



BISKINIK
P.O. Box 1210
Durant OK 74702

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

PRESORT STD
AUTO
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
CHOCTAW NATION

The Official Publication of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

December 2016 Issue

Tribal Council holds Regular Session

The Choctaw Nation Tribal Council met in regular session Nov. 12 in its chambers at Tvshka Homma.

Committee reports were presented. New business included approval of the following bills:

- Application for the Title VI Part A and Part C.
 - Funds and budget for the Tribal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program—Chahta Inchukka.
 - Funds and budget for the Indian Community Development Block Grant (ICDBG).
 - Funds and budget for the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program.
 - Funds and budget for the Cooperative Agreements for Tribal Behavioral Health—Project Embrace.
 - Funds and budget for the Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program.
 - Funds and budget for the Farmers Market Promotion Grant.
 - Funds and budget for the Local Food Promotion Program.
 - Funds and budget for the Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers Program.
 - Funds and budget for the Transitional Housing Assistance Grants for Victims of Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Program.
 - Child Passenger Safety Seat Program.
 - Funds and budget for the COPS Tribal Resources Equipment/ Training Grant.
 - Funds and budget for the Demonstration Grants for Indian Children Program—Project Impact.
 - Funds and budget for the methamphetamine and Suicide Prevention Initiative—Generation Achukma.
 - Funds and budget for the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program.
 - Funds and budget for the Chahta Vlla Apela.
 - Funds and budget for the Native Assets Building Initiative.
 - Funds and budget for the Economic Development Assistance Programs.
 - Approved a right of way with Oklahoma Natural Gas Company on Choctaw Tribal Fee Land in Choctaw County, Oklahoma for the Hugo Travel Plaza.
 - Dispose of Surplus Capital Assets.
 - Approved the expenditure of funds for road improvements at the Nation’s Travel Plaza and Casino Too in Stringtown, Oklahoma.
 - Approved the Chief and Tribal Council Election Ordinance.
- For detailed meeting information on these resolutions and Council bills, go to <https://www.choctawnation.com/government/tribal-council/council-meetings-and-bills>.

The Future is Now
Choctaw Nation Headquarters
Reaches for the Sky

By RONNI PIERCE
Choctaw Nation

The new Choctaw Nation Headquarters is taking shape and Choctaw citizens from all over Choctaw Country trekked to Durant to join in the topping out ceremony, watching the last beam fall into place on Nov. 18.

Designed to honor our Choctaw heritage, the 500,000-square-foot building stands five stories tall and sits on 130 acres.

Just eight months ago ground was broken north of the Choctaw Community Center for the new Headquarters. Having long outgrown its present building on 16th and Locust, the Nation’s employees are scattered across 30 buildings in the Durant area.

Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. kicked off the

ceremony by introducing Councilman Joe Coley who opened with a prayer. Chief Gary Batton and District 4 Councilman Delton Cox followed with short speeches. Larry Rooney, the Vice President of Manhattan Construction—the company building the Headquarters—talked about the symbolism of the topping out ceremony.

Before the actual raising of the beam, Assistant Chief Austin also honored the late District 9 Councilman Ted Dosh. His words were met with a standing ovation.

Chief Batton said, “For the first time ever, we are going to have a one-stop shop here in Durant. For our employees to do well and be efficient for our tribal members they need the latest tools available to them and that’s what we are hoping to have here.”



Chief Gary Batton acknowledges the audience as he stands before a rendering of the completed Headquarters. Choctaw citizens arrived in buses from across the Nation. District 6 Councilman Joe Coley, Council Speaker from District 4 Delton Cox, Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr., Chief Gary Batton, and Manhattan Construction Vice President Larry Rooney.



Photos by Deidre Elrod

Over 200 people celebrated for the topping out and raising of the last beam on the new 500,000-square-foot Choctaw Nation Headquarters on a warm, breezy, November day. Councilmen from the 10 1/2 counties signed the beam along with the Chief, Assistant Chief, and Choctaw Nation citizens. (left to right) Ron Perry (D5), Perry Thompson (D8), Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr., James Frazier (D12), Chief Gary Batton, Thomas Williston (D1), Bob Pate (D11), Kenny Bryant (D3), Delton Cox (D4), Anthony Dillard (D10), and Joe Coley (D6).

Collaboration and teamwork are important for maintaining the family culture that exists within the Nation. According to T.R. Kanuch, Senior Executive Officer of the Division of Commerce, “When you get as big as we have the last few years, you’ve got to create synergies. You’ve got to create opportunities for people to work together and share ideas and that’s only going to make us better.”

The Headquarters will feature symbolic and culturally significant artwork by Choctaw artists and will include a parking garage and a conference center with cafeteria. External features include a small lake with a bridge and a walking track that will meet up with the

city-wide track planned under the Imagine Durant initiative.

“It’s important to mesh history and culture with technology,” said Chief Batton. And, according to the Chief, the new building is all about accessibility with an eye on future growth.

While excited about the prospects of the new building, some employees were quick to give a nod to the past.

“It’s a little bittersweet to leave this building behind just because of the memories and the history and those who worked here before who have left us,” said Shelia Kirven with the Choctaw Nation marketing department. We’ve had a lot of really good employees who have passed

away and a lot of really good employees who have retired and worked hard for this place. It’s bittersweet, yes. But it’s also exciting. It’s a new chapter in our history.”

The new building will join several other Choctaw structures—both old and new. Along with the Headquarters and the Community Center, the area houses the Food Distribution Center, Head Start, Print Services, Recycling Center, the Language Department and several other Choctaw buildings. A new Wellness Center is planned for the area, and the new Public Safety building is expected to open soon, followed by the Choctaw Regional Medical Clinic, scheduled to open its doors in late February.

A Boy with a Special Heart : 10-year-old Has Wish Come True

By TINA FIRQUAIN
Choctaw Nation

Since birth, Connor Frazier has been a special kid with a special heart, one filled with compassion and kindness. His family calls him an inspiration and he may be one of the most polite and loyal young men one could ever meet.

On the outside, he looks like any other child that likes to play sports and learn more about history. In his words, Connor is a “history buff.” Taking a closer look at this 10-year-old boy from Hugo, you would never expect that he was diagnosed with a life-threatening medical condition.

For the rest of Connor’s life, he will have to live with Pulmonary Atresia.

Connor was sent to Dallas just hours after being born. He was put in a helicopter without his family while other babies were being given to their moms and dads.

Michele Frazier, his mother said, “There was several hours when we didn’t know what was going on, what his condition was or what to expect.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), “Pulmonary Atresia is a birth defect of the heart where the valve that controls blood flow from the heart to the lung doesn’t form at all. In babies with this defect, blood has trouble flowing to the lungs to pick up oxygen for the body.”

There was a hole in Connor’s heart according to his mother and at just six days old, he had his first open-heart surgery.

Connor’s sister, Josie Frazier, was five when he went into surgery for the first time. Although she was young and can’t remember much, she remembers being sad and confused.

On their drive to Dallas, his father, Darren Frazier said, “Michele and I decided that we were just going to take the attitude that everything was going to be OK.”

After that surgery, his mother and father realized

they would live with a new kind of normal that many would never know.

His mother explained that his normal would always consist of regular visits to a cardiologist, EKGs, and surgery. He would live with certain limitations. Because of all these things and many more, Connor Frazier is a very special boy to many people.

In December 2015, Connor’s pediatric cardiologist, Tracy Laird, nominated him for Make-A-Wish.

“We grant the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions to enrich the human experience with hope, strength, and joy,” according to Oklahoma.wish.org.

By February 2016, the Fraziers were contacted by Make-A-Wish and were told that Connor qualified for a wish.

Michele recalled having mixed feelings and how Connor was overwhelmed by the decision he got to make.

Rachel Ratliff and Jill Anderson are volunteers who work with Make-A-Wish Oklahoma and they interacted personally with the Frazier family to make the

whole wish experience a memorable one. After months of contemplating Connor came home one day and told his mom he knew what he wanted to do.

He wanted to visit Pearl Harbor.

cont’d on page 13



Photo Provided

Chief Sielu, Darren, Connor, Michele, and Josie Frazier, and a luau performer at Chief Sielu’s Luau on Oahu. Connor learned many different activities while in Hawaii, such as how to make fire and how to dance the hula.

Faith♦Family♦Culture	2
Health	3
Notes to the Nation.....	5
Iti Fabvssa	6
Sports	7
Obituaries	8-9
Business	10
People You Know	11
Thanksgiving Dinners.....	14-15

The Mission of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma To enhance the lives of all members through opportunities designed to develop healthy, successful and productive lifestyles.

Digital Copy Scan this code with your smart-phone to go online for this issue and archive copies of the BISKINIK: <http://www.choctawnation.com/news-room/biskinik-newspaper-archive/>



Faith ♦ Family ♦ Culture



Choctaw Veterans are Honored and Respected

Last month’s Veterans Day ceremony at Tvshka Homma provided an opportunity to show our Choctaw veterans how much we appreciate them.

We were able to give each one who attended a new jacket and 1st Sgt. Chris Dill provided an inspirational speech that resonated with all of the men and women. The ceremony and gifts are simple tokens of our gratitude for these valiant warriors.

In World War I, a small group of Choctaw men made a huge difference in the course of battle. They were the Choctaw Code Talkers—Albert Billy, Mitchell Bobb, Victor Brown, Ben Carterby, Benjamin Colbert Jr., George

Davenport, Joseph Davenport, James Edwards, Tobias Frazier, Benjamin Hampton, Noel Johnson, Otis Leader, Solomon Louis, Peter Maytubby, Jeff Nelson, Joseph Oklahombi, Robert Taylor, Walter Veach, and Calvin Wilson.

Ben Carterby was the first Choctaw to receive a coded message and translate it to his battalion commander on Oct. 17, 1918. He was quoted later in his life saying, “I served in the World War, went to France with the other boys over there, saw a new country, and came back alive.” He was so humble.

The men were told their mission was top secret. Many didn’t tell their families when they came home because the tactic might be needed again.

Terms were used like little gun shoot fast or “tanampushi tushpat tokahli” in the Choctaw language. The enemy, who had been breaking all other codes, had never heard our tribal language. I’m sure it surprised and completely baffled the German army. It was the tool that turned the tide of the war. The world as we know it could have been very different without the Choctaw Code Talkers of World War I.

Pfc. Joseph Oklahombi has been called Oklahoma’s greatest war hero of World War I. He was an exceptional marksman who, along with 23 of his fellow soldiers, brought down 79 of the enemy and captured 171 others in action at St. Etienne, France, in October 1918.

Members of the Oklahoma House of Representatives called Cpl. Otis Leader an outstanding soldier of World War I. He was wounded twice, received two Silver Stars, and was described by Gen. John J. Pershing as the “war’s greatest fighting machine.”

There were four Choctaw men among the Code Talkers of World II—Schlicht Billy, Andrew Perry, Davis Pickens, and Forreston Baker.

Schlicht Billy participated in the landing of Anzio, liberation of Rome, and the invasion of southern France.



Photo by Choctaw Nation

The Code Talker exhibit in the Capitol Museum in Tvshka Homma gives tribute to the Choctaw Code Talkers of WWI and WWII and tells the Code Talkers’ stories. The Choctaw language spoken by the Code Talkers was used to communicate orders and intel. The German Army, who had been breaking previous codes, were unable to break the Choctaw code.

country. I enjoy talking with each of our veterans. I am honored to shake your hand and want to once again express my deepest gratitude for all that you do at home or abroad. I wish you all a Merry Christmas and hope the New Year finds you safe.



Year of Many Firsts and Much to Be Thankful for Draws to an End

Have you ever counted how many times “give thanks” is written in the Bible? It is mentioned 73 times in the King James Version. The month of November is set aside for Thanksgiving here in the United States, but giving thanks has been encouraged for thousands of years. It is something we should do every day.

The Choctaw Nation had a record breaking year with a large growth in job opportunities. It was a year of many “firsts” and much to be thankful for.

- The opening of a Choctaw Country Market in Clayton was the first economic venture of its kind by the tribe and one that brought a much needed solution to the area’s food drought.
- Oklahoma Hunting and Fishing licenses are now available for tribal members for the first time.
- Special parking spaces were provided for veterans at Choctaw Nation facilities.
- The tribe is performing its first pecan harvest on ranch property.
- College & Career Resources completed its first year as a new program on the campuses of Carl Albert State College, Southeastern Oklahoma State University, and Eastern Oklahoma State College.
- The Voter Registration Department was formed. Voter Registration was created to promote transparency of election processes and to increase voter participation. They began accepting applications at the first of the year.
- We built our first data center, a world-class 10,000-square-foot building.
- The Choctaw Nation is the only tribal nation to initiate the Connect Home Program, and it is ranked second in implementation in the United States out of 26 major cities, according to HUD.
- The Choctaw Nation was the first tribe to become accredited through the Emergency Management Accreditation Program.
- We were the first tribe to set up a Medical Reserve Corps (MRC).
- We were also the first tribe to conduct FEMA’s Logistics Capability Assessment Tool (LCAT).
- The School of Choctaw Language created a new Choctaw Language Dictionary.
- The first Early Head Start Center opened in Durant.
- The first Choctaw Travel Plaza/Casino Too was built in Pushmataha County.
- Choctaw Nation Tribal Transit is the first tribal program in the United States to sign a full contract with LogistiCare Solutions, LLC, which helped create more jobs and added vehicles to the program. Through the contract, services will be available to eligible SoonerCare/Medicaid patients as well as tribal members.
- A new age—BiskinikTV is available online as well as videos honoring our elders and veterans.
- The Labor Day Festival Princess Pageant and State of the Nation Address were both live-streamed for the first time.
- Several businesses and programs were awarded for their excellence, evidence of the creative thinking and dedication of so many of the Nation’s staff.

As this year ends and we move into 2017, I’m counting our blessings and very thankful for God’s wisdom. My family and I wish you all a wonderful Christmas and Happy New Year.



By SANDRA BERG

Contributing Writer

I am immediately greeted by a horse who came to the fence to say hello when he heard my car pull up. Another one peers at me from around the barn. A very-friendly dog noses me as I open the car door and several kittens swarm around my feet as I get out. June and her granddaughter, Sara, then appear on the porch to welcome me. I feel like I’ve come home.

June makes me feel like I was actually there as she points out family and friends from long ago. Each picture or object has a story. And she remembers them all.

June Slape was born in Atwood, on June 21, 1933. Her father, Sullivan Lewis, was an original enrollee, part Cherokee and part Choctaw. Her mother, Alice, was French and Cherokee.

Her parents met in Lindsay, when her mother swiped an apron-full of apples from her father’s family’s orchards. He caught her in more ways than one! Her mother’s father, a Baptist minister, performed their wedding ceremony.

“My mother always wore no less than three petticoats, but she preferred five,” June tells me. “She used to save all the print sacks to make dresses and clothes for our family.” June learned to sew standing on one foot because she was too little to sit down and reach the treadle of her grandmother’s old white 1896 treadle sewing machine. June started by making clothes for her dolls. Then, while she was in Campfire Girls, her father made her first beading loom from the end of a fruit box. He taught her how to bead, just like his family had taught him.

June was barely in elementary school when her family moved to California, although she remembers it like it was yesterday. “My memory is very good,” she tells me. And indeed it is, as she tells me story after story about being raised “out West.” It was the summer of 1942 when her parents loaded up the family in a little house trailer and traveled across the country to Salinas, California. Her father went to work at the shipyard and her mother worked at the “veggie sheds.” One of June’s favorite memories is of watching the USS Fremont “hit the water” when it was commissioned in 1943.

It was in California that June met her first husband, Harold. His sister, Bonnie, was in the same grade as June. June smiles as she tells me she still talks to her every morning. She and Harold moved back to Oklahoma in 1951. “We were following the vegetables and moving from place to place,” she recalls. They wound up in Okmulgee next door to his parents. About that time, they started having children. Four boys: Dusty, Daniel, Burt, and Patrick.

They also got involved in the rodeo around then. “It was fun,” she tells me. “I’d watch him rope calves and then I’d turn barrels,” she reminisces. June eventually went to work as a secretary for the rodeo. But she also worked as security for many years. “I was in the first security class of the State of Oklahoma and worked security for the Creeks back when they were bingo halls instead of casinos,” she tells me. Her dad, a US Deputy sheriff, thought everyone should be able to handle a weapon, so he started teaching June

June Slape



Photo Provided

June was born in Oklahoma in 1933 but her family moved to California when she was still a little girl.

how to shoot when she was just 5 years old!

June got back into beading when she and Harold started rodeoing. They couldn’t afford the fancy western shirts, so she would go to TG&Y and buy some fabric and then add pearl snaps, leather details, and beads. “Pretty soon, we had the best shirts in town and others were asking me to make pieces for them,” she says. “I remember the first time I saw a pair of bell bottoms with pleats. I took one look at them and made me a pair,” June says proudly. “I also made all of the kids’ clothes.”

From hatbands to necklaces with matching earrings to Christmas ornaments, June still does a lot of beadwork, but she tells me she likes to sew best. “I’ll sew for a while and then play with the beads,” she says. As she pulls out a box of her beadwork, “Pandora’s Box” she calls it, I’m amazed at the intricate patterns. There’s a piece with a turtle on it that she traded the pattern for an original painting by another Choctaw artist. “It also won a blue ribbon at the Tulsa State Fair,” she says. There’s another piece with matching earrings adorned with Kokopeli figures, an elaborate collar with fetishes, and many other smaller pieces and ornaments. To make a typical hat band takes her about three days she tells me, “if I’m in a good mood.”

June has won several blue ribbons at both the Tulsa and Oklahoma City fairs for her beadwork. She and her granddaughter, Sara, now enjoy taking their work to Tvshka Homma and various dances around the state. June’s dark eyes light up as she tells me how much fun the dances are to watch.

While at Tvshka Homma, she also likes to sneak over and watch the stickball tournaments. She tells me about how someone once brought an old photograph of a stickball tournament and asked if she recognized anyone in the picture. “I just smiled as I pointed out my dad and his brothers. They were all in the picture,” she says proudly. “That picture is in the museum now.”

June’s designs are all original and her granddaughter says they come from “whatever strikes her fancy”. She’s gotten so good at the design part that she can also simply look at a cross-stitch pattern and adapt it to beading. She’s also taken up embroidery and uses one of her new fancy machines to embroider details on the clothes she makes for her handmade dolls. Also from her own pattern fashioned after a doll she had as a child.

To see the video version of this story, visit ChoctawNation.com.



Senior Citizens Dinners & Kids Parties

Antlers Seniors	12/21	Noon
Atoka Kids	12/8	5 p.m.
Atoka Seniors	12/14	11:30 a.m.
Bethel Kids	12/16	6 p.m.
Bethel Seniors	12/14	11:30 a.m.
Broken Bow	12/9	6 p.m.
Crowder Kids	12/10	1 p.m.
Crowder Seniors	12/14	11:30 a.m.
Durant Seniors	12/14	11:30 a.m.
Hugo Kids	12/16	6:30 p.m.
Hugo Seniors	12/7	11:30 a.m.
McAlester Kids	12/10	1 p.m.
McAlester Seniors	12/14	11:30 a.m.
Poteau Kids	12/10	4 p.m.
Poteau Community	12/14	Noon
Quinton Kids	12/8	6 p.m.
Smithville Community	12/14	Noon
Spiro Kids	12/12	4 p.m.
Spiro Seniors	12/13	11:30 a.m.
Stigler Community	12/14	11:30 a.m.
Summerfield Kids	12/11	2 p.m.
Talihina Community school cafeteria	12/8	6 p.m. at the Talihina
Wilburton Kids	12/10	2 p.m.
Wright City Kids	12/11	3 p.m.
Wright City Seniors	12/22	Noon



HEALTH

Healthy Tips for the Holiday Season

By ERIN ADAMS

Choctaw Nation

Halito,

Merry Christmas! Oh the holidays are such a wonderful time of year from the family gathering around the table at Thanksgiving to the celebration of Christmas. What would this all be without those old family favorites?

We all have them, those once-a-year treats that only your favorite Auntie can make. Then there is the flip side of course, the guilt, from enjoying a little here, there and everywhere.

Well, first of all don't beat yourself up over this. These are joyous times that we should celebrate. If we use moderation and cut corners here and there, we can enjoy the holidays without gaining 10 pounds or sacrificing.

Here are some ideas to help enjoy the holiday festivities without all the guilt.

Typical holiday meals and get-togethers have the same foods and beverages from year to year, so plan ahead. Write down what you typically want and try not to have more than 3 cup or 4 ½ cup servings of foods high in starches and of fats.

Many foods are high in starch and carbs. Those foods include dressing, stuffing, potatoes, breads, spoon bread, beans, corn, hominy, cranberry sauce, fruits, fruit salads, pies, cakes, and pastries.

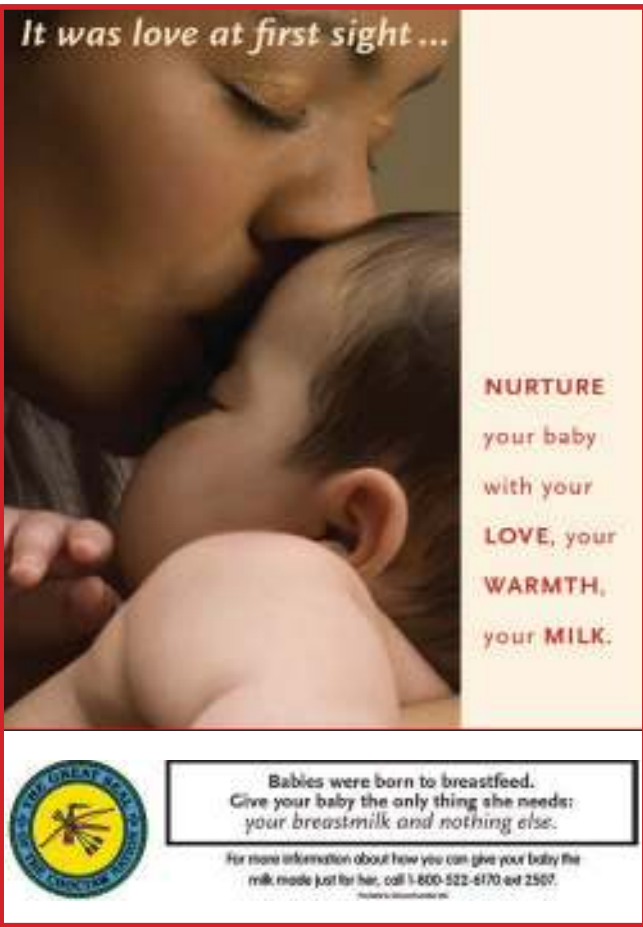
Use a small plate and space foods so each serving is separate. By waiting 5 to 10 minutes before going back for seconds, you may just find out you are satisfied by the first plate. This will also save room for a serving of dessert.

When going to a dinner or gathering, have a healthy snack just prior to leaving to help prevent hunger from taking over what you eat.

Drink Water. Make water your primary choice of beverage. This will save a lot of wasted calorie intake.

You can bring healthy alternatives to gatherings. You can do so by reducing fat in some of your favorite dishes by:

- Using non-stick pans and cooking spray.
- Baking with apple sauce.
- Use herbs and spices; sprinkle fresh lemon, lime or orange zest over veggie or rice dishes or herbs like tarragon or dill on salads. Remember to add herbs at the end of cooking to preserve flavor.
- Make dips with Greek yogurt and Splenda brown sugar for fruits and Greek yogurt and fat free Miracle Whip with Italian seasonings and garlic for veggies.





Barley & Wild Rice Pilaf with Pomegranate Seeds

Recipe by EatingWell.com

Recipe of the Month

- Barley and wild rice pilaf with pomegranate seeds is a great side dish to bring to holiday get-togethers. Just remember this dish is a carbohydrate. So, ¼ cup is considered one serving of carbohydrate.
- Ingredients
- 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
 - 1 medium onion, finely chopped
 - ½ cup wild rice, rinsed
 - ½ cup pearl barley
 - 3 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth, or vegetable broth
 - 1/3 cup pine nuts
 - 1 cup pomegranate seeds, (1 large fruit; see tip)
 - 2 teaspoons freshly grated lemon zest
 - 2 tablespoons chopped flat-leaf parsley

- Instructions
1. Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and cook, stirring often, until softened. Add wild rice and barley; stir for a few seconds. Add broth and bring to a simmer. Reduce heat to low, cover and simmer until the wild rice and barley are tender and most of the liquid has been absorbed, 45-50 minutes.
 2. Meanwhile, toast pine nuts in a small, dry skillet over medium-low heat, stirring constantly, until light golden and fragrant, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer to a small bowl to cool.
 3. Add pomegranate seeds, lemon zest, parsley and the toasted pine nuts to the pilaf; fluff with a fork. Serve hot.

Make Ahead Tip: Prepare through Step 2. Cover and refrigerate for up to 2 days. To reheat, place in a baking dish, add ¼ cup water and cover. Microwave on high for 10 to 15 minutes or bake at 350°F or 25 to 30 minutes.

Tip: To seed a pomegranate and avoid the enduring stains of pomegranate juice, work under water. Fill a large bowl with water. Slice off the crown. Lightly score the fruit into quarters, from crown to stem end. Keeping the fruit under water, break it apart, gently separating the plump seeds from the outer skin and white pith. The seeds will drop to the bottom of the bowl and the pith will float to the surface. Discard the pith. Pour the seeds into a colander. Rinse and pat dry. The seeds can be frozen in an airtight container or sealable bag for up to 3 months.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: 3/4 cup

Calories: 225	Sodium: 283mg
Total Fat: 8g	Total Carbohydrate: 35g
Saturated Fat 1g	Fiber 6g
Cholesterol omg	Protein: 7g

I hope this recipe and tips help to make the holidays tastier. Merry Christmas!

For further information you may contact Erin Adams, RD, LD. Choctaw Nation Diabetes Wellness Center (800) 349-7026 ext. 6950.

Address Changes

If you are not receiving your copy of the Biskinik, or need to change your address, please give us a call. We'll make sure your contact information is correct.

The Circulation Department can be reached at:
800.522.6170 Ext. 2116, 2409 or 2310

NURSERY NEWS

Zachary Lawson Umsted

Zachary Lawson Umsted was born at 3:45 p.m. on Sept. 12, 2016, in Rockwall, Texas. He weighed 7 pounds 1 ounce and was 20 inches long.

Zachary is the son of Steve Lawson Umsted and Celianiz Umsted. He was also welcomed into the world by his sister Stevie (Umsted) Scott and her husband Justin Scott.

Zachary is the grandson of Jess Umsted, Sharon Joan Robinson, and Ana Maria and Anthony Torres. He is the great-grandson of Vera Mae and Hiram Eugene Robinson, Israel and Ana Celia Santiago, and Jose Antonio and Carmen Torres.



Kimberlyn Ruth Leamond

Kimberlyn Ruth Leamond was born on Sept. 19, 2016, at Norman Regional Hospital. She weighed 5 pounds 12 ounces and was 18 inches long.

Kimberlyn is the daughter of Aire Thorne and John Leamond of Oklahoma City.

She is the granddaughter of John and Marie Thorne of Moore. Kimberlyn is the great-granddaughter of George and LaHoma Ruth (Murphy) Crauthers of Oklahoma City. She is the great-great-granddaughter of the late William T. and Ella Murphy of Idabel.




Edmond Newton Bohanan-Wheeler

Edmond Newton Bohanan-Wheeler was born on Sept. 20, 2016, at St. Joseph's Regional Medical Center in Lewiston, Idaho. He weighed 9 pounds 7 ounces and was 22 inches long.

Edmond is the son of Ayisha Bohanan and Shawn Wheeler. Edmond joins his siblings Kendrick Wheeler, David Wheeler Jr., Selin Bisbee, Jordan Wheeler, Xavier Wheeler, Ashley Wheeler, Quannah Wheeler, and Keanon Wheeler.


Edmond is the grandson of Joanne Bohanan of Kamaiah, Idaho and Harold Williams of Shiprock, New Mexico, and Ida Ann Wheeler and Adrian Moody of Lapwai, Idaho. He is the great-grandson of Newton Bohanan Sr. and the late Marian Bohanan of Kaimah, Idaho.



River Vaughn Wells

River Vaughn Wells was born on Oct. 9, 2016, in Austin, Texas. He weighed 4 pounds 6 ounces and was 16 inches long.

River was welcomed into the world by his parents Adam and Alicia Wells of Austin. He is the grandson of Bette Huskey of Durant, Dennis and Phyllis Wells of Schuller, and Mike and Christi Ostrom of Austin.



Choctaw Elders

age 80 & up . . .

You have stories to tell, let us preserve them.

Contact:
Deidre Elrod
Choctaw Nation Communications
800-522-6170
delrod@ChoctawNation.com

Choctaw Nation WIC



WOMEN, INFANTS and CHILDREN

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

CHOCTAW NATION FOOD DISTRIBUTION

WAREHOUSES & MARKETS
*** HOURS ***

Open 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday; 9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Thursday

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 Afullotha Hina, (918) 420-5716
Poteau: 100 Kerr Ave, (918) 649-0431

December	January
ANTLERS Market open weekdays December 1-31, except for: Closed: December 15, 23, 24, 26, 28, 29, 30. Cooking with Carmen: December 9 & 19, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.	ANTLERS Market open weekdays January 1-31, except for: Closed: January 2, 30, 31. Cooking with Carmen: January 9 & 20, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
BROKEN BOW Market open weekdays December 1-31 except for: Closed: December 15, 23, 24, 26, 28, 29, 30. Cooking with Carmen: December 7 & 12, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.	BROKEN BOW Market open weekdays January 1-31 except for: Closed: January 2, 30, 31. Cooking with Carmen: January 11 & 23, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
DURANT Market open weekdays December 1-31, except for: Closed: December 15, 23, 24, 26, 28, 29, 30. Cooking with Carmen: December 2 & 27, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.	DURANT Market open weekdays January 1-31, except for: Closed: January 2, 30, 31. Cooking with Carmen: January 3 & 16, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
McALESTER Market open weekdays December 1-31, except for: Closed: December 15, 23, 24, 26, 28, 29, 30. Cooking with Carmen: December 5 & 14, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.	McALESTER Market open weekdays January 1-31, except for: Closed: January 2, 30, 31. Cooking with Carmen: January 13 & 25, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
POTEAU Market open weekdays December 1-31, except for: Closed: December 15, 23, 24, 26, 28, 29, 30. Cooking with Carmen: December 1 & 21, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.	POTEAU Market open weekdays January 1-31, except for: Closed: January 2, 30, 31. Cooking with Carmen: January 5 & 18, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; Fax: (202) 690-7442; or Email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

EDUCATION

—YOUTH of the NATION— Ishtaboli Changes Life of Teen

By
Chayla Huggins

In May of 2015 I picked up my first pair of kapucha (stickball sticks) and I never looked back. I played my very first game on July 25, 2015, in Valliant.

I now play in the youth league for the team Yvnnvsh Homma (Red Buffalo), which is coached by Dewayne Hornbuckle and Jennifer Roberts.

I never imagined that ishtaboli (stickball) would have become such an important part of my life. Since I began playing, I have not only learned to play ishtaboli, but I have also learned many Chahta dances.

Before we do ishtaboli demonstrations at local schools and other places, we do a few Chahta dances. Some people have never been able to experience seeing either performed, so to be able to show them a portion of the history is truly amazing.

Before this experience I never knew what it was like to be a part of something so big, so life changing. Ishtaboli is a big part of the history of the Choctaw Nation, and my life.

As a young Choctaw teen I feel that if you have never experienced playing in an ishtaboli game, or participated in Chahta dances you are truly missing out.

Not only have I joined Yvnnvsh Homma stickball team, but Jennifer Roberts introduced me to the Choctaw Nation Youth Advisory Board.

YAB has taught me that there are so many different community service activities that I, and well everyone, can do to better the communities of the Chahta Nation and how to be a better representative of the Choctaw people.

I recommend that any young person or adult look into joining a stickball team. I also recommend that any eighth through 12th grade students look into joining a YAB chapter. You will make friends, more like a family, and have so many memories that will last a lifetime.



Photo Provided

Chayla Huggins is pictured in traditional Chahta clothing and holding a pair of kapucha (stickball sticks) at the 2015 Poteau Balloon Fest. During the Balloon Fest, Huggins was a part of the Stickball demonstrations and the Chahta dance demonstrations.

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 easy for anyone to get involved with Box Tops!

It's simple. Buy the products, clip the Box Tops; drop off or send the Box Tops to the Choctaw Nation and help earn cash for 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!

DID YOU KNOW?

FAFSA applications can be submitted **NOW!**

Starting this year, you can submit the FAFSA any time after October 1, 2016.

For more information please visit the FAFSA website at: www.fafsa.ed.gov or call the High School Student Services office at ext. 4105.

CHANGES TO THE FAFSA PROCESS FOR 2017-18

STARTING A FAFSA EARLY: Students will be able to submit a 2017-18 FAFSA as early as Oct. 1, 2016, rather than beginning on Jan. 1, 2017. The earlier submission date will be a designated change, making access to complete and submit your FAFSA as early as October 1 every year. There is NO CHANGE to the 2016-17 selection. The 2016-17 FAFSA became available Jan. 1, 2016.

USE EARLY INCOME AND TAX INFORMATION: Beginning with the 2017-18 FAFSA, students will report income and tax information from as recent as available. For example, on the 2017-18 FAFSA, students will report their 2015 income and tax information, rather than their 2016 income and tax information.

Here's a summary of key dates for submitting the FAFSA depending on when you plan to go to school:

IF YOU PLAN TO ATTEND COLLEGE FROM	YOU WILL SUBMIT THIS FAFSA	YOU CAN SUBMIT THE FAFSA FROM	USING INCOME AND TAX INFORMATION FROM
July 1, 2016-June 30, 2016	2015-16	January 1, 2015-June 30, 2016	2014
July 1, 2016-June 30, 2017	2016-17	January 1, 2016-June 30, 2017	2015
July 1, 2017-June 30, 2018	2017-18	October 1, 2016-June 30, 2018	2015
July 1, 2018-June 30, 2019	2018-19	October 1, 2017-June 30, 2019	2016

Federal Student Aid
StudentAid.gov/fafsa

Curtis Brothers Graduate



Trevor Curtis



Evan Curtis

Evan Curtis graduated in May from Thurgood Marshall School of Law and was awarded a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree. Evan and his wife Kelly have relocated to the Dallas area. Trevor Curtis of Dallas also graduated in May. He graduated from Oklahoma State University with a degree in Economics and will be attending the University of Dallas to pursue a Master's degree in Finance. The brothers are grateful to the Choctaw Nation for helping them pursue their dreams. They are the sons of John and Sheila Curtis of Dallas and the grandsons of the late Lewis Hampton Jr. and Lu Hampton of Dallas.

District 10 Princesses and Councilman Anthony Dillard Visit Atoka Head Start Center



District 10 Councilman Anthony Dillard, along with the District 10 Choctaw Princesses, Senior Miss December Pittman, Little Miss Hailie Pittman and Junior Miss Kylee Hampton, visited the Atoka Head Start Center on Wednesday, Oct. 26. *(i above)* Councilman Dillard read the Choctaw story “The Boy Who Almost Lost His Name” by Mary M. Frye to the students. *(b elow)* The princesses, Councilman Dillard and the Head Start students danced a Choctaw dance.



Barrom Enters Law School

After graduating from Cornell University, Joshua Ryan Barrom has begun studies at Boston University in Boston, Mass. Barrom is pursuing a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree.

He is the son of Doctors Janice Bartleson and Colin Barrom. He is the grandson of Marcella Widmar. Barrom and his family would like to acknowledge the support he received from the Choctaw Nation during his undergraduate studies.



McGee Helps Update Red Oak Cemetery Records



Mollie McGee, a junior at Red Oak High School in Red Oak, plays softball and basketball. She is an honor student and has been on the Superintendent's Honor Roll every semester. She is also an active member of First Baptist Church in her hometown and has attended Youth Leadership Camp at Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee for two summers.

McGee participated in the Choctaw Nation Summer Youth program under the auspices of the Choctaw Nation Workforce Investment Opportunities Act. She worked for the City of Red Oak at the Red Oak Cemetery. McGee had the task of data entry and organization for the Red Oak Cemetery. The records for the cemetery had not been updated since 1964, with the exception of sketchy written notes. According

to the 1964 Census, there were approximately 1,250 gravesites. Once McGee finished the project, over 3,000 gravesites were recorded.

The Red Oak Cemetery records now reflect search information such as section number and row number, which will help visitors and genealogy research. The individual records contain birth and death dates, as well as a notation of veteran status. The records will be added to the Latimer County Historical Records, as well as state and national databases. McGee was supplied with a computer and the handwritten notes that were available. She used technology and her computer skills to finalize the project. She worked independently to create the final document. She is the daughter of Tammy and Russell McGee.

Valdez Takes Home First Place at Kentucky State Fair



Sienaca Valdez, a 10-year-old fifth grade student at St. Mary of the Woods School in Whitesville, Kentucky, won first place in the Student Art Division at the Kentucky State Fair. Valdez was the recipient of the Ben H. Johnson Creative Kid Award for her fox collage of metal and paper.

She is pictured with her art teacher, Enid Roach, and her prize winning artwork. She is the daughter of Jesse and Jahnnna Valdez.

Sienaca is the granddaughter of Patricia Valdez of Newalla, and Jean Ann and Joseph Rearden of Whitesville, Kentucky. Her older sister, 17-year-old Sierra, has also placed at the Kentucky State Fair. Sierra won fifth place for a sea shell sculpture of a horse and fifth place for a graphic art enhancement of a photo of her dog.

Wesley Excels in Algebra

Jade Warren Wesley, a student at Rector Johnson Middle School in Broken Bow excelled in Mathematics Algebra I. His mastery of Mathematics was advanced. He is the son of Lola Wesley, who is proud of his accomplishment.



2017 EDUCATION CLASSES

Choctaw Nation Adult Education High School Equivalency(HSE)

Class sessions will meet twice weekly for three hours each day for 12 weeks. Students can enroll only during the first two weeks of class. Please bring Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB), Social Security card, and state-issued ID (driver's license, permit, or ID). The class will meet each week for approximately 12 weeks. Books, supplies, and testing fees are provided. In addition, a \$10 per day attendance stipend will be paid to those who attend classes on a regular basis and attempt the HSE/GED test. Please contact Kathy Bench at the Durant office, (800) 522-6170 ext. 2122 for more information. A CDIB is required.

January 2017 - March 2017

- Monday, Jan. 2, 9 a.m. - noon
Poteau, Carl Albert State College, Ollie Building
- Tuesday, Jan. 3, 9 a.m. - noon
McAlester, Eastern Okla. State College, Clark Bass Building
- Tuesday, Jan. 3, 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.
Hugo, Choctaw Nation Community Center
- Tuesday, Jan. 3, 5 p.m. - 8 p.m.
Durant, Headquarters South Building

NOTES TO THE NATION

LETTERS

Yakoke (Thank You)!



I ordered these seeds from the tribe when I read about them in the “Biskinik.” We planted the seeds and had five plants come up. Out of those five plants, only one survived. This one plant took complete control of the garden and has produced about 30 pumpkin—squash. We are so excited about them. So far I have made a pie that is similar to a custard pie. It is made with honey instead of sugar, and no crust. This is a wonderful dessert for my family since my husband is a diabetic. I have also made a pound cake, muffins, mashed potatoes and even a chilie. There are also several ways to roast the seeds too.

Rebecca Smith
Hugo, Oklahoma

I am trying to locate a descendant of Choctaw tribal member Earl C. Intolubee. I believe a recent issue of the “Biskinik” contained an obituary for Mr. Intolubee’s daughter, Gayle Earlene Intolubbe Wilks of McKinney, Texas. I have been unable to reach persons so mentioned. The purpose of my intention is to send a framed oil painting by Earl C. Intolubee to the family. The obituary lists a brother, James Intolubee, among others.

Kenneth B. Goodner
Executor Lydia Goodner Estate
P.O. Box 1360
Rockport, Texas 78381
(361) 790-7793
kbgoodner1742@gmail.com

Biskinik Announcement Policy

We will accept milestone birthday greetings for ages 1, 5, 13, 15, 16, 18, 21, 30, 40, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, and above. Couples may send in announcements of their silver wedding anniversary at 25 years of marriage, golden anniversary at 50 years, or 60+ anniversaries.

News from graduates of higher education only and sports submissions will be accepted as space allows. We do not post wedding announcements.

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

Notes to the Nation Submissions

Send thank you notes and event notices to:
Biskinik, Attn: Notes to the Nation
P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702
or email to: biskinik@ChoctawNation.com

CHOCTAW COLLEGE CLOTHING ALLOWANCE



- ❖ The Choctaw clothing grant is a “one-time only” allowance.
- ❖ A grant of \$300 is provided for a semester GPA of 3.00 to 4.00.
- ❖ A grant of \$250 is provided for a semester GPA of 2.00 to 2.99.
- ❖ Fall awarding begins January 1, 2017 and ends April 1, 2017.
- ❖ Apply online January 1, 2017 at <https://ccapplication.choctawnation.com>. Paper applications are no longer accepted.

NEED COLLEGE CLOTHING?

Gary Batton
Chief

Jack Austin Jr.
Assistant Chief

The Official
Monthly Publication
of the
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Lisa Reed, Executive Director
Ronni Pierce, News Director
Stacy Hutto, Managing Editor
Kendra Germany, Reporter/Photographer
Tina Firquain, Reporter/Photographer

P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702
(580) 924-8280 • (800) 522-6170
Fax (580) 924-4148
www.ChoctawNation.com
email: biskinik@ChoctawNation.com

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 proper grammar and punctuation. Copy will be accepted in any readable form, but where possible, it is requested that material be typewritten and double spaced. You must include an address or phone number where you may be reached. Due to space limitations and the quantity of article submissions, we are unable to include everything we receive.

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

The BISKINIK is a nonprofit publication of the Choctaw Nation.

Circulation is monthly. 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.



Thank you so much Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma for the generosity you showed to me and my grandkids in the time of our loss. Thank you for the assistance with the burial of my daughter, Amanda Willis, and the food. It was deeply appreciated and we will be forever grateful for your kindness.

Charlotte and grandkids
Angelina, Gabriella,
Jasmyn, Isreal and Lilliana

I wanted to compliment employees Chelsea Seitz and Sherrie Varner, Benefit Coordinators and Patient Advocates. They are nice, pleasant, kind, and very professional ladies. They represent the Choctaw Nation well. May God bless the Choctaw Nation and everything they do for their people.

Danny Boyd
McAlester, Oklahoma

I graduated from Murray State College with an Associate’s degree in Applied Science. When I was younger I was asked, “What do you want to be when you are grown?” My answer was always, “I want to be a physical therapist assistant.” The Choctaw programs have helped me pursue my goal. The Higher Education Program has assisted me with funding for college. The WIOA (Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act) Program also helped me throughout my journey. Going to school to be a PTA isn’t cheap. There were extra expenses during the program, such as three different clinical sessions we had to pay for out of our own pocket. All of my clinical studies were either an hour away or more. So, I had to consider money for fuel over there or a place to stay, which the WIOA Program helped in that area. I am more than grateful to have this kind of assistance. I want to give a big “thank you” to career counselors Kelly Brame and Karen Thomas, as well as classroom training counselor Ginger Crawford. They have helped me pursue my dream. I can now call myself a graduate from the Murray State College Physical Therapist Assistant Program. The Choctaw family has helped me in so many ways and I am proud to say Chahta sia hoke!

Jessica Luellen

I would like to write this note as a way to say thank you to the Chief, Assistant Chief and Tribal Council for all that you have done for me and my family. My wife had a transplant in October 2010. The Choctaw Nation has taken good care of her medical needs before and after the transplant. Each employee involved in her care was courteous and knowledgeable. Things are not always easy when a family faces serious health problems. I just want to thank the Choctaw Nation again for all your assistance to help us make it through. Yakoke!


Bobby Coley

Lic e n s e d C o n t r a c t o r s W a n t e d

Choctaw Nation Housing is looking for licensed contractors. If interested, visit ChoctawHousing.com. Under contractors tab are applications, or call the Procurement Department at (580) 326-8820. Contractor requirements are listed below:

- Minimum \$300,000 general liability insurance
- Workers Comp insurance certificates
- If specifying a specific trade, ex. electrical, HVAC, etc., a copy of license must accompany application.
- Completed W9
- DUNS number registered at sam.gov

Contact Procurement Dept. for questions about obtaining the DUNS number and how to register.

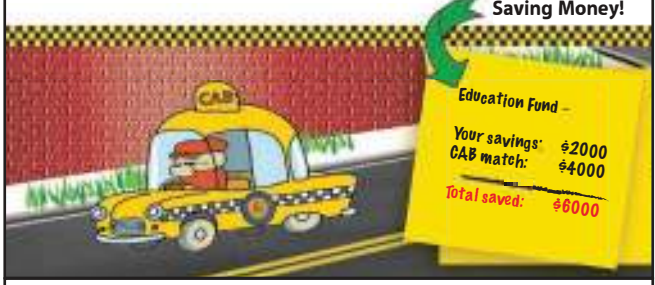


Need more cash for the cost of college?

Choctaw Asset Building now serves tribal members **outside of Oklahoma!**

A college matched savings program is available for eligible Choctaw college students!

Earn Money for Saving Money!



Start earning money TODAY! Contact Choctaw Asset Building (866) 933-2260 choctawcab.com.

Great article about the 1972 Bryco team. I never dreamed that anyone would develop that into the story that you did. I must apologize for not making it clear that the letters S.S.C. actually stood for Southeastern State College, not Seminole. This event took place before South-eastern was changed to S.O.S.U. Again, great job!

Kenny “Sonny” Young
Kyle, Texas

I would like to thank the Choctaw Nation and the staff at the Choctaw Nation Health Clinic in Durant. I am a new tribal member and I recently received care in the Durant clinic. I was so overwhelmed with the spectacular treatment and service I overheard from the receptionist who checked me in, to the nurses, and doctor, to the pharmacist, and pharmacy technicians. They were so helpful in making sure I was comfortable and that I had a complete understanding with my diagnosis and my medications. They welcomed questions and did not act as though my questions were a burden on them. I appreciate the entire staff there and I thank them so much. I am thankful to the Choctaw Nation for making sure that we, as a Nation, have the resources needed to further enrich our lives. I am so proud to be a member and feel a real sense of community and belonging.

Laura Hawkins

EVENTS

Christmas in the Park

Toshka Komma Grounds

Open Dec. 2–31

Hot chocolate and ornament giveaway on Fridays and Saturdays from Dec. 2–17.

The drive through holiday light display is free and open to the public.

For more information call,
Cultural Services at (800) 522-6170
ext. 2377 or 2517

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Legal Assistance

A licensed attorney will be available 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 (adoption, divorces, custody, child support)
- Contracts and leases
- Guardianships and modifications

Contact the community center to confirm the attorney will be there before traveling. The office does not provide representation in court or assist in criminal matters. For questions contact Samantha Guinn at (580) 380-8149.

December Community Center Schedule

12-1 Atoka: 10-1 & 1:30-3
12-8 Coalgate: 10-1 & 1:30-3
12-13 Crowder: 10-1 & 1:30-3
12-22 Stigler: 10-1 & 1:30-3
12-29 Wilburton: 10-1 & 1:30-3

NOW SHOWING YOUR FUTURE

CHOCTAW CAREER EXPO 2017

Open to all job seekers!

- MEET WITH TOP-NOTCH EMPLOYERS AND TRAINING FACILITIES FROM ACROSS THE REGION.
- LEARN ABOUT FINANCIAL AID ASSISTANCE.
- BUSINESSES WILL BE ACCEPTING RESUMES AND INTERVIEWING ON SITE.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22ND • 10AM-2PM

SOUTHEAST EXPO CENTER
4500 W. HWY 270 MCALESTER, OK 74501

GUEST SPEAKER:
GARY "LIGHTFOOT" DAVIS

Presented By: **CAREER**

For more information contact:
Choctaw Nation Career Development
at www.choctawcareerexpo.com
866.933.2260

Choctaw Nation Vocational Rehabilitation						
January 2017						
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 Antlers by appt.	5	6	7
8	9 Broken Bow & Idabel by appt.	10 Talihina 10:00-2:00	11	12	13 Crowder by appt.	14
15	16 Durant 8:00-4:30	17	18 McAlester 10:00-2:00 Stigler by appt.	19	20	21
22	23 Wright City by appt.	24 Broken Bow & Idabel by appt.	25	26	27 Atoka by appt. Coalgate by appt.	28
29	30 Poteau 11:30-1:00	31 Wilburton by appt.				

Iti Fabussa

Issuba—
“Like a Deer”
Part Two

In this two part series, Iti Fabvssa examines the relationship between the Choctaw people and the horse.

In the past, Choctaw stickball players had worn the tails of panther or deer in order to emulate the speed and agility of those animals in the game.

Now, some Choctaw stickball players began to wear collars made of horse hair. When a Choctaw man died, his horse was killed, roasted, and eaten by the people attending his funeral.

This was a sign of the connection between a man and his horse, and done in the belief that the horse would accompany him into the next life.

The horse made traditional life easier for Choctaw people in a number of ways, but it was a two-edged sword.

Hunting parties now brought teams of horses on the owachitto, or great fall hunt. A man would still follow the ancient tradition of stalking deer on foot, but once he had killed one, instead of field dressing it for transport, he simply returned to hunting camp, and pointed in the direction of the kill to his wife or female relative.

She would head to the spot with horses and transport the kill back to camp (Cushman 1899:180).

When they were ready to break camp and head back home, the horses would be loaded with 50-pound packs of deer jerky on each side and one on top. A deer rawhide

would placed on top to protect the cargo from rain (Cushman 1899:235).

A train of pack horses could transport the jerky and hides of many deer. This coincided with the escalation of the deer hide trade.

By the 1770s, Choctaw hunters had depleted the deer population in present day Mississippi.

When they had moved by foot or canoe, Choctaw hunters usually traveled 100 miles or less to hunt. With the horse, there was not necessarily an upper limit.

By the 1790s, Choctaw hunting parties were traveling with trains of pack horses across the Mississippi River (Rousseau 1793, in Kinaird and Kinaird 1980:353) and into present day east Texas and Southeastern Oklahoma.

The encroachment on the homelands of other tribes, including the Caddo, Osage, Wichita, and Tonkawa by Choctaw hunters led to conflicts.

In 1790, an epidemic killed a significant part of the Choctaw horse herd. Young Choctaw men, eager to prove their bravery and replenish the herd stole the horses of enemies.

In the 1786 Treaty of Hopewell, the Unites States acknowledged the right of the Choctaw government to punish American families that were squatting on Choctaw lands.

With the deer hunted out, Choctaw warriors killed and butchered squatters' cattle, which they realized were damaging the cane brakes and other important plant communities. They also stole their horses as a way of protecting Choctaw

borders, without resorting to killing Euro-Americans.

In 1805, the Treaty of Mount Dexter effectively ended Choctaw horse raids on American squatters.

For more than a century, horses had been an economic means to an end, now they became an economic end in and of themselves (Carson 1995:504). In other words, the horses themselves came to have value.

During this period, most Choctaw parents reportedly gifted their newborn children a mare and a foal, a cow and a calf, a sow and pigs. By the time a child was old enough to leave home, he or she was already supplied with stock (Cushman 1899:228). Through such forward looking practices, by the 1820s, the tribe had grown its horse herd to 15,000 head (Carson 1995:506).

With Choctaw horse raids prohibited, some squatters and other Euro-Americans now began to steal Choctaw horses.

Others simply waited with contraband on the edges of Choctaw territory, to trade alcohol for horses. In 1823, the Chiefs, realizing the negative impact that this trade had on their communities, created the Choctaw Lighthorsemen (Carson 1995:503). One of the first tasks given to these mounted law officers was stopping the horse/alcohol trade.

The Choctaw people were eventually forced to give up the sacred home-



Photo Provided

The photos on this page are from the Jesse Nelson Locke collection to approximately 1910. The individuals are either Locke family members or their working hands. The Locke family cared for and bred over 700 of the Choctaw horses from the late 1800s to the 1940s.

land, and many were forced to relocate to Indian Territory on what came to be called the Trail of Tears.

At this point, the Choctaw horse herd was worth an estimated \$500,000. One government agent suggested that a barge be created for the sole purpose of transporting the Choctaw horse herd to Indian Territory.

It was never done.

Families were left to transport their horses as best they could. Through poor planning, exposure to the elements, and murder, an estimated 1,500 to 4,000 Choctaw people died on the Trail of Tears.

An estimated 2,000 Choctaw horses were lost due to drowning and theft (Carson 1995:507).

Once in Oklahoma, the Choctaw Nation rebuilt its economy. An important part of this economy still included cattle ranching, and horses continued to be an integral tool for these ranchers.

Horses were also used as draft animals on some Choctaw homesteads. They would furrow the ground, plant the corn hills, and then plow out the middles between the rows later (Edwards 1932:411). “Chahe” had been the Choctaw word for an ancient type of hoe made from a deer shoulder blade or a mus-

sel shell that was used to prepare the ground for planting.

The term “Isuba Ichahe,” meaning “Horses’ Hoe,” became a word for the plow.

The Choctaw horse herds were again decimated through two Union invasions during the Civil War, and through thefts from robbers in the aftermath.

Some Choctaw families, both in Oklahoma and Mississippi, held onto their horses.

More recently, through the efforts of Bryant Rickman and others, steps are being made to conserve this rare and special breed (Locke-Bray 2010).

Today’s Choctaw pony is a pure breed of Spanish Mustang, descended from the old Choctaw herds, found in places like the Blackjack Mountains of Pushmataha County.

To the best of our knowledge, these horses are the same type that Choctaw ancestors faced so long ago on the battlefield against DeSoto, they are the same horses that extended the distance for the Choctaw winter hunt, and they are the same horses that carried some Choctaw people across the Trail of Tears.

For centuries now, we have walked our paths together.

The story of the Choctaw horse began in Issuba–“Like a Deer” Part One in the November 2016 issue of the Biskinik.



Photo Provided

From the Jesse Nelson Locke collection: pictured is Allece Locke on a Choctaw pony in the 1920s.

Foster faith. Foster Family. Foster Culture.

Foster a child.

Choctaw Nation Foster Care

800-522-6170

◆◆◆ Lesson of the Month ◆◆◆

What Hurts? – Nanta Hosh Hottupa?

ikonla – neck (ik-ohn-lah)	noshkobo – head (nohsh-koh-boh)	moma – still (moh-mah)
hanali – leg (ha-nah-lih)	iyyi – foot/feet (iy-yi)	hottupa – hurt (hoht-toh-pah)
sv – my (sa)	chi – your (che)	issa – stop (es-sah)

isht ia – starting to/beginning to
(esht-eya)

Question: Nanta hosh hottupa? - What hurts?
(Nantash hottupa?- conversationally)

Responses:

1. Sv noshkobo yvt hottupa.	My head hurts/is hurting.
2. Svkonla yvt hottupa.	My neck hurts/is hurting.
3. Sv hanali yvt hottupa.	My leg hurts/is hurting.
4. Svyi yvt hottupa.	My foot/feet hurt/s is hurting.

Questions:

1. Chiyyit hottupa ho?	Does/Is your foot/feet hurt/ing?
2. Chikonlat hottupa ho?	Does/Is your neck hurt/hurting?
3. Chi hanali yvt hottupa ho?	Does/Is your leg hurt/hurting?
4. Chi noshkobo yvt hottupa ho?	Does/Is your head hurt/hurting?

hottupat issa – stopped hurting moma – still
hottupat isht ia – starting to/ beginning to hurt

Questions:

1. Chiyyi yvt hottupat issa tuk ho?	Did your feet stop hurting?
2. Chikonla yvt hottupat isht ia ho?	Is your neck starting to hurt?
3. Chi hanali yvt hottupa moma ho?	Does your leg still hurt?

Statements:

1. Sv noshkobo yvt hottupvt issa.*	My head stopped hurting.
2. Svkonla yvt hottupvt isht ia. *	My neck is starting to hurt.
3. Svyi yvt hottupa moma.	My foot still hurts.
4. Sv hanali yvt hottupvt isht ia. *	My leg is beginning to hurt.

*In the word ‘hottupa’ the suffix ‘t’ is added – ‘hottupvt’ - when two verbs are together, the first verb picks up the suffix ‘t’.

www.choctawschool.com

CHOCTAW

STORE

The Choctaw Store is the place to shop for unique items handcrafted by Choctaw Artisans and Choctaw Nation branded items. Shop for apparel, jewelry, books, home décor and more! Whether you are shopping for a gift or something for yourself, the Choctaw Store has just what you are looking for.

MEET THE ARTIST

CAROLYN BERNARD YOUNG

POTTERY

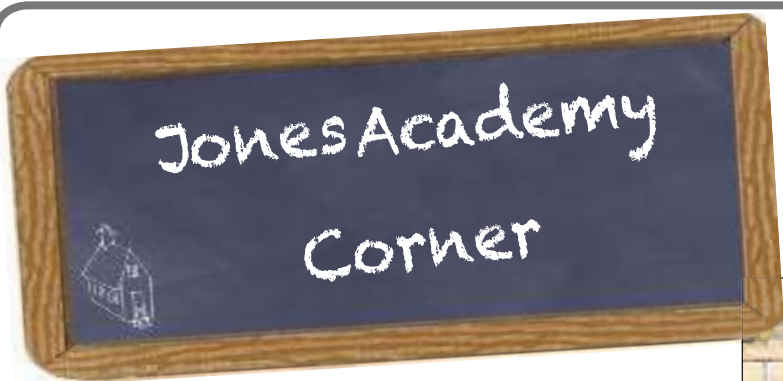
DECEMBER 17 • 11AM - 4PM

1882 Hwy 69/75 ♦ Colbert, OK 74733 ♦ 580-296-2672

CHOCTAWSTORE.COM

Like Us On

SPORTS



Jones Academy Students Excel During First Year in League Soccer Program

This is the first year the students at Jones Academy participated in the Hartshorne City League Soccer Program. Elementary students at Jones Academy who wanted to participate signed up and were placed in divisions based on age.

Jones Academy had one team in the 6 to 8-year-old division and two teams in the 9 to 11-year-old division.

Brad Spears, coach of the blue team, said, “The students had a blast playing soccer and looked forward to game day. The students are already excited about next season.”



The Turquoise Team was in the 9 to 11-year-old division and ended the season with a record of 2 wins, 2 losses and 1 tie. Members of the Turquoise Team were (back, from left) Coach John Sokolosky, Recreation staff; Alivia King Martinez; Dameion Wakolee; Alycia Henderson; Leilene Jefferson and Coach Kanani Watashe, 12th grade student. (front, from left) Jacob Cotton; Jimmy Trejo-Rains; Denise Nape; and Isabel Lujano.



The Blue Team was in the 6 to 8-year-old division and were undefeated with a record of 4 wins and 0 losses. Members of the Blue Team were (back, from left) Memorie Bell, Caylee Billy, Amariah Chee, Kaylee Chee, Kayla Billy, Stetson Spears, Selena Wakolee, Taydem Harden and Coach Brad Spears, Senior Director of Jones Academy. (front, from left) Sharayah Thundershield, Jonathan Jackson, Julian Esquivel, Octavius Posodas-Gabino, Leonel Lujano, Lucas Branch and Jadea Leflore.



The Red Team was in the 9 to 11-year-old division and ended the season with a record of 4 wins, 0 losses and 1 tie. Members of the Red Team were (back, from left) Coach John Sokolosky, Recreation staff; Eevett King; Morgan Jefferson; Abigaile Logston; Anahi Romero; and Coach Kanani Watashe, 12th grade student. (front, from left) Arianna Ellison; Bri'Anna Harden; and Tatyana Lewis.

Spears Family Well Represented at Fairs

Braylon and Railey Spears of Hartshorne recently competed at the Arkansas–Oklahoma State Fair held in Ft. Smith, Arkansas on Sept. 23–26. Railey Spears, a seventh grader at Hartshorne Middle school, exhibited the first place class VII crossbred and was selected for premium sale honors. Braylon Spears, a freshman at Hartshorne High School, exhibited the Breed Champion Spot and first place class VIII and Reserve Breed Champion Crossbred. Braylon was selected for premium sale honors with his reserve champion cross.

Only 15 swine are selected for the premium sale. Braylon and Railey's premium sale pigs were bred and raised on their family's farm located in Latimer County, Oklahoma. Braylon also competed at the Tulsa State Fair Livestock Judging Contest. FFA students throughout the state competed at the event, which consisted of judging and evaluating swine, beef, lambs, and goats. Students had to give oral reasons for their placings. Braylon was second highest overall individual in the Junior FFA division. The Hartshorne Junior FFA team placed fourth overall at the event.



The Hartshorne Junior FFA team placed fourth overall at the Tulsa State Fair Livestock Judging contest Teammember Braylon Spears was the second highest overall individual in the Junior FFA division. Pictured (from left) are Taylor Stufflebean, Ashton Hackler, Sheyenne Sanders, Braylon Spears and Hartshorne FFA advisor and Livestock Judging Coach Shawn Sparks.



Railey Spears is pictured with her pig. (from left) FFA advisor Ira Brinlee, Brandon Spears, Railey Spears and Miles Toyne, a judge.



Braylon Spears is shown with his award winning pig. (from left) Hartshorne FFA advisors Ira Brinlee and Shawn Sparks, Braylon Spears, Brandon Spears and Miles Toyne, a judge.

Duty Named to All State Team

Augusta Duty, a senior at Minco High School, was recently named to the Oklahoma All-State Fastpitch softball team. Duty has played fastpitch softball for 13 years. The All-State honor capped off a high school career that included Duty being named to the Southern Plains All-Conference team for four years, and being named the conference MVP her junior and senior years. She is the daughter of Tommy and Michelle Duty. Her future plans are to continue her softball career as a member of the Southeastern Oklahoma State University Savage Storm softball team in Durant and to major in the medical field.





The Next Step initiative specializes in keeping Tribal Members on a budget to sustain financial independence.

5 Holiday Spending Tips

1. Plan ahead and make a list of everyone you want to buy for.
2. Set your budget and know your limit. Think about how much you can spend on each person.
3. Try not to use credit or debit cards. Use cash only and stay on track.
4. Compare pricing. The internet allows you to compare pricing between retailers.
5. For the hard to buy for person, gift cards are a great idea, it helps you stay on budget.

Happy Holidays,
The Next Step Team

Antlers (980) 293-6443	Broken Bow (980) 584-2942	Contact Information Durant (980) 624-7773	McAlester (918) 425-5176	Poteau (918) 649-043
Fax: (980) 620-7007 Email: nextstep@choctawnation.com				

P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702
Fax: 980-920-1821



Imagine the possibilities . . .

Choctaw Nation
Of Oklahoma
Educational Talent Search
Announces our **FREE**
ACT Prep Workshop
For Grades 9–12
Thursday, December 8, 2016
8:30 am-Noon
Eastern OK State College
McAlester Campus



You must be Choctaw or a Talent Search student to attend the workshop. Pre-register by calling 1-800-522-6170, ext. 2711. Check with your high school counselor or call our office for a new Talent Search application. (New students may apply at this time.)

Choctaw Nation
Faith • Family • Culture



Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Youth Work Program

Apply Online Starting:
Sunday, January 1, 2017

<https://wioaapplication.choctawnation.com>
PO BOX 1210 • DURANT, OK 74702

 Keep up to date by liking us on Facebook:
Choctaw Nation Youth Work Program

Eligibility Requirements:

- ♦ Age 16 – 21 On or Before the 1st Day of Work
- ♦ Reside within 10 ½ Counties of the Choctaw Nation
- ♦ Tribal Membership or CIMB card
 - From a federally recognized tribe
- ♦ Social Security Card
- ♦ Household Income Verification
 - For the Last Six Months: Check Stub, Etc.
- ♦ Residence Verification
 - Utility Bill, Junk Mail, Etc.
- ♦ Education Background Verification
 - Transcript, HS Diploma/GED
- ♦ Selective Service Registration
 - Males 18 Years and Older

When applying online make sure that you hit the submit button and receive the page that states your application has been submitted.

Need Help? Visit your local field office or contact the WIOA Staff at 1-800-522-6170 for assistance completing the online application.

Mark your Calendars!!!



I've got my BTV.

Whatever you do,
Wherever you go,
Choctaw Nation goes with you.

BISKINIK TV

New show every month on the 15th.

ChoctawNation.com  

OBITUARIES

Christofer Michael-Paul Hartwell

Christofer Michael-Paul Hartwell, 30, of Mt. Pleasant, Michigan, passed away unexpectedly, Sept. 30, 2016.

Chris was born Jan. 5, 1986, in Kalamazoo, Michigan, to Kelly (Schramm) Hartwell.

He was a descendant of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe. The center of Chris' life was his daughter, Olivia, and grandparents. He loved passing on his traditions to his daughter and going to pow wows with her. He loved listening to music and entertaining friends and family by playing guitar at bonfires. He enjoyed playing sports, being outdoors, photography, painting, sculpting, poetry, cooking, and reading. He will ever be grateful for the support and companionship of his auntie Sue and Jill.

He is preceded in death by his beloved grandfather and best friend, Paul Schramm Sr.; and cousins Melissa Bonnama and Timothy Schramm.

Chris is survived by his daughter Olivia Hartwell and her mother Kristen; mother Kelly Hartwell; brothers Justin and Alex Hartwell; grandmother Linda Schramm; and many aunts, uncles, and cousins.



Nettie Hampton Trice

Nettie Hampton Trice, 106, died on Sept. 23, 2016, in her home in Chickasha.

She was born on July 10, 1910, in Bradley to Julius C. Hampton and Frances Harkins Hampton.

Nettie grew up in Bradley and graduated from Bradley High School in 1928. She continued her education at the Haskell Indian Institute in Lawrence, Kansas, and also at the Chickasha Business College. Nettie worked at the Chinlee Navaho Indian Reservation in Chinlee, Arizona, before moving to Dinuba, California, where she met and married Fred Trice on Nov. 8, 1938. Fred and Nettie made their home in Earlimart, California, where they owned and operated a grocery store and filling station. Nettie retired in 1970. Nettie was very proud of her Native American heritage as evidenced by the Wisdom Blanket on her casket which was given to her by Choctaw Chief Gary Batton.

Nettie is preceded in death by her husband, her parents and all of her siblings Walt, Roy, Lake, Pearl Mann, Leonard, Alice Lookaround, Lillian Kendrick, Arlee, Annie, and Michael Lefore Hampton as well as nephews Bobby Gene Kelley, Jim C. Hampton, and Richard Wayne Mann and nieces Frances Hampton and Michaelene Hampton.

She is survived by her nephews Ira J. Mann, Jr. of Bradley, Ray Hampton Mann of Garden City, Kansas, and John Ben Mann of Louisville, Kentucky; nieces Lageina Trayerina and Phoebe Sue Saenz of Fort Worth, Texas; many grandnieces and grandnephews; and a special cousin Jimmie Ann Utterback.



Christopher Glen Armstrong

Christopher Glen Armstrong, 34, passed from this life Sept. 20, 2016, in Antlers.

Christopher was born June 10, 1982, in Antlers, to Henry Armstrong and Glenda Felihkatubbee.

Christopher enjoyed being outdoors hunting and fishing. During his off time, he enjoyed playing video games and drawing different things. Anytime he wasn't out fishing or hunting Christopher loved being able to spend his time with his family telling stories.

Christopher is preceded in death his grandparents Leslie and Marie Branch; grandmother Ola Mae Satterfield; aunts Helen Satterfield and Joann Stanley; grandfather Coleman Felihkatubbee; step-dad John Calvin Cockrill.

He is survived by his parents Henry Armstrong of Moyers, and Glenda Felihkatubbee of Idabel; son Jagger Lee Armstrong; brothers Micheal and wife JJ Armstrong of Moyers, John Cockrill Jr. of Idabel, and Dylan Cockrill of Idabel; sisters Angie Armstrong and Jason Spalding of Tucson, Arizona, and Jessica and husband Derrick Haury of Idabel; nephews Raiden Haury of Idabel and Jason Spaulding Jr. of Tucson, Arizona; nieces Acelyn Cockrill of Idabel, Patience Haury of Idabel, Brianna Spalding of Tuscon, Arizona, and Akria Armstrong of Moyers, as well as many aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins, and a host of friends.



Delora Mae Smith Rogers King

Delora Mae Smith Rogers King, 86, loving wife, mother, and friend, peacefully returned home to our Lord at her residence in Huntsville, Texas, on Aug. 27, 2016.

Delora was born Jan. 31, 1930, in Widnoon, Pennsylvania, to Roy Smith and Birdie Virginia Woolridge Smith.

he family moved to Big Cedar where Delora grew up among other Native Choctaws and was surrounded by the Kiamichi Mountains. She attended Bacone College until June of 1950 when she married Clifford Rogers, newly graduated from the OU School of Pharmacy. They immediately relocated to Dallas and were soon blessed with three of their four children. Following a short move to Houston and the birth of their fourth daughter in June of 1961, they purchased the Addison Baker Drug Store located on the square in Huntsville. Delora's time was filled with raising the four girls and enjoying activities including Sunday School teacher and Girl Scout troop leader as well as maintaining the business end of the pharmacy. Within a few years, the pharmacy moved to a clinical building and was renamed Medical Arts Pharmacy. Upon the death of Cliff in 1970, Delora became full time owner/manager of the pharmacy until her retirement. The first woman elected to the Huntsville City Council, Delora served diligently from November 1974 until 1983. She was an active member of the Business and Professional Women's Club of Huntsville and was named the recipient of their Outstanding Woman of the Year in 1982. In 1976, Delora again found a life partner and married Merton P. King, Ph.D., a professor in the English department at Sam Houston State University, to whom she was married for over 32 years until his death in 2008. Following retirement in 1989, Delora became an avid quilter, golfer, and gardener. However, her most special moments were spent with her family, especially her grandchildren and great-granddaughter who affectionately called her "Grandma with the deer". Her passion for politics—local, state, or national—never waned.

She is survived by her loving children Brenda Rogers Watt, Sandy Rogers, Glenda Rogers Addison (Paul), Lena Rogers Boyer, and John R. King; grandchildren Jason Atkinson, Christi Atkinson Jager, Sarah LaRue Addison, Clifford Paul Addison, and Catherine "Catie" Sue Watt; great-granddaughter Allison "Alli" Ryan Jager; and brother Thomas Smith (Claire).



Franklin "Buddy" Delano Tonihka

Franklin "Buddy" Delano Tonihka, 70, died April 28, 2016, at the Skies Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico, after a brief battle with cancer.

He was born Jan. 31, 1946, in Talihina to original enrollees Jowick and Fannie Tonihka.

Franklin grew up in McCurtain and attended high school in Idabel. He served in the U.S. Army from September 1966 to December 1979. He has been a resident of Los Lunas, New Mexico, since June 1980. Franklin was a member of the Rio Grande Baptist Church in Albuquerque. Franklin's passion was caring for his kin and watching the family he created in New Mexico grow and flourish. He will be remembered as a strong Choctaw man who was proud of his Choctaw heritage.

He is preceded in death by his eldest son Jeremy Tonihka; parents Jowick and Fannie Tonihka; three brothers John Tonihka, Jesse Tonihka, Joseph Tonihka; five sisters Ennie Cusher, Ida Crosby, Rebecca Billy, Anna Lesley, and Frances Williams.

Franklin is survived by his wife of 49 years Carolyn Tonihka; Jeremy's wife Jennie Tonihka, his son Jason Tonihka and his wife Antoinette Tonihka; his youngest son Brian Tonihka and his wife Christine Tonihka; his grandchildren Dominic Tonihka and his wife Erika Tonihka, Danette Tonihka, Bryanna Tonihka, Devoni Quintero, Aaron Tonihka, Faith Tonihka, Eric Tonihka, Jowick Tonihka, Jacy Tonihka, Aislyn Tonihka, Buddy Tonihka; and his great-grandchildren Ezeriyah Smith, Daizie Tonihka, and Clyde Tonihka.

Interment was held at Pajarito Cemetery in Albuquerque.



Jimmie Wanna "Sissy" Osburn

Jimmie Wanna "Sissy" Osburn, 78, of Noel, Missouri, was called to heaven on Aug. 29 at the Golden Living Center in Anderson, Missouri.

Jimmie was born on Aug. 3, 1938, in Quinton to the late Nicholas Joseph and Jimmie Eloise (Brogdon) Roberts.

She married Leslie Osburn on July 14, 1978, in Southwest City, Missouri. Her younger years were spent in Oklahoma. She worked in green houses and did upholstery work. Jimmie loved to do arts and crafts. She cherished the time spent with family, especially her grandchildren.

She is preceded in death by her parents; her loving husband Leslie Osburn; a brother Nicholas Joseph "Sonny" Roberts; and a grandson Paul Brow.

Jimmie is survived by her four children, Debra Bifulco of Bentonville, Arkansas, Janet Daise and husband Thomas of Joplin, Missouri, Richard "Sam" Tracy and wife Alicia of Grove, Melissa Usery and husband Earl of Goodman, Missouri; a brother Richard Roberts and wife Paulette of Valley Center, Kansas; seven grandchildren Elisha Harris, Courtney Barnett, Christine Fowler, Michael Clark, Jerica Harriman, Tracy Mejia, and Jeremy Sherman; nine great-grandchildren Presley, Kohura, Destinee, Ameena, Aliyah, Brison, Emily, Erick, Adriana, and Haley; along with a host of other relatives and friends who will dearly miss Jimmie.



Lois Jessie Bowling

Lois "Jean" Jessie Bowling, 82, went to be with the Lord Sept. 12, 2016.

She was born July 15, 1934, in Garvin to Jack Jessie and Elizabeth Lewis Jessie.

She was born the eighth of nine children with siblings twin sisters Leona and Neoma, Marie, Helen, Jack, Auther, Raymond, and Joe. She loved her family and family events, especially the Jessie family reunion in Oklahoma that has lasted almost fifty years and continues to this day. She loved her dogs, gardening, playing games, especially Canasta, and recently watching Jose Altuve and the Houston Astros. Jean attended Wright City High School, in Wright City. She played on the basketball team and loved to dance. While still in high school, Jean married her husband of sixty-five years, Johnny Bowling, on Nov. 18, 1950, at sixteen years old. While her husband was serving in the United States Army, Jean continued her education and graduated from high school in 1953. Jean and Johnny moved to Houston, Texas, in 1954 and had two children, a daughter, Sharon Jean (Sherry) and a son, John Lewis. Jean was primarily a stay-at-home wife and mother until her children graduated high school and then worked a couple of jobs as a secretary. She retired from Faith Manufacturing in 1990, where she worked as a secretary, in order to move to "The Country" in Jewett, Texas, where Jean and Johnny resided the past twenty-six years.

Jean is preceded in death by her parents Jack Jessie and Elizabeth Jessie and sisters Neoma Ives, Leona Tidwell, Marie Sullivan, and Helen Haan; brothers Jack Jessie, Auther Jessie, and Raymond Jessie.

She is survived by her husband of sixty-five years Johnny Bowling, of Jewett, Texas, daughter, Sherry Webster and husband Greg Webster of Tomball, Texas, and son John Bowling, of Austin, Texas; grandchildren JeanAnne Wiggins and husband Mark of Spring, Texas, Cas Webster and wife Gina of The Woodlands, Texas, Andrea Rountree and husband Chris, of Haslit, Texas, and Michelle Bowling, of Austin. Great-grandchildren Allison Wiggins, Emma Wiggins, Megan Wiggins, Evelyn Rountree, C J Webster, Cooper Rountree, Caroline Webster and "Baby Boy" Rountree due any day, and brother, Joe Jessie, of Broken Bow; and numerous nieces, nephews, and friends.



Linda Sue Pipkins

Linda Sue Pipkins, 73, of Pocola, passed away Sept. 19, 2016, in Oklahoma City.

Linda was born July 1, 1943, in Pocola, to Andy and Esta Alice (Gregory) Pipkins. She was a seamstress.

Linda is preceded in death by her parents.

Survivors include her sons Dennis R. Mills of Sayre and Ronald Mills of Spiro; grandchildren Lacey Mattox, William Mills, Remington Derryberry, Destiny Benson, Ronald Mills Jr., Linville Mills and Radonna Davis; ten great grandchildren; her siblings Tom Pipkins, Aaron Pipkins, Gary Pipkins, Kenny Pipkins and Gerald Pipkins of Pocola, Mary Joyce Welker and Melba Large of Spiro, Paul David Pipkins of Big Cedar, and Dan Pipkins of Hackett, Arkansas; and other relatives, loved ones, and many friends.



Gerald Files

Gerald Files, 90, passed away on Sept. 18, 2016, in Mansfield, Louisiana.

He was born on Feb. 13, 1926, to Walter and Emaline Wall Files.

Gerald was a WWII Navy Veteran and also a horse and cattle rancher his whole life. He ran landing barge landing troops in Okinawa. Gerald was a Judge for the American Quarter Horse Association, American Paint Horse Association, and American Appaloosa Association. Gerald was also published in numerous horse publications.

He is preceded in death by his wife Jacqueline Files; parents Walter and Emaline Files; brothers George Files, Leon Files, and sister Edra Krute.

Gerald is surbived by his son Jim Files and wife Amanda of Stanley, Louisiana; daughter Vicki Jernigan and husband Adam of Center, Texas; sister Agnes Sutch of Florida; three grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, and one special niece Carolyn Allen of Wasilla, Alaska.



OBITUARIES

Catherine Eileen Gardner

Catherine Eileen Gardner, 86, of Graham, passed away March 15, 2016.

Catherine was born March 1, 1930, in Shamrock, Texas, to James and Myrtle Wilson.

She was a homemaker having her hands full raising nine children.

She is preceded in death by her husband Buster; two daughters Linda Haislip and Clarissa Gardner.

She is survived by sons Darrell and wife Carolyn of California, Bennie and wife Nelson of Montana, Robin of Utah, Delbert of California, Gary and wife Wendy of Graham, and Jesse and wife Brandie also of Graham; daughter Jeynell Eubanks of California; brother Cecil Wilson and wife Naoma of Cross Plains; sister Francis Thornton and husband Don; 21 grandchildren; numerous great-grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews.



Jonah Ray Ward

Jonah Ray Ward, 72, of Broken Bow, left this physical world Sept. 14, 2016. Jonah was born Jan. 8, 1944, in Idabel to Wilson Moses and Eva Mae (Byington) Ward.

Jonah was a member of the Living Land United Methodist Church in Idabel. He was honorably discharged from the United States Army having served two years from 1965-67. His service included being a member of the 82nd Airborne during the Vietnam War. He worked as a millwright for the Weyerhaeuser Company, retiring after 35 years of service. As much as Jonah loved his family and friends, he also enjoyed the last several decades of watching his sons, grandchildren, nieces and nephews play a variety of organized sports in Broken Bow and Idabel. His enthusiastic support as a fan for the Broken Bow Savages and Oklahoma Sooners was only matched by the same enthusiasm he had when the Dallas Cowboys lost. Among his other favorites, in addition to tinkering with old mustangs, Jonah was an avid fisherman and leaves behind the best catch of his life. Jonah and Kay Wilson were united in marriage on June 6, 1971, at the McGee Chapel in Broken Bow and spent 45 wonderful years together.

Jonah is preceded in death by his parents Wilson and Eva (Byington) Ward; two sisters-in-law Joyce Williston and Cynthia Billy.

Jonah leaves to cherish his memory his wife Kay of the home; two sons Clay Ward and wife Jackie of White Plains, Maryland, and Jonathan Anthony “Tony” Ward and wife Amy of Broken Bow; two brothers David Stanley Ward of Idabel and Bobby J. Byington and wife Betty of Bryant, Arkansas; sister Shirley Lambert and husband, Bill of Idabel; four grandchildren Peyton and Kayla Ward of Broken Bow and Dylan and Notah McCabe of White Plains; two sisters-in-law Betty Jacob and husband Rev. Randy Jacob of Broken Bow and Juanita Henry of Chicago, Illinois; brother-in-law Walter T-Loyd Wilson and wife Louise of Philadelphia, Mississippi; and numerous nieces and nephews in addition to a host of friends.

Katherine Virginia Thorpe

Katherine Virginia Thorpe, 90, passed away Sept. 21, 2016, in Paris, Texas.

She was born Dec. 6, 1925, in Smithville to Jerry Harris Samuels and Rosie Nell (Mayab) Samuels.

She was the faithful wife of an ordained minister. She and Edward Thorpe married Jan. 3, 1952. She had lived in this area most of her adult life and was a member of the Heavens Harvest Church. She had worked as a cook for the Choctaw Senior Citizens Center. She loved to go fishing, traveling to different places, and especially liked to drive through the countryside.

She is preceded in death by her parents; her husband; her children Virginia “Ginger” Rose Pond and Johnny Lee Shannon; one grandchild Johnny “JJ” Shannon Jr.; siblings Albert, Gilbert, Wesley, Jerry, Viola, Flora Lee, Artie, and Benjamin (Harris) Samuels.

Katherine is survived by her grandsons James Pond and wife Tracy of Broken Bow and John Pond and wife LeaAnna of San Antonio, Texas; granddaughters Kimberly Pond of Idabel, Denise Rangel of Idabel, Chrystal Pond of Broken Bow, and Wendy and Brian Turner of Paige, Texas; and special nieces Robin Hunter, Malinda Pollard and family; 17 great-grandchildren; and 30 great-great grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.



Josephine D. Gonzales

Josephine Deandra Gonzales, 86, of Albuquerque, New Mexico, passed away April 18, 2016.

She was born April 18, 1930, in Slim, to parents Patterson Davis and Lizzie Thompson.

Josephine grew up as the third of six siblings Aleckton, Henry, Jim, Joel, and Nary. Josephine has two older daughters Beatrice and Janice. She moved to Albuquerque and married Frank Abel Gonzales and they had six boys Dewayne, Garry, Patrick, Jaime, Carlos, and Alfie. Josephine was a woman of many talents. She was first a loving mother and also an artist whose art was seen in the beautiful ribbon shirts and intricate quilts she designed. She attracted many followers as a cook for University of New Mexico Golf Courses (no one could match her fry bread). She taught her daughter Janice, the art of bead work. Josephine was a hard working, dedicated mom but always made time for fun.

She is preceded in death by her husband Frank; sons Garry and Carlos Gonzales; and daughter Janice Keleher.

Josephine is survived by her younger brother Jim; sons Dewayne, Patrick, Jaime, and Alfie; four grandchildren Hushtolakpi (Fi), Crystal, Cody, and Jessica; four greatgrandchildren Brianna, Ariana, Santiago, and Elijah.



Samuel “Sammy” Arch Lovelace Jr.

Samuel “Sammy” Arch Lovelace Jr., 74, of Moore, passed away Sept. 16, 2016, in Atoka.

He was born July 29, 1942, in Denison, Texas, to Samuel Arch and Nita Evangeline (Williams) Lovelace

Sammy attended Atoka schools and graduated from Wapanucka High School in 1959. He also attended Southeastern Oklahoma State University and Murray State College. Sammy was a car dealer and was a member of Ward’s Chapel Baptist Church. He enjoyed motorcycles, especially Harleys, loved hot rods, and enjoyed watching OSU football, Thunder basketball, and NASCAR.

He is preceded in death by his parents Samuel and Nita Evangeline (Williams) Lovelace.

He is survived by sons Sam Lovelace and wife Becky of Yukon, Dr. Mike Lovelace and wife Christy of Lubbock, Texas; sisters Carol Moseley and husband Waylan of Sterling, Virginia, Laura Coppedge and husband Raymond of Oklahoma City, and Nancy Kirby and husband Bill of Wapanucka; granddaughters Lexie Lovelace of Lubbock, Alexis Jacks, and Emily Jacks both of Yukon; nieces Dr. Dana Kirby of Keller, Texas, Tina Nunn and husband Rody of Moore, Lisa Hollaway of Oklahoma City, Janet Pasielski and husband Chris of Lovettsville, Virginia; nephews Paul Moseley and wife Ana of Seattle, Washington; he is also survived by other relatives and friends.



William Lee Minyard

William Lee Minyard, 20, of Bennington, passed from this world Aug. 26, 2016.

He was born on Sept. 2, 1995, in Ada, the son of Shawn Lee Minyard and Christie Nanette (Wilson) Lemons.

William was a kind hearted and funny young man, stubborn as he could be, but never met a stranger. He loved to hunt, fish, and work on the farm. He was a country boy through and through. He loved deeply and he was passionate about the people and things he loved. In the short time he had with his daughter, he loved her with all that he had and was an amazing father. William will never be forgotten. Blaze will know him and his love every day.

William is survived by the love of his life Cheyanne Rutz and their precious daughter Ariya “Blaze” Minyard; father Shawn Minyard and girlfriend Chelsea Noland; mother Christie Lemons and husband Damon Lemons; his close friend Richie Ford, whom he always considered a father figure; brother Tyler Minyard and girlfriend Kimi Frizell; sister Morgan Graves; stepbrother Alec Fuller; nephews Braden Minyard and Jadynd Shoals; niece Aaliyah Shoals; grandparents Troy Minyard and girlfriend Rita Regina, Johnny and Annette Terrell, and Randy and Kaye Matthews; aunts Sheila Boyd, Melissa Mitchell, Adrian McDonald and husband David; and many more relatives and friends.



Harold R. Jones

Harold R. Jones, 65, passed from this life on Oct. 7, 2016, in Oklahoma City.

He was born June 19, 1951, in Vian, to Robert Lee Jones and Lavene (Harris) Jones.

Harold married Joan Evelyn Young in 1987 in Hot Springs, Arkansas. He was a U.S. Army veteran and a dog handler and trainer for the military police.

He is preceded in death by his parents and grandparents Doug and Ora Harris and Hattie and Clarence Jones and one daughter Jennifer Savage.

He is survived by his wife Joan of the home; granddaughter Makenzie Savage of Sallisaw; sister Nancy Phillips of Pocola; two brothers Robert Jones and Joe Jones of Vian; and several other relatives and friends.

John Wesley McKinney

John Wesley McKinney, 90, went to heaven on Sept. 12, 2016, in Red Rock.

He was born July 5, 1926, in Eagletown, to Elliott and Irene (Bohannon).

John retired from the U.S. Navy in 1969. He served in WWII, the Korean Conflict, and the Vietnam War, and was awarded multiple campaign medals and was qualified as an assault boat coxswain. After discharge from the U.S. Navy, he served seven years in the Merchant Marines as an able bodied seaman. He also worked for Pratt’s Fishing Company in National City, California.

He is preceded in death by wife of 50 years Frances A. McKinney; his parents; son David McKinney; daughters Tina Little Thunder and Karen Silva; brother Jimmie Jefferson; sister Annie Amos; granddaughter Misty Love; son-in-law Terry L. Wapskineh; and great-granddaughter Alexandria Lynn.

John is survived by sons John and wife Christina McKinney and Robert Ledbetter; daughters Loretta and husband Mike TallBear, Cecilia and husband Mark Notware, and Alicia McKinney; 20 grandchildren; 37 great-grandchildren; a great-grandson Julian Max; and many nephews and nieces from Alaska to California and Oklahoma.



Cynthia L. Robinson

Cynthia L. Robinson, 39, died Oct. 4, 2016, in Escondido, California.

She was born Jan. 1, 1977, in Kansas City, Missouri, to Judy and Earl Robinson.

When young, Cynthia spent summers traveling with her maternal grandparents in remote areas of the U.S. and developed a love of nature and especially the Southwest and California. She graduated from Raytown South High School and attended Longview Community College. She worked for Physicians Reference Lab, Overland Park, Kansas, then moved from the Kansas City area to Phoenix, working for the May Clinic. She decided to go back to college, attending Arizona State University majoring in applied mathematics. She loved dancing and was a member of the Klogghoppers competition team in the 90s through 2003. She was especially artistic and creative, loving every facet of art and crafts. She also loved growing cacti and succulent plants and was a board member of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America. She was the 2017 Biennial Convention Chair, Social Media Committee Chair, and Children’s Potting Workshop Chair and elected to become the society’s treasurer. Cynthia was a member of The Huntington Gardens in San Marino, California, and the central Arizona C&S Society. Cynthia was proud of her Indian heritage from her father. She recently realized her dream of living in California. She loved the ocean, wonderful weather for growing her plants and being closer to so many of her friends.

Cynthia is survived by her father Earl Robinson and significant other Linda Palkowitsh; mother Judy Pigue and stepfather Bill Pigue; aunt Oren Peevy; and many cousins, nieces, and nephews.



Oscar Almon Blake

Oscar Almon Blake, 79, of Watson, passed away Aug. 1, 2016, in Ft. Smith, Arkansas.

He was born on Aug. 4, 1936, in Buffalo to Herman L. Blake and Nola Bee Parnell Blake.

He was married to the love of his life Opal Williams Blake for 56 years. Mr. Blake worked for 30 years at U. S. Motors as a machine operator. He enjoyed fishing, hunting, farming, and working in his garden. Most of all he was a family man who dearly loved and enjoyed spending time with his children and grandchildren.

Oscar is preceded in death by his parents Herman and Nola Blake; sister Joyce Spicer; brother Mikel Blake; daughter Lida Marie Loyd and son-in-law Leon Owens.

He is survived by wife Opal Williams Blake; sons Buddy Blake and wife Jimmie Anne of Aztec, New Mexico, and James Mikel Blake and wife Kayla of Red Oak; daughters Loretta Keiss and husband Troy of Watson, Elizabeth Ann Blake of Bella Vista, Arkansas, and Becky Hilton and husband Brett of Octavia; brothers Tommy Gene Blake and wife Louise and Richard Blake and wife Karen; sisters Mayola Perish, Mable Martin and husband Edward, Mary Lou Phillips and husband Buck, Edith Sinyard and husband Gene, Anna Lois Stafford and husband Roy, Donna Smith and husband Jimmy, and Frances Hartley and husband Gary; 18 grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren, and a host of friends and other family.



Eddie Dean Homer

Eddie Dean Homer, 57, a resident of Durant passed away Oct. 3, 2016.

He was born on June 12, 1959 in Talihina to Hubert and Pearlyne (Ludlow) Homer, Sr.

Eddie loved being outside working in the yard. He enjoyed drawing, whittling, carving, and watching wrestling. Eddie especially loved his little dog Jack.

He is preceded in death by his father Joe Carnes; and brothers Sonny Homer and J.B. Carnes.

Eddie is survived by his mother Pearlyne Carnes of Durant; sisters Linda Hornsby of Calera, Ramona Swillings of Hugo, Jennifer Carnes of Durant, and Sheila Carnes of Oklahoma City; brother Gerald Ludlow of Durant; numerous nieces and nephews and his beloved dog Jack.



Bernie Coleman Thompson

Bernie Coleman Thompson, 79, of Hugo died Oct. 11, 2016, in Oklahoma City.

Bernie was born Jan. 16, 1937, in Speer, to Simon Thompson and Frances (Pisachubbe) Thompson.

He was raised in the Hugo area and moved back to Hugo in 1997 after his retirement from Ben F. Keith Foods of Dallas where he worked as a credit manager. He and his wife Dianna were married on Jan. 12, 1959. They owned and operated Thompson Grocery & Deli in Grant for a number of years. Bernie loved his family, good food, Cowboys football, and dogs, especially Lady. He was stubborn but was always the first one to say “I’m sorry.” Bernie was of the Baptist faith.

He is preceded in death by his parents; infant daughter Cynthia Marie Thompson; two brothers Leonard Thompson and William “J.R.” Thompson; four sisters, Dorchee Thompson, Ethel Hamill, Edith Jones, and Norma Homer.

He is survived by his wife Dianna (Bassett) Thompson; two sons Mark Ryan Thompson of Ponca City and Bernie Len Thompson of Ardmore; six grandchildren Andrew Thompson, Patrick Thompson, LeAnn Eckert, Lynette Vorhees, Taylor Thompson, and Brennan Thompson; three great-grandchildren Brooke Eckert, April Vorhees and Owen Vorhees; numerous nieces, nephews, and cousins; and a host of other family and friends.



Obituary Policy

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

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

BUSINESS

Luksi Creations Brings Beading Supplies to Oklahoma City

By KENDRA GERMANY
Choctaw Nation

In Oklahoma City, there sits a beading shop named Luksi Creations LLC. Luksi Creations is a one-stop shop for beads, beadwork, hand-made Native American crafts and jewelry.

Located at 1909 N. Classen Boulevard, the shop is owned and operated by three generations of Native women.

Catherine Stairs, her daughters, Kiamichi Camp and Maui Watkins and her granddaughter Tashina Goodbear run the business together.

The family has been a part of the beading world for years now, traveling the powwow circuit and selling their beads at other crafting events.

But the family’s affinity for beading began long before that.

Catherine started beading when she was a child.

“I got started in the most obscure place in the world, southwestern Pennsylvania. My mother and grandmother are from here. So, they taught me when I was about nine to bead,” said Catherine. “So, I’ve been beading for about 60 years.”

According to Catherine, her affinity of beadwork is something she passed on to her girls.



Photos by Tina Firquain

(from left) Tashina Goodbear, Maui Watkins, and Catherine Stairs stand in front of their business Luksi Creations, LLC. Luksi Creations is owned and operated by three generations of Native American Women. Predominately a beading supply business, Luksi Creations is also a one-stop-shop for beads, beadwork, hand-made Native American crafts, and jewelry.



Tashina Goodbear works on a detailed beading project inside of her family business Luksi Creations LLC.

“I passed the love of beads to my girls and my granddaughter,” said Catherine. “When she came along, she decided to love beads. She does gorgeous beadwork.”

According to Catherine, it wasn’t until she visited Oklahoma that her love of collecting beads truly blossomed.

“The first time I came to Oklahoma, we went to Anadarko. I won’t even tell you how many beads we went back with, but that’s when beads were a lot cheaper than they are now,” laughed Catherine.

The family has used the moniker Luksi Creations for years.

“I came up with that 30 odd years ago. Luksi, because it’s the Choctaw word for turtle, I move like a turtle half the time,” said Catherine. “I’ve used it on and off, then about seven years ago, we decided to go legal and started setting up at powwows. Our goal was for a store, and that’s what we’ve always wanted to do. But, it took us a while to find it.”

According to Catherine, it took the family around two years to find the perfect location.

“Nobody wanted to rent to us,” said Catherine.

When Catherine would explain the business to potential landlords, they didn’t quite understand the appeal of a business

that sold beads.

“There are 38,000 Natives in Oklahoma City alone,” said Catherine. “Granted not all of us do beadwork, but there’s a lot of us here and there is a market.”

A year and a half ago, Catherine found the perfect location while driving down Classen Boulevard, and that is where the business now calls home.

According to Catherine, the family’s goal is to cover the walls with beads, a task Catherine’s daughter Maui is up for.

“It gave us a great outlet for our bead collection, and gave us a great excuse to peruse and buy more beads,” laughed Maui. “I’ve always been a bit of a bead-hog. I buy the pretties and I hoard them for years. But, you know it’s great inventory. It gives us something to do with that.”

According to Maui, the brick and mortar store has helped the business expand their reach.

“If we have somebody from Kansas that sees us online, sees us on Facebook, and they want to order beads, we can ship it to them because we’ve got all the inventory here,” said Maui. “So it gives us a little more flexibility than just being a booth set up at the occasional powwow.

Luksi Creations isn’t just a bead shop. “We are also an outlet for local beaders

and artists that don’t have a way to sell their things. We take things on consignment and give them an outlet for their work,” said Catherine. “We just want to be here for the community. That’s for the Native community, that’s where we want to be. We think we’re in a good spot.”

Just like any family business, there are ups and downs.

I think it’s kind of what you’re going to run into with any family and business. You butt heads over some things and you create a cohesive bond. In the end you get a little more respect for each other,” said Maui. “You figure out what each other’s strengths and weaknesses are.”

According to Catherine, Luksi Creations’ purpose is to serve the Native Community.

“We just want to be here for our people. We want to be here,” said Catherine. “We want to make it work as a place where Native people can come in the city and buy a hank of beads or whatever they need, and not feel like they have to spend a small fortune.”

Luksi Creations LLC is located at 1909 N. Classen Blvd., in Oklahoma City. The shop is open Monday through Friday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. For more information call (405) 839-8008 or e-mail luksicreations@gmail.com.

SUMMER WORK PROGRAM APPLICATIONS

The WIOA department will be visiting schools throughout Oklahoma to help students sign up for the summer work program.

1/3/17	BUFFALO VALLEY	1/18/17	DURANT
1/3/17	TALIHINA	1/18/17	MOYERS
1/4/17	PANOLA	1/18/17	SOPER
1/4/17	RED OAK	1/19/17	CALERA
1/4/17	WILBURTON	1/19/17	COLBERT
1/5/17	LEFLORE	1/20/17	TUPELO
1/5/17	McALESTER	1/23/17	BROKEN BOW
1/5/17	WHITESBORO	1/24/17	BENNINGTON
1/5/17	WISTER	1/24/17	FORT TOWSON
1/6/17	CAMERON	1/24/17	CROWDER
1/6/17	POCOLA	1/24/17	CANNADIAN
1/6/17	SPIRO	1/24/17	HAWORTH
1/10/17	BOSWELL	1/24/17	IDABEL
1/10/17	HOWE	1/24/17	INDIANOLA
1/10/17	POTEAU	1/25/17	ATOKA
1/10/17	RATTAN	1/25/17	BATTIEST
1/10/17	SILO	1/25/17	SMITHVILLE
1/11/17	CANEY	1/25/17	TUSHKA
1/11/17	CLAYTON	1/26/17	CADDO
1/11/17	COALGATE	1/30/17	EAGLETOWN
1/11/17	HEAVENER	1/31/17	CALVIN
1/11/17	PANAMA	1/31/17	VALLIANT
1/11/17	STRINGTOWN	1/31/17	WRIGHT CITY
1/12/17	ARKOMA	2/1/17	HAILLEYVILLE
1/12/17	BOKOSHE	2/1/17	HARTSHORNE
1/12/17	COLEMAN	2/1/17	McCURTIAN
1/12/17	HUGO	2/1/17	QUINTON
1/12/17	KIOWA	2/1/17	STEWART
1/12/17	WAPANUCKA	2/2/17	KINTA
1/12/17	SAVANNA	2/8/17	KEOTA
1/17/17	ROCK CREEK	2/8/17	STIGLER
1/18/17	ANTLERS	TBA	JONES ACADEMY

Bring a copy of CDIB/Membership Card, Social Security Card, Drivers License, Physical Address verification, Selective service (if male and over 18). Also, bring a voided check or letter from the students bank if money direct deposited is wanted.

Southeastern Oklahoma Indian Credit Association and Choctaw Revolving Loan Fund

The Southeastern Oklahoma Indian Credit Association offers small business, home, home improvement, and agriculture loans. To be eligible to apply, a person must reside within the 10 1/2-county service area of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and must possess a Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) from a federally recognized tribe. Micro-loans are available for emergency home improvements and small businesses. The loans are available up to \$2,500 and are to be repaid within 24 months. To be eligible to apply you must be Choctaw, possess a CDIB and you must reside within the 10 1/2 county area of the Choctaw Nation.

For more information, please contact Susan Edwards at 580.924.8280 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:

Wilburton Field Office
December 12
9:30–11 a.m.

HOT JOBS

Get HIRED! December 2016

Every month the Biskinik will spotlight open job positions in the Choctaw Nation. For job objectives, primary tasks, as well as required education, skills and experience, visit www.Careers.ChoctawNation.com.

Position	Location
• Indian Child Welfare Staff Attorney	• Durant
• User Interface Designer	• Durant
• System Support Analyst I & II	• Durant

To apply for these positions or see other job postings in the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, visit www.Careers.ChoctawNation.com

PEOPLE YOU KNOW

Frazier Represents Choctaw Nation in D.C.

Josie Frazier, a sophomore at Hugo High School, recently had the privilege of being selected as a youth representative of the Choctaw Nation to attend President Barack Obama's eighth and final Tribal Nations Conference.

The conference provided tribal leaders from the 567 federally recognized tribes with the opportunity to interact directly with high-level federal government officials and members of the White House Council on Native American Affairs.

President Obama addressed the Tribal Nations Conference and said,



"I've been proud of what we've been able to do together. We haven't solved every issue. We haven't righted every wrong. But together, we've made significant progress in almost every area."

In addition to the Conference, Josie was invited to attend the second annual White House Tribal Youth Gathering, as part of the Generation Indigenous (Gen-I) initiative, an initiative focused on improving the lives of Native youth by removing the barriers that stand between Native youth and their opportunity to succeed. The gathering brought together approximately 100 Native youth leaders who participated alongside tribal leaders and senior federal leaders in breakout sessions, panels, and youth-specific programming.

Tribal youth representatives were selected through an application process hosted by the Aspen Institute's Center for Native American Youth and Gen-I. Josie and three other Choctaw youth were selected for this opportunity.

Josie Frazier is pictured in her traditional Choctaw Dress in Washington D.C.

Frazier said, "My experience in Washington D.C. was very educational. I learned many things about Native Americans from all over the country that you don't learn in history class. It was eye opening to hear from other tribes about the struggles they experience. At the same time though, it was disheartening to see how many struggles people in Indian country still have to experience, even in this day and age. Even though I'm young, I've always known I can make a difference and attending the conference only strengthened that belief. I'm very grateful that I was selected, and my favorite part was seeing President Barack Obama and hearing him speak. He's the best public speaker I've ever seen, and it felt like he was speaking to me personally. I also enjoyed having dinner with Chief Batton, and all of the Choctaw Nation Tribal Youth delegates appreciated him spending time with us and listening to our concerns. I was honored to represent the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation District 8, and the Choctaw Nation Youth Advisory Board (YAB) of Hugo. Thank you to Chief Batton, Assistant Chief Jack Austin, Councilman Perry Thompson, Choctaw Nation YAB, Sara-Jane Smallwood, Choctaw Nation Career Development, and Aaron Impson for this amazing opportunity."

Josie is the daughter of Darren and Michele Frazier and sister to Connor.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



Spring Turns 105

James Harold Spring "Pop" was born in Jumbo, on December 3, 1911. He and his family enjoyed many road trips they took. Pop still enjoys watching the Oklahoma Sooners football games as well as "tinkering" around his garage and working on his lathe. His family would like to say "We love Pop more than words can say and we want to wish him a very special happy 105th birthday."

Dean is Blessed with 90th Birthday

Betty Goode Dean recently celebrated her 90th birthday in Moore with her family. Betty is originally from Boswell, but she now resides in Choctaw. Her family would like to say, "Happy birthday to a wonderful mom, grandmother and great-grandmother."



McCurtain is Sent Birthday Wishes



Rebekah "Beki" Jean Lyllian McCurtain turns 21 Dec. 10, 2016.

Her Aunt Jinjer and cousin Bonny would like to wish her a "Happy 21."



Smokey the Bear Visits Stigler and Teaches Children About Fire Safety

Choctaw Nation Forestry Department recently sent Smokey the Bear to the Head Start Center in Stigler. Josh Bates presented a Fire Safety Program for the children. Smokey visited with the students, and provided them with coloring books and crayons, but what they most liked receiving, were the Smokey the Bear hats.

Business Owner Celebrates 15 Years

Dean Turner, owner of EDT Advertising Co., celebrated his company's 15th anniversary. Chief Gary Batton stopped by to help Turner celebrate.

Turner was born in Atoka in 1944 and served in the Army as a Medical Laboratory Technologist. Then he worked in the medical field for many years before starting up his own business. Turner and his business are on the Preferred Supplier Program list with the Choctaw Nation.

He has close to a million of promotional products including LED signs.

EDT Advertising Co. is located in Cushing. You can contact Turner at deanturner2@hotmail.com or (918) 223-5493.



Hill Celebrates Her First Birthday

Nayely Michele Hill turned one on Sept. 25, 2016. She is the daughter of Marcellous D. Hill Jr. and Meagan R. Belvin. Her maternal grandparents are Bryan E. Belvin and LaDonna R. Belvin from Boswell, and paternal grandparents are Carol Hill and the late Marcellous Hill from Boswell.



District 4 Royalty and Councilman Cox Visit Trail of Tears Memorial

Main Street Ozark, Arkansas held a dedication ceremony on Sept. 24, 2016, in conjunction with the Ozark Area Museum in Ozark. The memorial was placed to honor the Choctaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, Muscogee-Creek and Seminole tribes that passed through Ozark by land and the Arkansas River during removal to Indian Territory from 1830-1840's. Among the guests representing each of the tribes were from the Choctaw Nation, Council Speaker/District 4 Councilman, Delton Cox, District 4 Jr. Miss Jade Cossey, and Little Miss Gracie Mattox.

CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

The Coopers are Blessed with 50th Anniversary

Richard and Bobbie Cooper of Harts-horne celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary on Oct. 15, 2016. They were married at the Holy Rosary Catholic Church in Hartshorne in 1966. Family and friends came together to help the couple celebrate.

50

CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

The Dukes Announce 50 Years of Marriage

Eddie and JoAnn Dukes will be celebrating their 50-year wedding anniversary. The two were married on Jan. 21, 1967, and raised three children and they have 13 grandchildren. They are looking forward to many more retirement years together and are enjoying all their grandchildren.

50

CHOCTAW PRINT SERVICES

TEXOMA PRINT SERVICES IS NOW CHOCTAW PRINT SERVICES

OUR NAME HAS CHANGED, BUT WE HAVEN'T.

We've changed our name, but we haven't changed a thing about our commitment to providing the service, attention to detail, and high quality work our customers deserve. As Choctaw Print Services, we'll continue our 37-year tradition of offering creative print solutions and excellent customer service for all your printing needs.

Come explore the new Choctaw Print Services and rediscover the power of printing.

PRINTING SERVICES DESIGN SERVICES PROMOTIONAL ITEMS

Choctaw Print Services
2711 Sangeria Blvd.
Bartons, Oklahoma 74009

866.924.1128 sales@choctawprint.com 800.924.1131

Hearts of Oklahoma: 800 to 5500s Monthly - 7day

Choctaw Nation keeps Construction Crews Busy with Growth

By STACY HUTTO
Choctaw Nation

November was a busy month for construction crews in the Choctaw Nation.

The month saw three ribbon cuttings and a Topping Out Ceremony, along with various projects advancing through all stages of construction.

The month started with a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony in Antlers on Nov. 1. Tribal members toured the inside of the new Wellness Center.

The Wellness Center is located at 304 SW O St. A sign on the front of the building says “Chahta Achukmaka,” which is Choctaw for “Choctaw Wellness.”

Chief Gary Batton addressed the audience about how important the new Wellness Center is.

“It’s all about wellness and prevention, and so what we’re trying to do is get people healthy before they have diabetes and before they have cardiovascular diseases. That is the reason why this is so important in Pushmataha County,” Chief Batton said.

District 7 Councilman Jack Austin Sr., whose district includes Antlers, said anticipation for the opening of the Wellness Center has been high among District 7 tribal members.

“They’re excited about it. We have a walking trail and that’s used very well. I know they are going to use this,” Austin said.

A couple days later, on Nov. 3, there was a ribbon cutting for another Wellness Center, this time in Stigler. The ceremony was held at 2208 E. Main St., Unit B.

While those attending the ribbon cutting had to dodge puddles left from overnight storms, the excitement of residents in Stigler could not be dampened.

“Thank you so much for coming out today,” Chief Batton said to the crowd. “It’s a blessing to have facilities like the one here. We set a vision quite some time ago of achieving healthy, successful and productive lifestyles for a proud Nation of Choctaws,” continued Chief Batton.

The crowd erupted with applause when Chief Batton

mentioned the new campus in Stigler was the 13th Wellness Center the Choctaw Nation has built in southeast Oklahoma.

Chief Batton said he could remember when they built the first one.

When speaking about the new Wellness Center, District 5 Councilman Ron Perry had baseball on his mind as the Chicago Cubs won the World Series the night before the ribbon cutting.

“It reminds me of a movie I once saw, an old baseball movie. They said, ‘If you build it, they will come.’ They built it for us. All we have to do is come use it.”

Chief Batton mentioned the Wellness Center was an investment.

“I think that it’s great that this council has invested in our health and is truly living out our vision of trying to make lives better for tribal members,” Chief Batton said.

The Stigler ribbon cutting was the first event to be livestreamed on the Choctaw Nation Facebook page.

Each Wellness Center is housed in a 9,700-square-foot structure that has a half court for basketball, a gym, and an indoor walking track.

The centers also have cardio and strength training machines, multi-function rooms for fitness classes, as well as lockers and shower facilities.

The Wellness Centers have trained staff on hand to assist with free personal training programs, nutritional counseling, and comprehensive fitness assessments.

The following week, on Nov. 8, the third Ribbon Cutting Ceremony of the month was held in Hugo at the new Choctaw Community Center located at 1306 W. Victor St.

While the ribbon was cut in front of the building, most of the ceremony was held indoors due to the threat of rainstorms and it was no hardship for the ceremony to be moved inside.

The newest Choctaw Community Center features a polished wood-like tile flooring and an elevated stage area.

The stage is backed by natural rock, with overhead beams, and

tract lighting.

The new center is equipped to hold a variety of activities and features a large assembly space. The fluorescent lighting, square and flush against the vaulted ceiling, is tiled to give a traditional diamondback appearance.

The facility includes an additional conference room, Tribal Council offices, and a full-scale commercial kitchen.

Chief Batton said, “It is always a great day when we can come together and have an opportunity like this for our senior citizens.”

District 8 Councilman Perry Thompson stood at the podium and as he held his young granddaughter in his arms, he spoke about how the new Community Center will serve generations to come.

He also thanked his fellow Councilmembers for supporting the facility that was needed due to the growing numbers of tribal members.

“We’re proud of the new building. We were in that little building a long time. It had been added onto twice. It was getting too small for us,” Councilman Perry said.

The new Choctaw Community Center in Hugo is a 10,274-square-foot building and is built on 3.43 acres of the Hugo campus.

It is located on the north side of U.S. Route 70 and is east of the Choctaw Nation Tribal Services facility.

The last event at the old Community Center was the Thanksgiving Dinner held Nov. 9.

The new Hugo Choctaw Community Center opened to tribal members on Nov. 14.

During his speech at the Ribbon Cutting for the Hugo Community Center, Chief Batton stated there were more than 40 major Choctaw Nation construction projects in southeast Oklahoma.

A Topping Out Ceremony was



Photos by

District 7 Councilman Jack Austin. cuts the ribbon at the new Antlers Wellness Center on Nov. 1. The Wellness Center was one of three Ribbon Cutting Ceremonies in November. Choctaw Nation currently has more than 40 major construction projects in southeast Oklahoma.

in Durant is expected to open the first part of 2017.

The clinic is located at 1801 Chukka Hina, which is north of the Choctaw Casino. The new road, Chukka Hina, will be the main entrance to the clinic and the new tribal headquarters, which is a separate campus from the clinic. It is located off Big Lots Parkway, northwest of the Choctaw Community Center.

The Choctaw Nation Durant Regional Medical Clinic is a two-story, 143,000-square-foot facility on a 20 acre campus.

Equipment in the new clinic includes a state-of-the-art MRI machine, which will allow patients to have tests performed locally instead of having to travel to Tali hina, or go outside the tribal healthcare system.

Additional healthcare services the clinic will provide include primary care, encompassing pediatrics, geriatrics, podiatry, WIC and other specialty care.

Patients will be served with dental, audiology, eye, lab and radiology services, and even behavioral health. Employee health also will be onsite.

The neighboring Health Administration, located at 1803 Chukka Hina, will provide additional medical offices such as Choctaw Nation Health Services Administration, WIC, Patient Relations, Public Health Nursing, and Healthy Aging, as well as education and meeting rooms.

The complex will include a 17,000-square-foot Health Administration building and a 10,000-square-foot Facilities Maintenance building.

The exterior of the new clinic will feature the Choctaw Blend brick on the building’s south side. The distinctive brick was created exclusively for the clinic by the ACME brick company of Fort Smith, Arkansas.

The new multi-hued red brick will be made available from ACME to the public for purchase once the clinic opens.

According to Senior Project Manager Joe Bray, there has been an emphasis placed on Choctaw art and painting, which will be displayed prominently throughout the clinic.

Construction has begun, Bray

said on a 12-foot-tall sculpture of a Choctaw elder, his daughter, and two grandchildren playing with hoops with Choctaw symbols on them.

The piece will stand at the entry to the clinic.

Also at the entrance, along the north wall, a commissioned art glass piece will be displayed depicting the history of the Choctaw Health system.

When visitors enter the main lobby from the east side of the building, they will encounter a grand staircase opposite the elevators, bordered on one side by a wall of glass to the ceiling. Among views from the setting will be that of the new Choctaw Nation Headquarters going up next door.

A unique feature of the glass wall that follows the grand staircase from the lobby to the second floor is newly developed Sage Glass. Requiring a joint effort by both the glass installers and electricians to be set into place, the special glass panels have electric sensors that will tint based on the amount of sunlight coming in from the outside.

The Atoka Head Start is approximately 44 percent complete and should be finished the winter of 2017.

The Choctaw Casino and Resort in Grant recently broke ground in August and is expected to be completed next summer.

The Choctaw Travel Plaza in Heavener is halfway to its finished Phase One completion date.

The Choctaw Travel Center in Hugo is expected to be complete in February 2017.

The Choctaw Travel Plaza in Stigler is scheduled to be completed the Summer of 2017.

The Tali hina Community Center is 90 percent complete and the Wright City Head Start is scheduled to be complete in late Spring 2017.

All completion dates are estimates and depend on the weather.

During the November Tribal Council meeting on Nov. 12, District 2 Councilman Tony Ward said the majority of the construction projects currently underway are coming in under budget and on schedule.

Choctaw Member Garners First Mark Costello Spirit Award

By CHARLES CLARK
Choctaw Nation

It takes a lot to stand out from a crowd of exceptional professionals under age 30 from across the state. But, 296 young Oklahomans did just that this year, and were recognized by iON Oklahoma magazine at the 2016 NextGen Under 30 Awards Dinner and Ceremony on Nov. 18 in Oklahoma City.

Four of those recipients are Choctaw, with one receiving an additional honor, presented for the first time—the Mark Costello Spirit Award.

Ta’Na Alexander, NextGen award-winner in the Science, Technology, and Engineering category, also was named recipient of the first Mark Costello Spirit Award.

“I thought, ‘Wow! To be chosen for this’,” Alexander said, “It just humbled me. I was very touched.”

The family of the late Oklahoma Labor Commissioner Mark Costello created the award and made the selections based on achievements and potential of the individuals. Alexander is a student and works in the area of cardiovascular disease research. She is the daughter of businesswoman and former actress Nuchi Nashoba. Both are members of the Choctaw Code Talkers Association. Originally from the small town of Dibble, Alexander traveled extensively as a child.

“I will not be limited when it comes to impacting the lives of others,” Alexander stated. “I am currently studying biomedical sciences and working part-time as a



Ta’Na Alexander

research laboratory technician. It allows me to see the amount of strength you have to have in order to fight for the unknown, and every day have your mind and heart in the right place.”

It is a platform she will strive to continue while earning her degree at Oklahoma

City University.

She has already accumulated a variety of certifications, an associate of science degree from Oklahoma City Community College, and has plans to apply at the University of Oklahoma to seek a graduate degree in International Business.

“An important thing for me is to help others identify with the importance of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematic (STEM) Education to improve the diversity of understanding how STEM and scientific policy relate to the general public, and what it can do for the future of our great state. Possibilities are endless, and I’m very excited for the future.”



The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Schedule of Revenues and Expenditures (Unaudited) For the Twelve Months Ended September 30, 2016			
	Tribal Government	Choctaw Businesses	Total
Revenues	292,005,121	1,114,566,681	1,547,856,419
Expenditures			
General Government	79,369,881	-	79,369,881
Health Expenditures	94,631,510	-	94,631,510
Education Expenditures	31,398,819	-	31,398,819
Human Expenditures	43,876,011	-	43,876,011
Community Expenditures	31,914,250	-	31,914,250
Cultural Expenditures	10,818,589	-	10,818,589
Legislature Expenditures	-	-	-
Judiciary Expenditures	864,817	-	864,817
Internal Service Expenses	53,493,449	-	53,493,449
Business Expenses	-	725,485,561	725,485,561
Total Expenditures	346,367,326	725,485,561	1,071,852,887
Transfers	363,235,894	(363,235,894)	-
Increase in Net Assets	(54,362,205)	389,081,120	334,718,915
Beginning Net Assets	1,703,439,877	815,878,496	2,519,318,374
Ending Net Assets	1,649,077,673	1,204,959,616	2,854,037,289
The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Schedule of Net Assets (Unaudited) September 30, 2016			
	Tribal Government	Choctaw Businesses	Total
Cash and Investments	1,639,434,267	141,007,073	1,780,441,340
Receivables	142,764,851	27,627,616	170,392,467
Inventory	4,079,420	16,037,314	20,116,734
Prepaid Expenses	5,387,946	3,879,662	9,267,608
Other Assets	-	-	-
Fixed Assets	515,375,492	721,448,940	1,236,824,432
Less Payables	(292,068,429)	(70,936,863)	(363,005,292)
Net Assets	2,014,973,547	839,063,742	2,854,037,289

Lester Brings Recorded History to Life with Art

By **TINA FIRQUAIN**
Choctaw Nation

An artist can be born anywhere and get their motivation and inspiration from many places. Gwen Coleman Lester is a God-loving, family woman and a Choctaw artist who has followed her passion from a very young age. “I can never remember a time when I didn’t draw,” Lester said. Her parents took her to many museums, especially around Washington D.C., because she had a sister that lived in the area. Lester was always fascinated by the artwork she saw. Lester believes the time that stuck with her the most and began to motivate her to create

Choctaw art was when her parents took her to the Philbrook in Tulsa to an Indian art exhibit. “I went to every piece in that exhibit and looked. They had the name of the piece, the artist and their tribal affiliation.” She continued, “And in that whole show, which was totally beautiful, there was not one Choctaw artist.” She remembers that day clearly and it has been with her for some time. “I think that was a big influence right there,” she claimed. Since that moment, Lester has gone on to do many things to represent Choctaw culture in her art. She studied graphic design at Oklahoma State University Tech in Okmulgee then worked towards her bachelors at South-

western Oklahoma State University after realizing she needed a bachelors degree to get further in the corporate world. Lester has won many awards in various categories and from many different shows. She appreciates the heritage awards they received, not only from the Choctaw Nation, but from the Five Civilized Tribes Museum as well. “It always makes me feel like I’m hitting that target right there,” she said. She realizes she could choose other subjects, but according to Lester, she feels it’s important for her to do Choctaw art, to help represent the nation. Lester was commissioned to create two pieces for the Durant casino. She created a piece with the Lighthorseman as the theme and the other is about the Trail of Tears. The first time the Choctaw Nation asked if she would do the Choctaw Removal theme she said, “I was reluctant to do it because I thought, ‘oh that’s too sad, I can’t really do that,’ but then the thing that I think about more is that we are still here.” When she was younger and throughout her life, Lester’s father would tell her to be proud of her heritage and it has carried over into all of her work. “I think it’s a lot of pride in our culture that show out in my paintings I think. A lot of pride in who we are as a people,” she said. Lester continued talking about what she wants people

to take away from looking at her pieces, “We are strong individuals with that survivor mentality and we’re not only surviving, but thriving I think. The Choctaws are people of strong character. I think that’s what I hope they can take away from these paintings.” Lester tries to be historically accurate and conducts research over her subjects. She reads about the same subject from different perspectives and finds it amazing how the same story can be so different. She’s done reading on subjects that are hard to find extensive information on. She’s read treaties and found information on what types of clothing soldiers wore so her art resembles history. She gets most of her ideas from looking at Choctaw history and Choctaw culture. Lester feels like she’s got a lot more work to do. “I feel like the older I get, the more I feel like I need to work faster. I’ve got so many more subjects I want to cover,” she stated. While her artwork and subjects may seem like a big variety of different art, Lester believes all her work is Choctaw inspired and fall into the large category that is “Choctaw Art.” Lester thanks God for giving her art and said, “I feel like that is my gift, everyone has a gift they say and this is mine. I’m pretty grateful for it.”

Four of Five

Featured Artists at the Choctaw Casino Resort in Durant



Lester works on her Trail of Tears piece and gives faces to the ones who made the journey.



Photos by Deidre Elrod

Gwen Coleman Lester sits in her studio surrounded by her art. Her style varies for each piece and goes from using Choctaw words in some to giving others a myriad of colors.

A Boy with a Special Heart

cont'd from page 1

The whole family was ecstatic about his decision; his father recalled doing a fist pump. Connor finds everything that happened at Pearl Harbor and the history of it very “cool.” The Fraziers visited Hawaii Oct. 18-24, 2016, but visiting Pearl Harbor wasn’t the only thing on the schedule for Connor and his family while they were in what his father called a “wonderland.”



Photo Provided

Connor basks in the sun while visiting the Battleship Missouri Memorial. This was one of many memorials he visited as part of his wish.

They visited multiple museums, took paddle board lessons, had a tour of the Dole Pineapple Plantation, and were guests at Chief Sielu’s Luau at Sea Life Park. Rachel, Jill, and the foundation took care of all the logistics. The family only had to enjoy their time together. During their trip, the family met other families who were having wishes granted. Before the end of the Chief’s Luau, Connor and other kids with conditions went on stage with the chief and were given gifts for the tree of life and blessings for a long life. Connor had a chance to meet children from New York, North Texas, Utah, and even Tulsa. “We talked about why they wanted to come to Hawaii, their conditions, all their wishes, and talked about what they were going to do,” said Connor. He continued, “It was really cool to see other kids from Make-A-Wish there and it was cool to see somebody from Oklahoma.” Connor can tell you stories about chickens, Tuskegee Airmen, and bullet holes. Although it was a trip for fun, he found that he learned a lot. Since his return from wonderland, Connor has decided to fundraise money to donate to Make-A-Wish. Nobody was really surprised that Connor wanted to help other children’s wishes come true. “We all agree that his wish coming true has had a profound positive impact on Connor and his health,” said Michele. This year is the first year that Connor has been able to

play sports and he couldn’t be happier. His mother knows that he hates being made to feel different from other kids and her heart was broken not being able to do more for her son. Connor sees his family do everything they can for him, and together they have all made the best of every situation. His sister said, “It’s great to see him do everything he’s always wanted to do.” She continued, “My brother inspires me every single day. He’s one of my best friends.” Connor may have a different definition of normal, but he has hope, strength, and most importantly joy because of the people in his life. He also realizes that some kids may not have the same luxury and to them and others “I would say, hope for the best and just see what turns out,” Connor ended his conversation showing his heart for others. To help Connor aid other children with their wishes you can make a donation at Oklahoma.wish.org.



FALL AWARDING PERIOD BEGINS DECEMBER 1, 2016 - APRIL 1, 2017

ONLINE SUBMISSIONS WILL BE AVAILABLE AFTER 12/1/2016 AT WWW.STAR.CHOCTAWNATION.COM

Follow Us On 



Reserve your 2017 Labor Day RV Site

In order to reserve an RV site with electric and water hookups for the 2017 Labor Day Festival, please mail the reservation request form below **no earlier than January 2, 2017**. RV sites will be reserved on a lottery style basis.

Please include a copy of your **CDIB card only**. Make sure you include the **Year, Make, Model, length and number of slide outs** of your RV/camper.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND ANY MONEY AT THIS TIME.

If your name is drawn, you will be notified by mail. At that time you will send in your cashier's check or money order in the amount of \$75.00. **NO PERSONAL CHECKS WILL BE ACCEPTED**

No phone reservations will be accepted.

Please only send one reservation per family. We will do our best to respect the requests for preferred RV sites; however, we cannot guarantee you will get the pad number requested.

Please watch the Biskinik newspaper for future articles or changes in RV Reservations

2017 RV Space Reservation

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Daytime Phone Number _____

CELL Phone Number _____

Email Address where you can be contacted _____

RV Camper description: Make: _____ Model _____


Length of RV/Travel Trailer: _____ **(this is very important)**

Number of slide-outs _____ Width of slide-outs _____


No reservations will be accepted prior to January 2, 2017

Please return to:


**Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
Attn: Janita Jeffreys
RV Reservations
2101 West Arkansas Street
Durant, OK 74701**



RESEARCH STUDY



Seeking Native American youth for a study on health and fitness



Choctaw Nation and the University of Oklahoma Department of Pediatrics are studying the health and fitness of Native American youth, and the role of exercise.

Who:	Healthy, normal weight, Native American youth 11 to 21 years old. We need boys and girls of all fitness levels that are either active in exercise or not active.
What:	Two visits for the following tests: physical exam, fasting blood draw, bicycle fitness test, and body composition test. One week of wearing a Fitbit activity monitor.
Compensation:	Participants will receive compensation for their time.
Contact:	For more information, contact Mary Ayn Tullier at 800-349-7026 ext. 6593 or matullier@cnhsa.com .

Thanksgiving Community Dinners 2016



Chief Gary Batton visits with Shar-ree LeFlore and Gary Anderson at the Coalgate Thanksgiving Dinner.



Two-year-old Elijah Sennett of McAlester puts on a serious face at the McAlester Thanksgiving Dinner.



Olivia and Richard Makke play Hide and Seek with a door prize ticket at the Durant Community Thanksgiving Dinner held at the Choctaw Casino Event Center.



Joyce Tran from Sawyer helps serve community members during Hugo's Thanksgiving Dinner.



District 5 Councilman Ron Perry speaks at the Thanksgiving Dinner in Stigler.



Destin Habrock strikes a pose while his grandfather Percy Harjo keeps a tight reign at the Antlers Thanksgiving Dinner.



Pricilla Standridge and her son Tanner Standridge from Durant enjoy the Thanksgiving Dinner at the Event Center on Tuesday, Nov. 8.



The smiling faces of Melissa McGee and Amy Richards at the registration table greeted people at the Idabel Thanksgiving Dinner on Thursday, Nov. 17.



District 7 Councilman Jack Austin Sr. welcomes Betty and Cyrus Battiest to the Thanksgiving lunch at Wright City.



Kaydence Kyle Tiffie is all dressed up for Thanksgiving with her mom, Haley Tiffie, at the Poteau Thanksgiving Dinner on Thursday, Nov. 17.



Before the meal, the District 2 singers sang a few songs to get the crowd in the spirit of the holidays.



Rebeca Loman, Clare Battie, Victor Eyachabbe, and Howard Loman take a break from the pecan pie dessert to say hello during the Antlers Thanksgiving Dinner on Wednesday, Nov. 16.



Billie White got a flu shot while at the Wilburton Thanksgiving Dinner on Wednesday, Nov. 9.



District 11 Councilman Bob Pate and Johnnie Sue Kemp are all smiles at the McAlester Thanksgiving Dinner on Sunday, Nov. 20.



Eddie Barker sits next to his wife of 58 years, Juanita at the Crowder Thanksgiving Dinner. Eddie wears the Veterans hat he received earlier in the month with pride. Despite the warm weather he brought his new Veterans jacket in case anyone wanted to see it.



Ollie Russell and Elmer Burge enjoy the Thanksgiving Dinner at the Choctaw Community Center in Stigler on Wednesday, Nov. 16.



Students from the Atoka Head Start joined the community for the Thanksgiving Dinner on Wednesday, Nov. 9.



District 7 Councilman Jack Austin laughs and visits with Dolly Batton, Myrtle Hopper and Dee Curry before the Tvshka Homma Thanksgiving Dinner began on Friday, Nov. 4.



Joseph Homer of Hartshorne (center) was at the Thanksgiving Dinner in McAlester with his sisters, Joy Fults, also of Hartshorne (left) and Marian Benson of McAlester (right).



District 4 Junior Miss Madison Cossey visits with a table full of guests at the Poteau Thanksgiving Dinner on Thursday, Nov. 17.



Charlotte Shawley and her mom, Chandl, both from McAlester, enjoy the Thanksgiving Dinner in McAlester. Charlotte is two years old.



District 8 Councilman Perry Thompson speaks to the lunchtime crowd at the Hugo Thanksgiving Dinner on Wednesday, Nov. 9.



Mike Melton holds Miken Melton while they visit with people at the Tvshka Homma Thanksgiving Dinner held on Friday, Nov. 4.



Choctaw families from Talihina fill the high school cafeteria for the Thanksgiving Dinner on Thursday, Nov. 17. A new community center is under construction in Talihina.



Pat Wallace watches as Kimryn tries a bite of the Thanksgiving Dinner served at the Wright City Choctaw Community Center on Thursday, Nov. 17.



Doris Coley (eaten), District 6 Councilman Joe Coley, Andrew James and Bobby Coley visit before lunch is ready at the Wilburton Thanksgiving Dinner on Wednesday, Nov. 9.



Rose Ann Nobles won the turkey door prize at the Tvshka Homma dinner. Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. delivered her prize.



From left) Peggy Nichols, Tiana Walton and Ron Nichols wait for dinner to be served at Tvshka Homma. Ron displayed beadwork pieces he had made.



Volunteers helped out in the kitchen and prepared plates for other volunteers to deliver to community members' tables at the Spiro Thanksgiving Dinner held Wednesday, Nov. 9.



Edith McMinn celebrated her 93rd birthday at the Thanksgiving dinner in Stigler on Wednesday, Nov. 16.



The Choctaw Community Center in Smithville hosted a large gathering for the Thanksgiving Dinner on Wednesday, Nov. 16.



Chief Gary Batton wraps up a busy week Friday Nov. 18, at the Bethel/Battiest Choctaw Community Center's Thanksgiving Dinner. Chief Batton always makes time to speak to tribal members, such as Mary Bohanan.



The Seyler family, Curtis, Travis, Tracy, Jennifer and Stephanie, wait to be served at the Poteau Thanksgiving Dinner held Thursday, Nov. 17. There were over 300 people at the dinner.



Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. and Joey Tom know laughter helps with digestion after a big meal like the Bethel/Battiest Choctaw Community Center's Thanksgiving Dinner Nov. 18.



District 3 Councilman Kenny Bryant is pictured with door prize winner Deborah Winship at the Smithville Thanksgiving Dinner held Wednesday, Nov. 16.



Chuck Holt and Rosa Lee Ramirez smile for the camera at the Wright City Thanksgiving Dinner held Thursday, Nov. 17.



Youth Advisory Board member Kendall Watts holds the tray as YAB member Angela Everly serves Eddie and Juanita Barker their Thanksgiving meals. The Thanksgiving Dinner was held at the Crowder Choctaw Nation Community Center.



District 2 Councilman Tony Ward bows his head as Henry Battiest blesses the food for the Thanksgiving Dinner at the Broken Bow Choctaw Community Center. The dinner was held on Monday, Nov. 14.



Sisters Lossie Grant from Hugo and Gracie Turner from Speer wait for the start of the Thanksgiving Dinner in Hugo.



Little Miss Choctaw Nation Isabella Muncy says hello to Ronnie and Frances Woodruff during the Thanksgiving Dinner at Wilburton. The dinner was held on Wednesday, Nov. 9.



Leola Lester holds her great-granddaughter, Kylah Deford at the McAlester Thanksgiving Dinner.



Walter Phelps carried Asher Hill over to visit with District 12 Councilman James Frazier at the Crowder Thanksgiving Dinner.



Sherman Ward and District 3 Councilman Kenny Bryant discuss Talihina's next football game at the Thanksgiving Dinner on Thursday, Nov. 17 at the Talihina High School cafeteria.



Lylalynn Anderson, Bob Holt, Charlotte Holt, Dana Perry, Ben Perry and Mary Jane Nichter gather for a photo with District 6 Councilman Joe Coley during the lunch festivities at Wilburton on Wednesday, Nov. 9.



District 1 Councilman Thomas Williston greets a table full of people at the Idabel Thanksgiving Dinner on Thursday, Nov. 17.



Visiting in the doorway at the Bethel/Battiest Choctaw Community Center's Thanksgiving Dinner on Friday, Nov. 18 are from left) District 2 Councilman Tony Ward, Emerson Wilson and Con Cusher.



Gina Nassar took the opportunity to speak with District 10 Councilman Anthony Dillard at the Thanksgiving Dinner in Atoka.



Choctaw Nation employees worked alongside employees from the Choctaw Casino-Durant to plate food assembly line style. Choctaw Nation and Choctaw Casino employees also worked together to serve members of the community who came to the Event Center for the Thanksgiving Dinner on Tuesday, Nov. 8.



From left) Topsy Williams, Virginia Terrell and Mary Kelly enjoy the food and friendship at the Poteau Thanksgiving Dinner on Thursday, Nov. 17.



Maelycia Garcia and Hilo Ha run off energy at the Choctaw Casino Event Center in Durant before the Thanksgiving Dinner is served.



District 7 Councilman Jack Austin makes a few announcements before the beginning of the Antlers Thanksgiving Dinner on Wednesday, Nov. 16.



Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr., District 4 Councilman Delton Cox, Chief Gary Batton, and District 5 Councilman Ron Perry enjoy their Thanksgiving Dinner at the Spiro Community Center on Wednesday, Nov. 9.

Photos by Charles D. Clark, Deidre Elrod, Karen Jacobs, Lisa Reed, Ronni Pierce, Shelia Kirven, Stacy Hutto, Tina Firquain, and Waddel Hern.

Veterans Day Ceremony

Veterans Honored at Tvshka Homma on Veterans Day

By STACY HUTTO
Choctaw Nation

Chairs filled the Capitol lawn in Tvshka Homma on Nov. 11 as Choctaw Nation honored veterans during the Choctaw Veterans Day Ceremony.

Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. opened the ceremony with a Welcome Address. The Chaplain for the Choctaw Tribal Council, District 6 Councilman Joe Coley, gave the Invocation.

The Choctaw Nation Color Guard posted the colors and Miss Choctaw Nation Karen Ann Crosby sang the National Anthem.

Miss Choctaw Nation was joined by fellow royalty Miss Junior Choctaw Nation Savannah Herndon and Little Miss Choctaw Nation Isabella Muncy in signing “The Lord’s Prayer.”

Surrounded by memorials bearing the names of Choctaw Warriors killed in action while defending our

nation in wartime, Chief Gary Batton spoke about the day’s events and the crowd that covered the lawn.

“It is great to see our tribal members come out to support our veterans. They’re the ones who gave us the ability to assemble, the reason we just went through an election, the reason we have a democracy,” Chief Batton said.

“I look at Sgt. Chris Dill, who served in our military and our Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. and I’m so humbled at the sacrifice they’ve given to God and to country,” continued Chief Batton.

While speaking on how he felt to be speaking on behalf of veterans, retired Sgt. Chris Dill said, “I appreciate Chief Gary Batton, Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. and the Choctaw Nation for all they do to support the veterans.”

During an interview with BiskinikTV hosts Candace Perkins and Seth Fairchild,

Dill spoke from the heart.

“To me, as a veteran I’m standing here talking to you. In front of us, behind the camera, is a Korean War monument. The fifth name down is Carl Dill, my dad’s brother,” Dill said. “I never met Uncle Carl. I’ve heard the stories. To me, it’s all about doing your part and Uncle Carl did his part. It was my job to do my part. Now it’s the next person’s time to do their part. If everybody does their part then America will be what America should be.”

Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. spoke about what Veterans Day means to him.

“I think for me, it means a day of coming together and honoring our veterans. All those who have served, current and past veterans. I was just thinking when Chris was speaking, about the words he spoke and just how emotional those words were as well as inspirational. I think that’s what is pro-

vided to our veterans today. I think it was very uplifting. It reminds me of those folks I served with and was proud to serve with. It also makes me proud of our leadership and what they’ve dedicated—the resources to support and advocate for our veterans,” Assistant Chief Austin said.

Chahta Foundation Scholarship Specialist Scott Wesley presented the Heart of the Warrior Scholarship to Mackenzie Bay.

Terry Scroggins, who is a Choctaw veteran, started the Heart of the Warrior Scholarship. The scholarship is awarded to an individual affected by the Iraq/Afghanistan War.

The Choctaw Veterans Day Ceremony ended with a 21-gun salute and “Taps.” Councilman Joe Coley gave the Benediction.

Veterans who attended the ceremony were given jackets and hats. Eddie Barker, a Choctaw veteran, proudly wore his hat at

the Thanksgiving Dinner in Crowder on Nov. 20. Despite the warm weather he had his jacket with him. He said he brought it with him in case someone wanted to see it.

The Choctaw Veterans Advocacy Department helps Choctaw veterans receive benefits and services that are on par with other veterans and helps ensure veterans do not encounter barriers or impediments in their attempts to access services.

They also serve Choctaw veterans by assisting with eligibilty and entitlements of

veterans and their dependents.

Veterans Advocacy assists veterans by also contacting the appropriate VA service provider in their area.

For more information on services provided by Veterans Advocacy, please contact Veterans Advocacy Director Brent Oakes at (800) 522-6170 ext. 2163, or by email at boakes@ChoctawNation.com.

The November episode of BiskinikTV can be found on the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma’s YouTube page.



A bugler with the Choctaw Color Guard brought the ceremony to a close as he played “Taps.”



The Veterans Day Ceremony ends with the Choctaw Color Guard giving a 21-Gun salute.



Stephen McGilberry spends a few moments to read the names of the fallen listed on the Korea Memorial in Tvshka Homma. Stephen went to school at Jones Academy with three of the men listed: Amos Morris, Isaac and Buster McCurtain. Stephen is 95 years young and served during World War II and Korea.



The ceremony begins with a posting of the Colors, the Pledge of Al-
legiance and the National Anthem.

Native November



Choctaw Nation employees participated in Rock Your Mocs, which was held the week of November 13-19.



Durant Seniors were encouraged to wear traditional clothing on Nov. 30. A total of 13 seniors showed up at the Durant Community Center in their traditional Choctaw wear.

Treat Our Elders with the Honor & Respect They Deserve

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
Victims Services - Elder Advocacy
If you suspect elder abuse or neglect call
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
Victims Services Elder Advocacy
1-800-326-8304 or 1-877-285-6833
Adult Protective Services Statewide Helpline
1-800-522-3511
Choctaw... growing with pride, hope, and success!



Seniors at the Durant Choctaw Community Center enjoy a traditional Choctaw meal on Nov. 30. The meal consisted of banaha, tanchi labona, beans and pork.



Annie Betsey holds up a banaha that is ready to be boiled. Annie, along with Durant Community Center cook Betty Wade, Russell Strayhorn and Jo Lee Lewis prepared the traditional meal for Durant seniors.



LaDonna Dry holds her traditional Choctaw meal on Nov. 30. The meal was prepared by kitchen staff at the Durant Community Center.

Photos by Kendra Germany, Mary Williams and Vonna Loper