.okcic.org.
Dave Anderson is the owner of Famous Dave’s, a popular barbecue restaurant and franchise. Famous Dave's products are also sold in stores like Target, Sam’s Club, Costco, Walmart and Menards.

Dave Anderson was recently inducted into the Native American Hall of Fame. According to Anderson, after serving at two award-winning barbecue restaurants in Wisconsin, he decided to start a barbecue restaurant of his own to honor his Choctaw heritage. His father taught him about the importance of hard work and commitment to one's dreams.

According to Dave, they were serving wood-smoked, real pit barbecue. And he is often asked how he first got into the barbecue business. James said, “I never really got into it, more than I was born into it.” This small restaurant grew into a national brand. Dave Anderson said that he hopes Famous Dave’s creates a link to their Choctaw heritage, and “Famous Dave” America’s Rib King and BBQ Hall of Famer.

The Anderson family is very proud of their Choctaw heritage and “Famous Dave” attributes the things that his father taught him to the Choctaw people. “I think there are a lot of values that the Choctaw Nation instills that my dad passed on to me—working hard, and then be a blessing away from other people, figure out how to help enough other people first. I would say learn how to take the problems away from other people, figure out how to work hard, and then be a blessing into the life of another person.”

For more information on Famous Dave’s and a full list of locations, visit https://www.famousdaves.com.
Luke Ludlow is now living life to the fullest after undergoing a kidney transplant at age 44. Ludlow was diagnosed with Renal Nutcracker Syndrome, a condition that occurs when the left renal vein, which carries blood from the left kidney, compresses the left renal artery and vein, leading to a condition where the left kidney becomes compressed. The syndrome can be caused by both kidney or nerve tissue abnormalities. It can affect adults or children, though the prevalence is lower in children.

According to the National Institutes of Health, Renal Nutcracker Syndrome is usually diagnosed when a patient has a history of high blood pressure, abdominal pain, or symptoms of kidney disease. The condition is diagnosed using imaging tests such as ultrasound, CT scans, or MRI scans. The treatment options for Renal Nutcracker Syndrome include medication, lifestyle changes, and surgery, such as endovascular procedures or laparoscopic or open surgery.

Ludlow was diagnosed with Renal Nutcracker Syndrome in 2014, and his condition required a kidney transplant. Since then, he has worked tirelessly to help others who have fallen on hard times.

Ludlow was born and raised in the Choctaw Nation, and he has been very active in the community. He is a member of the Choctaw Nation Fish, Game, and Wildlife Association, and he has been involved in many community service projects. He is also the founder and president of the Choctaw Nation's Youth Conservation Corps. His work has helped to improve the quality of life for many Choctaw Nation residents.

Ludlow's work has been recognized by many organizations, and he has received several awards for his dedication to helping others. In 2021, he was named the 2021 Male Choctaw Outstanding Elder by the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. He is also the recipient of the 2021 Male Choctaw Outstanding Elder award by the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

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By Sheila Kirven

When filmmaker Manny Marquez was studying directing and writing at the Arts Center College of Design in Pasadena, California, over 20 years ago, he had no idea that his biggest projects would be a feature film of his younger brother's road to healing.

But that is exactly what he is working on today.

The film is not something they initially wanted to do. It started when Anthony wanted to give back to fellow service members and their families, something he began working on today.

In 2011, Anthony was deployed to Afghanistan and had been sent for another tour in 2014.

Anthony delivered it to the family of one of the fallen Marines.

Anthony was given her discharge certificate and greeted Allie. She still remembers him.

For the last seven years of her life, Allie was being discharged from the Marines and he filed adoption papers the next day.

He was able to drive 19 hours to pick Allie up when he received a phone call from former championship handler. His dog was Allie.

Allie could detect hidden explosives. She had been blown up shot at and had grenades thrown at her. She remained on active duty for the next seven years of her life.

Anthony was given her discharge certificate and greeted Allie. She still remembered him.

The brothers are proud to be Native Americans and talk of how it means a lot to them to be connected to the Choctaw and talk of how it means a Marine in the 1970s. A cousin was a Marine in Desert Storm.

The brothers are also proud of the Choctaw Nation and what it means to them to be connected to the Tribe.

Anthony said, “I have a lot of heart behind what I do for these families. It was in the Marine Corp with their sons and on that deployment. There's a lot of weight behind it. There's a big reason behind it. I can't talk on what I'm trying to accomplish.”

Manny said, “It was really important for me to make a movie with your brother and paying respect to the families, to do for these families because I was in the Marine Corp with their sons and on that deployment. There's a lot of weight behind it. There's a big reason behind it. I can't talk on what I'm trying to accomplish.”

The brothers' grandfather's veterans, as well as their uncle who was a Marine in the 1970s. A cousin was in Desert Storm.

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The brothers are proud to be Choctaw and talk of how it means a lot to them to be connected to the Tribe.

Anthony said, “I want to make a story that is for these families, for people who may have not talked before, these 17 families, to connect these people who may have not talked before, these 17 families, as we were able to connect these people who may have not talked before, these 17 families, Manny said.

Anthony is also working on carvings for families of fallen Marines who were on deployment before his film. They have been through private funds and has been through private funds and has been through private funds.

Anthony went back on the road to revisit families, interview them about their sons and their (A bit lengthier)

Anthony was able to do something for these families, as we were able to connect these people who may have not talked before, these 17 families, Manny said.

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Manny said, “It was really important for me to make a movie with your brother and paying respect to the families, to do for these families because I was in the Marine Corp with their sons and on that deployment. There’s a lot of weight behind it. There’s a big reason behind it. I can’t talk on what I’m trying to accomplish.”
By Chris Jennings

The Choctaw Nation recently held its second jury trial in the Tribal Court system. In this trial, the nation faced a domestic violence case and was able to demonstrate its capability to handle such a case, which is a significant milestone for the tribal court system.

Amy J. Pierce, the first full-time district court judge appointed by the Choctaw Nation, played a key role in this trial. Judge Pierce has been praised for her commitment to evidence-based prosecution and for bringing in-house public defenders to the trial process.

Judge Pierce’s appointment followed the decision to increase the case load of the Tribal Court system as a result of the McGirt v. Oklahoma decision. Since then, the nation has employed two additional attorneys and is currently in the interview process for a fourth attorney.

In this second trial, a domestic violence case, Judge Pierce was able to bring in a range of evidence, including photographs, witness statements, and transcripts from the victim’s cooperation. The trial was a success, with the defendant being sentenced to six months in prison.

Judge Pierce has been voted a “Top 25 Women in Law” in the State of Oklahoma, and she has received other honors, including being named a Super Lawyer and Harvard Negotiation Institute program. She graduated from Oklahoma City University with a Bachelor of Science and went on to receive her law degree from Oklahoma City University after receiving her Bachelor of Science from Oklahoma State University.

Judge Pierce has been praised for her commitment to evidence-based prosecution and for bringing in-house public defenders to the trial process. She is an enrolled member of the Choctaw Nation and has worked in the Tribal Court system for several years.

The Choctaw Nation’s commitment to providing fair justice and rehabilitation for domestic violence cases is evident in its efforts to support victims and their families. The nation has employed a domestic violence expert, Shawnnay McCarrell, to provide training and support to judges and attorneys.

Tribal Prosecutor Kara Bacon said, “This verdict was a huge step toward ending domestic violence in the Choctaw Nation.”

The Choctaw Nation’s Tribal Court system has evolved and changed according to times. With the increase in caseload and the need for evidence-based prosecution, the nation has employed Shawnnay McCarrell as a domestic violence expert, and the Tribal Court system has demonstrated its ability to handle such cases.

The Choctaw Nation’s Tribal Court system has shown that it is capable of providing fair justice, and it is continuing to support victims and their families through evidence-based prosecution and in-house public defenders.

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