

“My time as Chief has been the greatest adventure of my life”
- Greg Pyle



Gregory E. Pyle 1949-2019

Nation mourns passing of Chief Pyle

By Kellie Matherly and Shelia Kirven

A celebration of life for former Choctaw Chief Gregory (Greg) Eli Pyle was held at the Choctaw Nation Event Center on Saturday, November 2, 2019 at 10:00 a.m. in Durant. People came from all over the Choctaw Nation, the state of Oklahoma and beyond to pay tribute to their beloved leader and friend. Choctaw Princesses, past and present, formed a receiving line in the entryway to greet guests as they made their way through displays of floral arrangements and photo collages of Chief Pyle prior to the service.

Following the Posting of the Colors by the Choctaw Nation Color Guard, Brad Joe sang “The Lord’s Prayer” in Choctaw while the Choctaw Princesses performed the song in sign language. Layne Heitz then read the official obituary, and Logan Cates offered the opening prayer. An ensemble of 85 elders gathered on stage to perform Choctaw hymns 53 and 112. Many guests in the crowd sang along.

Chickasaw Governor and close friend Bill Anoatubby gave the first of three eulogies. “His work will have a positive impact on the Choctaw people and Native Americans across this country for generations to come,” Anoatubby said of Chief Pyle’s leadership ability. “He worked tirelessly to ensure the federal government lived up to its responsibilities to Choctaws and other Native Americans.”

“His work will have a positive impact on the Choctaw people and Native Americans across this country for generations to come.”

– Bill Anoatubby

Anoatubby ended his tribute by saying, “I truly miss him. I’ll miss him for the rest of my life...Greg Pyle had his priorities right. Faith, family, his people and his country. I’m so fortunate to have been his friend.”

Chief Pyle’s family requested that all attendees join together to sing the first verse of “Amazing Grace” before the family’s pastor, Jared Hyatt, gave the second eulogy. Hyatt spoke mainly of the mission work he has done with Chief Pyle, including time they spent in Nicaragua. Hyatt also shared stories of Chief Pyle’s generosity and selflessness, including one instance where he purchased beds for sick children in a hospital in Nicaragua when there weren’t enough. Hyatt read from Philippians 2: 3-8 and closed by saying, “Greg was a leader. He was a leader because he loved and served.”

The final eulogy was given by Chief Gary Batton, who spoke of Chief Pyle as a mentor and a friend. Batton, who served under Pyle as Assistant Chief, told stories that highlighted Pyle’s tremendous sense of humor and warmth of spirit.

Following an emotional pause, Batton said, “He was more than just a friend. I call people like that a true friend...He would come up to you and say the kindest and warmest things to you that would make your day better. No matter what your day was like, he just had a way to make it better.”

Batton went on to emphasize many of Chief Pyle’s accomplishments in office and spoke directly to Pyle’s family, promising to help with any outstanding needs they have during their time of mourning. He thanked Pyle’s wife Patti and children Eric and Andrea for their sacrifices in sharing him with the Choctaw Nation and the world.

Batton’s eulogy was followed by a slide show of pictures from Chief Pyle’s childhood through his retirement. Many of the photos illustrated the close relationship Pyle had with his friends and family. Others showed Pyle’s humor and good-naturedness.



Photos by Christian Toews and file photo

From left: Chief Gary Batton delivers one of the eulogies during the memorial service held for Chief Pyle. Top right: Chief Pyle at an event at Tvshka Homma. Chickasaw Governor Bill Anoatubby delivers a eulogy during the memorial service. Law enforcement salute during the ceremony.

Chaplain Olin Williams offered the closing prayer in Choctaw and English. Officers from the Choctaw Nation Color Guard then presented the Pyle family with the American flag that covered Chief Pyle’s casket. Finally, Chief Batton signaled the Retrieval of the Colors, which was followed by the departure of Chief Pyle’s casket, carried by pall bearers Sidney Lewis, Edward McCurry, Fred Booth, Lyndol Wren, Donald Henson, Frank A. Deal, Dock Dill and James Dry. Honorary pall bearers included David Harmon, Suzanne Heard, Newton Caldwell, Andy Feco, Bill Blankenship and Joe Christie.

Jeanne Porter worked in the office of Chief Pyle from his days as Assistant Chief and until his retirement in 2016. When asked to describe his lasting legacy, she said, “I think for those of us who knew Chief Pyle well, his legacy to us would be to live your life to the fullest. Work hard but don’t forget to play and love those around you. Be kind always, help those who cannot help themselves. Love God and be thankful for the blessings in your life.”

Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. summed up Pyle’s legacy as, “Always striving to achieve great outcomes for Choctaw people.” Austin said he will always remember how down to earth and genuine he was. He said he thinks Chief Pyle would want us to continue living out the Chahta spirit to provide opportunities for our tribal members while living out our values passed down from our ancestors.

When asked what memory stands out about Chief Pyle in his mind the most, Chief Batton said, “I think that was probably back in the early 90s. He pulled me aside and he said he wanted to talk to me...he said, ‘The future looks bright for you, and I want you to be over health care systems.’ I was probably 24-25 years old, and he was Assistant Chief at that time. For him to take the time with me to walk around and encourage me, to give me advice and to give me hope for what he saw in me was priceless for me.”

Chief Batton went on to say, “First, I want people to remember him as a great Chief, a great leader, a great statesman among all men, but also he was a great friend, not only to me but to everybody he met. He was always so caring, so compassionate, [he] put other people before himself.”

Batton signed a proclamation designating Nov. 2, 2019 as a National Day of Mourning across the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma in honor of former Chief Pyle. Flags of the Choctaw Nation will be displayed at half-staff for a period of 30 days from Oct. 26, 2019.

Lasting legacy

By Shelia Kirven

Gregory E. Pyle became active in tribal government when he was elected by popular vote, along with Chief Belvin, to the Agricultural Board to oversee the Choctaw Nation ranch at Tvshka Homma in 1975. He became Choctaw Nation Personnel Director in 1982 and was also appointed to the Arkansas Riverbed Board.

Pyle was appointed to be assistant chief in 1983, and served on many boards and committees, including an appointment to a task force created to reorganize the Bureau of Indian Affairs. He was reappointed two years later by former Secretary of Interior Bruce Babbitt, heading up several committees on the task force. He was also appointed to the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes and in 1986, was elected President of the Oklahoma Area Indian Health Board, as well as being a member of the National Indian Health Board for several terms.

Pyle became Chief of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, the third largest Indian Tribe in the United States, in 1997.

See Pyle, page 3



Photo illustration by Chris Jennings

Faith, Family, Culture

Faith, Family, Culture and Christmas



Chief Gary Batton

I can't believe another year has flown by and it is once again Christmastime. Christmas is truly the most wonderful time of the year. It is a chance for us to share our faith, family and culture. Some of my most cherished memories have been made during the time spent with loved ones during the holidays. I'm truly thankful to have the opportunity to make those memories and hope you all have a blessed Christmas with your families.

Christmas is a time to celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. I am so thankful for the blessings God has given me, and for the sacrifice Jesus made for all of us. He is the ultimate gift and true reason for the season.

The Christmas season also brings up memories of those we have lost. This year, we go into the holiday season with heavy hearts. We lost a great man, friend and leader, Chief Greg Pyle. I am so grateful for the time I got to spend with him, learning how not only to be a leader but also a better person. Please keep his wife Pat, children and grandchildren in your thoughts and prayers as they go into

the holidays.

I love seeing all the signs of Christmas popping up around us with the decorations, music, lights and the spirit of giving. It is so heartwarming to see so many Choctaw people giving back to their communities. The Choctaw Nation hosts numerous events in the spirit of Christmas. Our annual Christmas in the Park is happening again this year. The event kicks off Dec. 6 and runs through Dec. 28. The free event is held at our historic capitol grounds at Tvshka Homma. Every evening, beginning at sundown, the park comes to life with festive lights and décor. I invite all of you to come and check out this wonderful display. It is sure to get you in the Christmas spirit. Our community centers are also once again hosting their annual Christmas parties. These events are a great way for our communities to come together. Having a strong sense of community is essential in keeping our culture and bond strong. I encourage those of you who can to attend these events. There is a list of parties in this month's issue of the Biskinik.

The spirit of giving and the Chahta Spirit go hand in hand. That spirit, to help not only each other but everyone who is in need, has been instilled in the Choctaw people for generations. It truly is the embodiment of the Choctaw Spirit. The Choctaw Nation held numerous food and clothing drives during the month of November. It is so heartwarming to see our people coming together and helping their fellow man. The Bible says, "And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased," Hebrews 13:16 NIV.

On behalf of myself, my family and the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, I would like to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy new year!



Photo by Chris Jennings

Signs of Christmas are popping up all around us. Pictured is the Nativity scene set up in front of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Headquarters in Durant. Nativity scenes serve as a reminder of the true meaning of Christmas.



Pastor Olin Williams
Employee Chaplain

Modern society is a fast push and technological advancements create a human need to keep up. There are a lot of physical accomplishments, and yet the soul of man is still stressed. Sometimes God intervenes in life and creates a moment in time when people must take stock and reevaluate priorities. An unexpected illness, loss of a loved one, job loss, natural disasters and other situations come into our lives, and we learn to sit at the feet of Jesus and feed our soul with the Word of God. In the story of Martha and Mary, Martha is busy with preparations for her guests' accommodations. She was concerned with being of good service to her guest. Mary sat and gave attention to the guest, listening and learning. To know something requires time of concentration and devotion. Martha was "doing" and Mary was "being." When we focus on this story, we learn that it was not a problem of doing the wrong things but of doing things for the wrong motivations and perhaps of having minor things obscuring higher priorities.

Nation celebrates Veterans Day



Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.

We celebrated Veterans Day on Nov. 11, during our annual Choctaw Nation Veterans Day Ceremony at Tvshka Homma. Cold temperatures and gloomy weather didn't stop nearly 1,000 visitors from attending the event. I loved getting to visit with and personally thank so many Choctaw veterans for their service. I also loved getting to hear the message of our guest speaker, Brigadier General Jon Harrison of the Oklahoma National Guard. His reading of the Andrea C. Brett poem, "I am a Veteran", was a great reminder that veterans are everywhere. They are our grocers, schoolteachers, bus drivers and leaders and they all have stories that need to be heard.

This year marked the 100th Veterans Day celebrated in America. Originally known as Armistice Day, Veterans Day began in 1919, which was the first anniversary of the end of World War I. In 1926, Congress passed a resolution for the annual observance, and in 1938, it became a national holiday. Veterans Day is observed as a day to pay tribute to U.S. Veterans, past and present.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there were roughly 18 million living U.S. Veterans in 2018. The majority of those were 65 years of age or older, and served in the Vietnam or Gulf War. We are running out of time to thank many of our older veterans. The last living World War I Veteran, 110-year-old Frank Buckles, passed away in 2011. Only 389,292 of the 16 million Americans who served in World War II are alive in 2019, according to the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs. If you know a World War II Veteran, I encourage you to visit with them and listen to their stories while you still have the chance. It is up to us to keep their legacy and history alive.

On behalf of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, I would like to thank all the servicemen and women, who served their country with dignity. No matter what branch, division or capacity you served, your service is appreciated, and we understand the sacrifices you made for our country. As the son of a veteran and as a veteran myself, I know what it is like to miss holidays and other life milestones while stationed in faraway lands. If you are currently serving, know that we appreciate your sacrifice. Our freedom isn't guaranteed, and it is protected by our Armed Services. Yakoke from all of us here at the Choctaw Nation.

If you are a Choctaw Veteran and are looking for help with services, please contact our Veterans Advocacy Program. This program assists with Veterans Affairs claims, applications and referrals. These advocates are accredited through the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs, giving them quick access to much-needed information from the VA. More information on this program can be found at choctawnation.com or by calling 800-522-6170 ext. 2160.

Veterans honored at Tvshka Homma

By Kellie Matherly

On Nov. 11, the Choctaw Nation held its annual Veterans Day ceremony at Tvshka Homma. Despite rapidly falling temperatures and rainy weather, a large crowd gathered at the capitol grounds to celebrate those who served the United States in the armed forces.

Prior to the ceremony, Choctaw Nation staff was on hand to offer refreshments, help register tribal members to vote, and distribute special gifts to veterans. This year, veterans received black jackets with a gold Choctaw Nation seal on the front.

Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. welcomed the audience by explaining the purpose of the ceremony and praising the Chahta tvshka spirit of the veterans in the room. Councilwoman Jennifer Woods then gave the invocation, and the Choctaw Nation Color Guard posted the colors.

After the Talihina High School Marching Band played the National Anthem, Scott Wesley and the Choctaw Princesses performed "The Lord's Prayer." The band also played "Salute America's Finest," a medley containing the service song for each branch of the US military. During this performance, veterans in the audience stood when their service song was featured.

Chief Gary Batton and Council Speaker Thomas Williston each spoke of the sacrifices veterans and their families make to keep the US and its allies safe. Assistant Chief Austin then returned to the podium to introduce the guest speaker, Brigadier General Jon M. Harrison.

General Harrison served four years as an enlisted member of the Oklahoma Army National Guard before receiving a commission to the Reserve Officer Training Corps at Northeastern University in 1988. In 1997, he was appointed as an officer in the Oklahoma Army National Guard.



Photo by Deidra K. Elrod

The Choctaw Nation Color Guard presets the colors during the Veterans Day ceremony at Tvshka Homma.

General Harrison has served in a variety of aviation officer assignments.

"I can't truly think of anywhere else I'd rather celebrate Veterans Day," said Harrison as he opened his address. He then gave a brief history of Veterans Day, beginning with the end of World War I on November 11, 1918. Harrison also highlighted the stories of Choctaw tribal members who gave their lives on the battlefield. "It is important that we spend this day rejoicing in your service and remembering that, because of you, our veterans, this country still stands," he continued. "It is your stories, your experiences, that will inspire young people to serve in the United States military or to serve the Choctaw Nation in some other capacity." In closing, Harrison read the poem "I Am a Veteran" by Andrea C. Brett.

The Choctaw Nation Color Guard stepped outside for a 21-gun salute, and although the audience could not see this part of the ceremony, a sense of reverence was palpable in the building as the shots rang out and a lone bugler played "Taps" in the doorway.

Following the performance of "God Bless America" by the Talihina High School Marching Band and a benediction by Jennifer Woods, the crowd reconvened in the cafeteria for lunch.

Choctaw Nation Christmas Meals and Parties

December 3

Smithville
Children's Party 6 p.m.
Smithville Community Center

December 6

Coalgate
Children's Party 6 p.m.
Coalgate Community Center

Hugo

Children's Party 6 p.m.
Hugo Agriplex

December 7

Talihina
Children's Party 2 p.m.
Talihina Community Center

Wilburton

Children's Party 12 p.m.
Wilburton Community Center

December 8

Tuskahoma
Children's Party 2 p.m.
Tuskahoma Cafeteria

December 10

Buffalo Valley
Children's Party 6 p.m.
School Cafeteria

December 11

Atoka
Seniors Lunch 12 p.m.
Atoka Community Center

Battiest

Seniors Lunch 11 a.m.

Battiest Community Center
Coalgate
Seniors Lunch 12 p.m.
Coalgate Community Center

Durant
Seniors Lunch 11:30 a.m.
Durant Community Center

Spiro
Senior Lunch 11 a.m.
Spiro Community Center

Talihina
Community Lunch 11:30 a.m.
Talihina Community Center

Wright City
Community Lunch 12 p.m.
Wright City Community Center

December 12

Atoka
Children's Party 5 p.m.
Atoka Community Center

Broken Bow
Children's Party 6 p.m.
Broken Bow Community Center

Durant
Children's Party 6 p.m.
Durant Event Center

Quinton
Children's Party 6 p.m.
Quinton School Cafeteria

Stigler
Children's Party 5 p.m.
Stigler Community Center

Pyle, a trailblazer who leaves behind a lasting legacy

Continued from 1

In 1999, he was elected by a vote of over 80% to continue as chief. In 2003, he ran unopposed, the only time that has happened in Choctaw Nation history. Pyle was Chief of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma from 1997 – 2014.

One of his first initiatives as chief was to build a new hospital for the Choctaw people, which was completed and opened in 1999. During his time in office, he negotiated millions of dollars of contracts for the Choctaw Nation and instituted many positive changes, particularly in education, healthcare and housing. Specifically, he expanded higher education scholarships and worked to implement career development programs at technical institutes. He also facilitated the building of clinics across the Choctaw Nation. In addition, Pyle oversaw the construction of a new hospitality house, a diabetes wellness center, a new recovery center, women’s treatment center, expansion of the Poteau clinic and mail order pharmacy refill center, several new community centers, child development centers and wellness centers, as well as independent living communities for elderly tribal members.

During his tenure as chief, the Choctaw Language



File Photos

Program grew from a few community classes to interactive online classes, accredited classes in high schools and distance learning classes in universities and colleges. Because of his sincere interest in the history and preservation of the culture of the Choctaw people, he encouraged and received enthusiastic participation in heritage-based events such as the commemorative Trail of Tears Walks, pow wows and stickball games.

In 2002, Chief Pyle was among ten tribal leaders representing 576 tribes across the United States that met at the White House to discuss major issues of health and economic development and to seek additional dollars for outsourcing medical care. He testified before Congress on many issues, including the Arkansas Riverbed, tribal sovereignty, the Choctaw Code Talkers, gaming and health care. Pyle was also a member of the Board of Directors for the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C.

Under Pyle’s leadership, the Choctaw Nation extended aid to victims of disasters and tragedies, such as Hurricane Katrina and the tsunami aid recovery program for Indonesian children and families. After 9/11, Pyle led fundraising efforts, and the tribe donated more than \$75,800 to be used for educational scholarships for the families of firefighters who were killed. He said, “God has blessed our tribe with the ability to sponsor these fundraising efforts, and I pray that He will bless America and its citizens.”

During his time as Chief, donations were made from the tribe to many notable charities, including a \$1 million donation to the Dean McGee Eye Institute and \$1 million to the Peggy and Charles Stephenson Cancer Center.

Pyle was instrumental in creating a hundred-year vision and plan for the tribe. He led the effort to create a vision statement for the Choctaw Nation, “To achieve healthy, successful, productive, and self-sufficient lifestyles for a proud Nation of Choctaws.” He made a promise to the Choctaw people saying, “Your tribal government will continue to fight for all tribal programs and services and also work to create more economic development and employment opportunities.”

He was devoted to those who served our country in the military and felt it an honor to pay his respects to them. Through his inspiration, the annual Veterans Day ceremony began at Tvshka Homma. Pyle established a Veterans Advocacy program, Operation Airlift Command and instituted Operation Choctaw Care, a program whereby special care packages are sent to Choctaws serving in combat situations, letting them know that they are not forgotten at home. As a result of all these efforts, the tribe was given the Pro Patria Award and ultimately the 2008 Freedom Award, which had never before been awarded to a Native American tribe.

Pyle, assisted by the Assistant Chief and staff members, prepared legislation for Congress, requesting that a special medal be minted and bestowed upon families



Chief Pyle shakes the hand of good friend, Chickasaw Governor Bill Anoatubby

of the Choctaw Code Talkers. In 2008, the Native American Code Talker Recognition Act passed, awarding the Congressional Gold Medal, among the most distinguished honors Congress can bestow, to the brave veterans that served the United States as code talkers in WWI. In 2009, the Choctaw Code Talkers were inducted into the Oklahoma Military Hall of Fame. The same year, the Choctaw Nation was honored by the Oklahoma State Senate for its outstanding support of the National Guard and Reserve, as well as veterans.

Awards honoring Chief Pyle include being named a Distinguished Alumni and Benefactor of Southeastern Oklahoma State University and an Honorary Member of the Oklahoma State Troopers Association. In 2007, he was inducted into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame. In 2008, AARP presented him with the 50 Over 50 Award for his lifelong contributions toward making Oklahoma a better state. He was 2010 Citizen of the Year for the Heartland District of Civitan International, a worldwide community service organization.

Pyle retired as Chief of the Choctaw Nation on April 24, 2014. He announced his retirement during a festive celebration honoring his 65th birthday and his many achievements. Almost two thousand well-wishers including family, friends and co-workers came to wish him well.

“The Choctaw Nation has much to be proud of. There is no limit to what Choctaw people can achieve! No matter what your goals are, don’t be afraid to reach for the stars. Our tribe’s future depends on all the tribal members’ continued success!” – Chief Gregory E. Pyle (2013)

Choctaw Clinic Named a Top Green Building

By Charles Clark

DURANT, Okla. – The Choctaw Nation Regional Medical Clinic in Durant is receiving a prestigious international honor for its architecture. The tribal health facility has earned the silver-level LEED Certification. Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) is one of the most highly regarded green building certification programs in the world.

“We are excited because this is the first LEED-certified building that the Choctaw Nation owns,” said Todd Hallmark, Executive Officer, Choctaw Nation Health Services Authority. “It enables us to help out our environment,” he said.

“This is quite an accomplishment,” said Halann Elliott, Budget Analyst and Compliance Officer for Choctaw Nation Health Services Authority, noting that the award is something that must be planned for at the beginning when the plans are made and construction gets underway.

Strict standards govern the construction of buildings to be eligible for LEED certification. The focus of the program is on constructing environmentally sustainable, energy-efficient buildings. Construction materials and methods also factor into the process, and the Durant clinic’s successful certification followed a rigorous design and construction process.

When the award is received from the non-profit U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) it will be prominently displayed in the lobby of the clinic.

In February 2017, clinic doors opened launching a new era in medical care for Choctaw people in southeastern Oklahoma. The Choctaw Nation Regional Medical Clinic, with the most modern equipment in use today and its staff of 300, quickly became a leader in meeting primary care, out-patient needs. Now, the building itself is bringing exposure to the Choctaw Nation as a regional leader in the green building movement.

The 20-acre clinic campus, located at 1801 Chukka Hina, is made up of three buildings that total 174,000 square feet. They are the Clinic, Health Administration, and Facilities Maintenance. All are within immediate proximity of each other on a 20-acre, campus-style development.

Among the clinic’s green features:

- Low-emitting materials. Materials used in construction were selected to protect the building’s occupants. Only responsible compounds that limit the off-gassing of dangerous chemicals into the indoor air were allowed.
- Fire safety. Behind the waterproof sealant protection are fire-rated materials on walls throughout the buildings.
- Geothermal. The clinic utilizes a geothermal heating-and-cooling system. A total of 300 geothermal wells are located under the clinic parking lot.



Photo by Deidre K. Elrod / Choctaw Nation

This overview of the Choctaw Nation Regional Medical Clinic in Durant shows the east-facing main entry. The green architecture, construction and policies have earned the building a prestigious LEED award.

- Efficient lighting. Light systems in the rooms are equipped with occupancy sensors resulting in nearly 30 percent less energy use than its peers. Bordering the grand staircase of the lobby, the south-side wall consists of Sage Glass. It required both glass installers and electricians to be involved in the placement. The special panels have electric sensors that tint according to the amount of sunlight hitting them, providing cost and energy savings, and temperature control.
- Air quality. Allergies can be triggered by indoor air compromised by particulates brought in on visitors’ shoes. Shoe matter is managed by walk-off mats at door ways designed to pull matter from shoes and isolate it for removal.
- Hi-tech water use. High-efficiency water closets, urinals, lavatories, showers, and kitchen sinks reduce potable water consumption by 35 percent.
- Irrigation. Campus-wide reduction in potable water is managed for irrigation by tapping into reused municipal greywater and captured rainwaters stored on-site in the retention pond. This saves a million gallons of drinkable water annually.
- Native foliage. The use of local vegetation around the building helps eliminate the need for heavy irrigation, thereby saving thousands of gallons of water.
- Recycling. All trash is transported to a sorting site where waste is separated from recyclables. Those materials are further redistributed for breakdown and reuse.

Shop now at

ChoctawStore.com

SHOP SMALL, GIFT BIG

HOLIDAY SHOPPING MADE EASY

Handcrafted Artisanal Pieces, Jewelry,

Apparel, Books & CD's,

Home Goods and Branded Items

CHOCTAW

STORE

THE CHOCTAW NATION JUDICIAL COURTS

OFFERS E-FILING PORTAL

A new electronic service offered by the Choctaw Nation.

odyssey

a byline courts & justice solution

Odyssey e-File breaks the constraints of traditional filing:

- 24/7 filing and access to electronically filed documents via a secure, user-friendly Web portal
- Online tracking and proof of delivery
- Instant access to file stamped copies of filings
- Advanced search functionality indexes, bookmarks and finds documents in seconds
- Streamline filing processes and reduce paper with the e-File solution

Choctaw Nation

Judicial Branch

CHOCTAWNATIONCOURT.COM

Prosecutor’s Office ready to serve the Choctaw Nation

By Kellie Matherly

The Choctaw Nation now has a fully staffed team of prosecutors to represent the tribe’s interests in criminal cases occurring in the Choctaw Nation’s jurisdiction. Prosecutors Kara Bacon, Hilary McKinney, and Cory Ortega are eager to let tribal members know what services they can offer as well as what their limitations are.

Many of the cases coming to the Prosecutor’s Office come from state courts through transfer and fall under the Indian Child Welfare Act, or ICWA. Hilary McKinney handles the majority of these cases. The Choctaw Nation believes every effort should be made to ensure the health and safety of the family unit, but when children must be removed from an unsafe situation, the goal is to place them with a Native family. McKinney works closely with social workers at the Indian Child Welfare Office to help children get the services they need. “When our people succeed, it’s good for all of us,” McKinney said. In addition to cases where the Choctaw Nation has original jurisdiction, the Prosecutor’s Office can take transfer cases where jurisdiction is shared with the state.

ICWA cases can get expensive very quickly for the parents, considering fees, treatment, travel, time off work and other costs. According to Lead Prosecutor Kara Bacon, “The Choctaw Nation is unique because we offer so many services to our members. We have the ability to handle all of that.”

Cory Ortega serves the Choctaw Nation as a Special Assistant to the US Attorney for the Eastern District of Oklahoma. Through an agreement between the Choctaw Nation and the US Attorney’s office, Ortega is permitted to prosecute crimes that would normally be handled at the federal level. The Choctaw Nation is also able to prosecute felonies in tribal court under a 2017 law that expanded the tribe’s jurisdiction and sentencing limitations.

The prosecutorial team is especially glad that their work is not driven by money or the number of convictions they get. This unique situation gives them the time to give each case the individual attention it deserves. “When you’re numbers driven, you are not helping people,” Bacon said. “Often the offenders can get help. We are in a position when we prosecute a case to get help for an offender.”

While the Prosecutor’s Office wants to help as many tribal members as possible, there are some limitations on what they are legally and ethically allowed to do. People who have been charged with a crime should not contact the Prosecutor’s Office because the attorneys represent the Choctaw Nation and are unable to give any legal advice. In ICWA cases, members should always contact their assigned social worker and their attorney first, rather than communicating with the Prosecutor’s Office. Victims of crimes who seek restitution or who are in personal danger should contact the Prosecutor’s Office .



Photos by Christian Toews

Kara Bacon was raised in Bryan County and is a proud member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. She graduated from Calera High School and received her Bachelor of Arts Degree from Southeastern Oklahoma State University. She later earned a Juris Doctorate from the University of Oklahoma College of Law with an emphasis in Native America Law. After being admitted to the Oklahoma Bar, Kara worked as an Assistant District Attorney for six years in primarily Grady and Caddo Counties. In 2015, she was appointed and served another four years as the First Assistant District Attorney for District 6 (Grady, Stephens, Caddo and Jefferson Counties). During her tenure as a prosecutor for the State she handled all cases including juvenile delinquent, deprived, criminal felony and misdemeanor cases but later primarily prosecuted violent and sex crimes. She started the Grady County Coordinated Community Response Team and the Together We Heal walk to raise awareness about domestic violence and fundraised over \$50,000 for the local Women’s Resource Center, which provides services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Kara says, “As a Choctaw member, I was excited to have the opportunity to build the Tribal Prosecutor’s Office and serve my tribe in this capacity.”



Hilary McKinney

Hilary McKinney, is a proud member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, born and raised in Denison, Texas. She graduated from University of Tulsa College of Law in 2012, with an emphasis in Native American Law. She worked with Muscogee Creek citizens in Okmulgee and did child welfare defense work for low income clients. Hilary became a child welfare prosecutor for the Chickasaw Nation in May 2015, and handled cases affecting over 150 children in her time there. Hilary says, “My heart is in child welfare even when I’m not at work. I’ve been a foster parent twice and look forward to being one again. I couldn’t be happier to be here, working for my people.”



Cory Ortega

Cory Ortega was born and raised in Gatesville, Texas. After graduating from Gatesville High School, Corey honorably served in the United States Navy from 2003 - 2007. After completion of his military service, he attended Southeastern Oklahoma State University in Durant, Oklahoma where he received his Bachelor



Kelsey Long

Kelsey Long, Legal Admin Assistant, enrolled member of the Navajo Nation, previously served with the Grady County District Attorney’s office for 4 years and has served as a legal admin assistant for 6 years. Kelsey is also a running enthusiast.

Members seeking assistance should contact Kelsey at the Durant Headquarters Building or at 580-924-8280 extension 4979.



New position interesting, exciting and busy

Halito chim Achuckma; Chihowa vt Achuckma. Since making my transition from a 35-year aviation manufacturing career to the Choctaw Nation on Labor Day, it has been interesting, exciting and very busy. I am honored to represent the Chahta okla achuckma of Dist. 11 and hope to bring big improvements to you. I appreciate all your encouragement and support.

During the Labor Day festival our senior abinili volleyball players represented Dist. 11 well by making the final four tournament at Tvshka Homma. The Princess pageant had some amazing, talented young ladies, and our Dist. 11 princesses, Jordyn Washington, Alexis Futischa and Cheyhoma Dugger, performed well and made us proud. It was a blessing to see all the Choctaws, young and old, enjoying the activities during our festival.

It was a pleasure to host several community activities in Dist. 11 these last few months. The most rewarding was the Krebs LEAP ribbon cutting in September, where 20 young Choctaw families moved in to new houses. This is a great program, and I’m so glad to see we are building new homes for our people again. In October, we attended the Outstanding Elder Banquet. Congratulations to John Pope and Sharon Blasingame who were the representatives for Dist. 11. On the 25 was the Halloween Trunk or Treat, and we had a full house that included 200 children. On November 1, the CHR Fall Fest health fair was attended by our seniors from all over the 10 and ½ counties. The Community Thanksgiving dinner was held on 23. Come join us at the kids Christmas party December 14 at 1:00 p.m.

Our community center in McAlester holds a senior citizen dinner every Wednesday from 11:00-12:00 for Choctaws 55 and over. It was nice to have Miko Batton speak and eat with us on September 25. Cultural Preservation Director Dr. Ian Thompson gave an interesting presentation about Choctaw history and culture on October 9. Arts and crafts classes are held at the center; gourd painting was on the 14 of November and pottery the 21.

We hosted the Inner-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes at Durant October 9-11, approving eight resolutions unanimously, showing the tribes’ willingness to work together. The Cherokee Nation will host the next quarterly meeting in January.

I am proud of the way the Choctaw Nation gives back to the Choctaw people and to our local communities. The generosity of our tribe was on display with donations to Choctaw churches in our area and the Indigenous Peoples Day celebration. The Pittsburg County Sheriff Department, several police departments and fire departments received donations as well.

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma has 11,000 employees with 400 openings right now, if you know of a Choctaw looking for work, tell them to check out jobs.choctawnation.com for a list of jobs. I can tell you from my short time here that the Choctaw Nation is a great place to work.

I wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. I’m humbled and honored to be able to serve the Choctaw people. Please let me know if I can help you. Contact me at rkarr@choctawnation.com or call 918-423-1016.

Chi yakoke li
Robert Karr, Chi Pisa la Chiki



2020 LABOR DAY TRIBAL MEMBER RESERVATION

ONE REQUEST PER ADDRESS | ELECTRIC AND WATER HOOKUP RESERVATION FORM
RESERVATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED PRIOR TO JANUARY 2, 2020

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Primary phone number: _____ Alternate phone number: _____

RV/Trailer description: (All information must be complete for reservation consideration)

Trailer type: ☐Bumper Pull Trailer ☐5th Wheel ☐RV Length of RV/Trailer: _____

Amperage required: ☐30 amp ☐50 amp # of Slide-outs: _____

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma | Labor Day RV Reservations | P O Box 1210 | Durant, OK 74702

No phone reservations will be accepted | Please include a copy of your CDIB card only
Sites will be assigned by lottery | DO NOT SEND ANY MONEY AT THIS TIME | All applicants will be notified by mail



CHOCTAWNATION.COM
#CHAHOTALABORDAY



YOUTH WORK OPPORTUNITIES

Choctaw Nation Summer Youth Employment Services

(Program funded by Public Law 102-477)



SCHOOL SCHEDULE 2020 | BRING COPIES OF CDIB OR MEMBERSHIP

| | |
|--|--|
| JAN 06 - Calera, Red Oak | JAN 20 - Whitesboro |
| JAN 07 - Caddo, Cannadian, Indianola, Crowder, Buffalo Valley, Coleman | JAN 21 - Arkoma, Cameron, Bokoshe, Atoka |
| JAN 08 - Allen, Tupelo, Wapanuka, Coalgate, Stuart, Kiowa, Calvin, Hugo, Boswell | JAN 22 - Durant, Keota, McCurtain |
| JAN 09 - Bennington, Choctaw Interlocal, Haileyville, Hartshorne, Clayton | JAN 23 - Ft Towson, Soper |
| JAN 10 - Rock Creek | JAN 27 - Spiro, Panama, Pocola |
| JAN 13 - Talihina, Wister, Howe | JAN 28 - Poteau |
| JAN 14 - Vision Academy, Achille, Quinton, Panola, Wilburton, McAlester, LeFlore, Heavener | JAN 29 - Savanna, Pittsburg |
| JAN 15 - Stigler, Colbert, Stringtown, Kinta, Moyers, Rattan, Silo | FEB 03 - Valliant |
| JAN 16 - Caney, Tushka, Antlers | FEB 04 - Idabel, Haworth |
| | FEB 05 - Smithville, Battiest |
| | FEB 10 - Eagletown |
| | FEB 11 - Broken Bow |
| | FEB 12 - Wright City |

APPLY ONLINE AT: 477ETSAPP.CHOCTAWNATION.COM

APPLICATION OPEN FROM JANUARY 1ST - APRIL 1ST

HINA HANTA

THE BRIGHT PATH

Explore the art and culture of the
Chahta people online.

HINAHANTA.CHOCTAWNATION.COM



Choctaw Dolls | CM 2017.119.1a-b

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma ♦ TOGETHER WE'RE MORE ♦

Nation spreads domestic violence awareness

By Chris Jennings

October was National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, which began in 1981, as a Day of Unity by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence. This day served to bring together battered women’s advocates from all over the country.

That single day has morphed into an entire month to bring awareness to domestic violence and the different ways it can manifest, not just for women but also for men.

Domestic violence is not limited to physical violence; it can also include yelling, humiliation, stalking, manipulation, coercion, threats and isolation. It can be stealing a paycheck, keeping tabs online, non-stop texting, constantly using the silent treatment, or calling someone stupid so often they believe it.

According to the National Congress of American Indians, more than 4 in 5 Native women (84.3%) have experienced domestic violence in their lifetime. To help bring awareness to these statistics, employees at the Choctaw Nation organized an event to bring domestic violence to the forefront of everyone’s mind.



Photo by Chris Jennings

Chief Gary Batton and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. speak with Carolyn Steelman at the domestic violence awareness event held at the Nation headquarters.

Choctaw Nation employee, Carolyn Steelman was on hand to tell her story during the event. Steelman had been experiencing all of the signs of domestic violence but had not accepted that it was happening to her. When she finally did, it was with the help of the Choctaw Nation.

“It’s helped me so much to discover there are other people out there going through the same thing I’m going through...It’s just a big, big relief that I’m not alone,” said Steelman.

Steelman talked about a time at the store when she passed some pepper spray for sale but thought she did not need it. She finally did buy some and it potentially saved her when her husband broke into the house and attacked her.

Having a month dedicated to spreading awareness of domestic violence and its many facets is important. Holding these events is one thing the Nation does to further that cause. Chief Gary Batton said, “I think it’s critically important that we’re aware domestic violence happens all around us at all times.”

Some of the warning signs to look for from friends and family who may be suffering from domestic violence are:

- Seeming afraid or anxious to please their partner.
- Going along with everything their partner says and does.
- Checking in often with their partner to report where they are and what they’re doing.
- Receiving frequent, harassing phone calls from their partner.
- Talking about their partner’s temper, jealousy, or possessiveness.
- Experiencing frequent injuries, with the excuse of “accidents.”
- Frequently missing work, school, or social occasions, without explanation.
- Dressing in clothing designed to hide bruises or scars (e.g. wearing long sleeves in the summer or sunglasses indoors).

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, intimate partner violence is physical, sexual or psychological. It can include any behavior that frightens, intimidates, manipulates or humiliates someone.

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence the Choctaw Nation wants to help. Anna Marcy,



Photo by Chris Jennings

Carolyn Steelman tells her story of domestic violence survival. Steelman credits the support she received from the Choctaw Nation for getting her through it.

Director of the Family Violence Prevention Program at the Choctaw Nation said, “There is help available... Whether you’re in Oklahoma or Texas, there are different programs; but if you live within the 10.5 counties of Choctaw Nation, whether you’re native or non-native, male, female, it does not matter, our programs doors are open to anyone.”

Batton said, “It means a lot to us that our dollars that come from our businesses are able to offer assistance for people that are going through domestic violence. Whether it’s through housing, or rental assistance, or through behavioral health counseling.”

If you are a victim of family violence, or you’re living in fear of violence, contact the Choctaw Nation Children and Family Services at 800-522-6170.

Mental health is important during the holidays

When people think of holidays, the first thing that often comes to mind is spending time with family. For some people, this can bring a sense of peace, but for others, it can bring on feelings of worry and/or anxiousness. This is especially true for those who may have a family member who struggles with a mental health and/or substance use disorder.

Oftentimes, family members are at a loss on what they can do to help. Here are a few tips found on the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) website for helping and supporting a loved one who may struggle with mental health and/or substance use disorders.

The first step is approaching a conversation with them. It is important to consider a private setting at an appropriate time or place. As you express concerns, it is important to show compassion by asking how they are feeling and be descriptive with the reasons for your concern. Say things such as “I’ve been worried about you. Can we talk? If not, who are you comfortable talking to?” Or “I care about you and am here to listen. Do you want to talk about what’s been going on?” Make sure to listen to what is going on with them and acknowledge their feelings without judgment.

The next step is to offer help by providing reassurance that mental and/or substance use disorders are treatable and help them connect with treatment services.

Then the last thing to remember is to be patient and remember that helping your family member does not happen overnight. It may take several attempts at reaching out and offering to listen and help. Through all of the helping, one final tip is to make sure that you participate in self-care. It can be emotionally draining aiding a loved one, so remember to take time for yourself and participate in healthy things that you enjoy. For more information and resources, visit www.SAMHSA.gov/families.

As you are talking to your loved one, if they start to express suicidal ideation or you feel they are at risk, please call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or text “hello” to 741-741. If the risk is immediate, go to your nearest ER.

If you or someone you know is facing a mental and/or substance use disorder, you can call the National Helpline at 1-800-662-HELP (4357) for free, confidential information and treatment referral services.

Choctaw Nation also has outpatient counseling available for you or your loved one. We have behavioral health counselors all across our 10 ½ counties. Please call 918-567-3065 to make an appointment at a clinic near you.

“This newspaper article was developed, in part, under grant number 5H79SM062902-05 from SAMHSA. The views, opinions and content of this publication are those of the authors and contributors, and do not necessarily reflect the views, opinions, or policies of CMHS, SAMHSA, or HHS, and should not be construed as such.”

Nursery News



Maximus Sims

Maximus Montgomery Sims was born on October 11, 2019, at 10:37 p.m. at the Chickasaw Nation Medical Center in Ada, Okla. He weighed 9 lbs. 9 oz. and was 21 inches long.

He is the son of Lane Sims and Alisha Roof. He has one older brother, Greyson Miller-Sims.

Pumpkin Fluff

- 1 pkg. Vanilla pudding, instant, fat-free, sugar free (1.5 oz. box)
- 1 can Pumpkin puree (15 oz.)
- 1 tbs. Pumpkin pie spice
- 16 oz. Whipped topping, light, thawed
- 1/2 tbs. Vanilla

Preparation

1. In a large bowl, mix together instant vanilla pudding, pumpkin and pumpkin pie spice.
2. Fold in the thawed frozen whipped topping and vanilla. Chill in the refrigerator until serving.

CHOCTAW NATION FOOD DISTRIBUTION

WAREHOUSES & MARKETS
Open 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday
Thursday: 9:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

December 2019

All markets open weekdays, December 2-26, **Closed:** December 16, 24, 25, 27, 30 and 31.
Participants can request a calendar at their location.

ANTLERS 400 S.W. “O” ST., 580-298-6443
Nutrition education and food demo December 12, 10:00-1:00

BROKEN BOW 109 Chahta Rd., 580-584-2842
Nutrition education and food demo December 3, 10:00-1:00

DURANT 2352 Big Lots Pkwy., 580-924-7773
Nutrition education and food demo December 10, 10:00-1:00

MCALESTER 3244 Afullota Hina, 918-420-5716
Nutrition education and food demo December 18, 10:00-1:00

POTEAU 100 Kerr Ave., 918-649-0431
Nutrition education and food demo December 4, 10:00-1:00

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Choctaw Nation WIC & Connecting Kids With Coverage are Coming to a Location Near You




Enjoy Full WIC Services and See If Your Child Qualifies for SoonerCare

December Mobile Unit Schedule

| | |
|------|--|
| 3rd | Heavener - CV's Grocery |
| 5th | Boswell - Across from Pushmataha Family Clinic |
| 6th | Heavener - EOMC |
| 12th | Clayton - At the Choctaw Country Market |

For More Information Call (580) 380-3628

Free backpack with every approved Connecting Kids to Coverage application.

|  | | |
|---|--|--------------------|
| Location | Days | Hours |
| Antlers 580-298-3161 | 1st & 2nd Tue. Every Month | 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. |
| Atoka 580-889-5825 | Mon., Wed., Thur., & Fri. | 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. |
| Battiest 580-241-5458 | 1st Tue. of Every Month | 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. |
| Broken Bow 580-584-2746 | Tue. & Thur. (except for Battiest & Smithville days) | 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. |
| Durant 580-920-2100 x-83582 | Daily Mon. - Fri. | 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. |
| Hugo 580-326-9707 | Daily Mon. - Fri | 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. |
| Idabel 580-286-2510 | Mon., Wed., & Fri. | 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. |
| McAlester 918-423-6335 | Daily Mon. - Fri | 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. |
| Poteau 918-649-1106 | Daily Mon. - Fri | 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. |
| Smithville 580-244-3289 | 1st Thur. of Every Month | 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. |
| Spiro 918-962-5134 | Wed., Thur., & Fri. | 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. |
| Stigler 918-867-4211 | Mon. & Tue. | 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. |
| Talihina 918-567-7000 x-6792 | Daily Mon. - Fri | 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. |
| Wilburton 918-465-5641 | Mon. 7 Fri. | 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. |
| Building Healthy Families Through Good Nutrition | | |



COLORECTAL CANCER AWARENESS

CONSIDER THESE FACTS:

Colorectal cancer is the 2nd leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States

Talk to your Doctor about getting screened for colon cancer if you are age 50 and older

The best screening is the one that gets done

Having type 2 diabetes increases your risk for colorectal cancer

Colon cancer can be prevented

FOR MORE INFO CALL:
918-567-7000 EXT.6957

Choctaw Nation

Diabetes Wellness Center

Stay Connected

CHOCTAWNATION.COM



Choctaw basketball player inducted into Naismith Hall of Fame

By Chris Jennings

Rosalie Ardese was inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame September 6, 2019, as a member of the Wayland Baptist University Flying Queens basketball team. Ardese played for Wayland between 1974 and 1975.

After graduating from Panola High School, Ardese received a scholarship to play at Wayland. The Flying Queens held the record for the longest win streak of any men's or women's collegiate basketball program between 1953 and 1958 at 131. During that time the Flying Queens won four straight Amateur Athletic Union titles.



Submitted photos
Rosalie Ardese goes in for a lay-up during a game.

In their 35-year run, the Flying Queens won 10 overall AAU titles. Ardese said she started her competitive sports career in the third and fourth grades playing marbles. “I played for keeps and whipped everyone,” said Ardese. She started playing basketball in the fifth grade and remembers her coaches stressing the fundamentals of the game.

“My grade school coach was DeWayne Mankin and both he and my high school coach, Ronnie Robison, stressed fundamentals. They gave me the drive to be better, so I was blessed to be coached by them,” said Ardese.

From grade school fundamentals to being Oklahoma’s leading scorer her junior and senior year with an average of 38 and 33 points respectively per game, Ardese was sought after by several colleges, finally landing at Wayland and now, years later, the Naismith Hall of Fame.

When speaking of the Hall of Fame Ardese said, “It was an amazing, exuberating feeling. To meet all the people, you know, you’re just a small-town kid...it’s amazing.”

Ardese tells the story of flying to Springfield, Mass. Flying in first class, she saw quite a few people going to the Hall of Fame ceremony, she didn’t know who they all were, but she recognized several of them from TV.

One person struck up a conversation with her, asking about her Oklahoma University shirt and talking about the Hall of Fame. “I told him I was fixing to be inducted in the Hall of Fame and then he just shook my hand, all the guys shook my hand,” said Ardese.

That initial handshake came from the only player to lead the National Collegiate Athletic Association, American Basketball Association and National Basketball Association in scoring for an individual season, Rick Barry. If you ever saw someone on TV shooting free throws in a game underhanded, that was probably him.

That wasn’t the only brush with fame Ardese had; “The biggest deal was Bill Russell and Larry Bird. It was exciting because I kept telling everybody that’s who I was going to meet when I got there and he [Larry Bird] was the first one up on the red carpet,” said Ardese

College wasn’t all fun and games. Ardese made the team her second year but wasn’t able to play in the second semester because of her grades.

With her grades declining and after being told that she may not be college material by college administration, Ardese made the hard decision to stop playing basketball so she could focus on academics.

“I dug deep into my studies to prove him wrong. I spent a lot of time in the library; the librarian, Ms. Conway, and her mother were angels. They were instrumental in helping me through dark days. They invited me over to their house to eat and watch games... My primary goal was to finish school with majors in PE and Biology, so I never returned to Flying Queens basketball,” said Ardese.

“I ended up working 24 years in law enforcement and was a three-year veteran in the Oklahoma National Guard in the 445 Military Police unit,” said Ardese. She also tried to go back and serve after September 11, 2001, but wasn’t able to due to medical reasons.

That’s not surprising given the fighting spirit Ardese demonstrated during several key moments in her life. She has been in a car crash that dislocated her shoulder and seriously damaged her knee. She has been struck by



Rosalie Ardese stands with a Flying Queens program banner at the Naismith Hall of Fame in Springfield, Mass.

lightning three times, describing one of the incidents as a ball of fire coming out of her eyeball. “I was blinded in my right eye for 7 days,” said Ardese.

The most drastic moment, though, came to Ardese in the form of a cancer diagnosis giving her six months to live. That was 40 ago and she’s still here putting up a fight.

The tendency for Ardese to look trouble in the eye and tackle it head-on shows when she goes through a list of jobs she’s held. “I worked for the State of Oklahoma Penitentiary system as a correctional officer, transportation officer and case manager on death row. I worked for the Latimer County Sheriff’s Office as a jailer and jail administrator. I worked for Pinkerton Government Services providing security services in the aerospace/defense, industry. I guarded Boeing airplanes. I was also a security guard at McAlester Army Ammunition Plant,” said Ardese.

With a life full of so many ups and downs and so many exciting and memorable moments, the only thing Ardese was adamant about being included in this story was how proud she is to be a representative for the Choctaw Nation and small-town kids. “I was representing all the kids at not only my college but all the young kids growing up playing ball here in Southeastern Oklahoma and my Choctaw Nation,” said Ardese

You may not be able to rub shoulders with basketball legends like Bird, Barry and Russell, but if you ever get to Wilburton, Okla. you might just catch a glimpse of basketball legend and real-life Chahta tvshka, Rosalie Ardese. And word is, she’ll sign an autograph for you if you ask nicely.

Vanard McIntyre, Choctaw Golden Gloves Champion

Submitted By
Charles McIntyre

Vanard Bob McIntyre grew up in Hugo, Okla., the son of Preston and Aurelia Kaneubbee McIntyre. He became interested in boxing at an early age because it was an individual sport. He believed success depended on one’s desire and how hard a person wanted to train and follow a good routine.

His athletic career started at Hugo Junior High and then Hugo High School. He continued at Tyler Junior College in Tyler, Texas where he received a boxing scholarship and even had some matches while involved in various army training exercises.

Vanard’s accomplishments were the result of always being in good physical condition. He never let anything stand in his way of a workout. His workout consisted of running over the Red Hills in Second Ward where he lived. He always ran with heavy army boots on so he could build up his legs. This gave him endurance, which was very important towards the final part of each match. He always believed whoever worked the hardest would win the match.

He also took his father’s advice, “Never underestimate your opponent!”

Vanard said his girlfriend, Kay Glenn -- who later became his wife -- sometimes helped him wrap his hands before fights ‘for good luck.’ When Vanard fought out of town, he might not get home until around 2:00 a.m. or later. His aunt, Effie Rogers, who raised him, would still be up waiting for him. She would ask for details on the boxing match, then would cook him breakfast, usually bacon and eggs. Effie always paid close attention to Vanard and took an interest



Submitted photos

in everything he did.

Vanard’s roadwork training led him to make lasting friendships. There were families along the road he saw each day as he ran. Families such as the Conloys, Bloodworths, Roys and Fergusons lived on the Goodland Road. He had a little brown dog named Lassie who accompanied him during this part of his preparation.

Because of his strong desire to succeed, he was willing to give a lot of time and effort to make it happen. As his brother, I always thought he was something special. I couldn’t stay up with him.

Vanard never said he felt bad or complained of a headache – he always worked out. The weather never deterred him. He always said, “If you want to succeed, you have to work at it.” Boy, did he work at it!

Some of Vanard’s notable accomplishments are:

1951 – Oklahoma State Novice Champion – 118 lbs.

1954 – Oklahoma State Open Champion – 135 lbs.

1955 – Oklahoma State Open Champion – 135 lbs.

Only Hugo Resident to Qualify for Nation Golden Gloves Tournament in 1954 and 1955.

Holds two decisions of National Champion Richard Wall of Idabel.

1957 – Texas Runner-up in Open Class - 147 lbs.

1959 – Texas Runner-up in Open Class – 147 lbs.

Won 138 out of 145 bouts during his boxing career.

Because he developed good stamina during his jogging for boxing there was a carryover into track where he won some one-mile races in that sport.

Vanard believes that involvement in sports helps people meet life challenges and encourages youth to get involved. I have always felt my brother has been a good role model to others, and I appreciate him for that.



Vanard McIntyre, seen here in the boxing ring, was the Oklahoma State Open Boxing Champion in 1954 and 1955.

MEMBER SERVICES AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

Introducing
Chahta Achvffa
A New Online Member Portal
Keep information and documents up-to-date on individual accounts.
Apply for services as readily available
Access on any device.
Now Available

800-421-2707 | CHAHTAACHVFFA.CHOCTAWNATION.COM

Thunder camp rolls through



Photo by Shella Kirven

Kids chase the ball during drills at the Thunder Youth Basketball Camp.

The Choctaw Nation Youth Events and Activities Department hosted the Thunder Youth Basketball HUSTLE CAMP on November 17th at the Choctaw Wellness Center in Durant. Attendees were taught the fundamentals of basketball through passing, dribbling, shooting and hand/eye coordination. Coaches from the Oklahoma City Thunder Youth Program were on hand to conduct the camp which consisted of 79 attendees.

EVENTS

Arts and Craft Bazaar

District 2 senior citizens will be having an arts and crafts bazaar at the new Choctaw Nation Community Center in Broken Bow, Oklahoma.

Saturday, December 7. - 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
\$15 a table.

All beading Vendors are urged to attend.

For more information, call Patsy Pilant 580-236-0445 or Cynthia Shomo at the center 580-584-6372.

Oklahoma Indian Legal Services may be able to help tribal members who have received storm damage, but can't get assistance due to title problems.

Call 800-658-1497 for more information.

Veterans Association Members Needed

Choctaw Veterans Association is searching for new members. Most of our members are Vietnam Vets.

We need young Choctaw military men and women, active or retired. Members of different tribes are welcome as well. Veterans Association paper work is needed.

Meetings are 8 a.m. on the second Saturday of each month at the Spiro Choctaw Community Center.

Members attend funerals, and Disabled American Veterans and Marine Corp League.

For information call:
Ed Hendricks, Recruiter 918-962-5524
Paul Perry, Commander 479-353-2709

NEED TO CHANGE YOUR ADDRESS?

Contact the Choctaw Nation
Circulation Department

580.924.8280 x4028

Read the Biskinik online at
CHOCTAWNATION.COM/NEWS

BISKINIK

Biskinik
Announcement Guidelines

We accept milestone birthday greetings for ages 1, 5, 13, 15, 16, 18, 21, 30, 40, 50, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80 and above.

Couples may send announcements of silver wedding anniversary at 25 years of marriage, golden anniversary at 50 years, or 60+ anniversaries. We do not post wedding announcements.

News from graduates of higher education only and sports submissions will be accepted as space allows.

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

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

Mail to: Biskinik
P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702
or email: biskinik@choctawnation.com

Gary Batton
Chief

Jack Austin Jr.
Assistant Chief

The Official
Monthly Publication
of the
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Dara McCoy, Executive Director
Mary Ann Strombitski, Senior Director
Kellie Matherly, Managing Editor
Chris Jennings, News Reporter
Christian Toews, News Reporter
P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702
580-924-8280 • 800-522-6170
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 space, proper grammar and punctuation. Copy will be accepted in any readable form, but where possible, it is requested that material be type-written and double-spaced. You must include an address and phone number where you may be reached. Due to space limitations and the quantity of article submissions, we are unable to include everything we receive. Items are printed in the order received. Faxed photos will not be accepted.

If you are receiving more than one BISKINIK or your address needs to be changed, our Circulation Department would appreciate hearing from you at ext. 2116.

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 in 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.

Tribal Council holds November session

The Choctaw Nation Tribal Council met in regular session November 9, 2019 at Tvshka Homma.

1) CALL TO ORDER

2) OPENING PRAYER/FLAG SALUTE

3) ROLL CALL

4) APPROVAL OF OCTOBER MINUTES

5) WELCOME GUESTS

6) REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

7) NEW BUSINESS

a) Approve the Choctaw Nation Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Farmers' Market Nutrition Program Budget FY2019 (YEAs- Unanimous; Bill passed)

b) Approve the Choctaw Nation Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program Budget for FY2019 (YEAs- Unanimous; Bill passed)

c) Approve the Family Violence Prevention Program Budget for FY2020 (YEAs- Unanimous; Bill passed)

d) Approve the Funds and Budget for the Year Five of Five Continuation for the Injury Prevention Program (IPP) (YEAs- Unanimous; Bill passed)

e) Approve the Transfer of Real Property to the Choctaw Nation (YEAs- Unanimous; Bill passed)

f) Approve Funding for Construction of New Travel Plaza and Casino Too and, upon Completion of Such Construction, the Demolition of the Existing Travel Plaza and Casino Too in Pocola, Oklahoma (YEAs- Unanimous; Bill passed)

g) Approve a Limited Waiver of Sovereign Immunity in favor of Starbucks (YEAs- Unanimous; Bill passed)

8) OTHER NEW BUSINESS

9) OLD BUSINESS

10) ADJOURNMENT

11) CLOSING PRAYER

Council Members Present:

Thomas Williston
Tony Ward
Eddie Bohanan
Delton Cox
Ron Perry
Jennifer Woods

Jack Austin
Perry Thompson
James Dry
Anthony Dillard
Robert Karr
James Frazier

Chahta Anumpa Aiikhvna
December Language Lesson

Usage of Common Verbs

habena v. – to receive a gift; a favor; a prize; money
Pronunciation – hah-be-nah

1. Nanta ish habena ha?
What gift did you receive? Or What did you win?

2. Iskvli habena li tuk.
I received (a gift of) money.

3. Kaa himona habena sv bvwna.
I want to receive (win) a new car.

4. Nanta e habena chi?
What gift will we receive?

habenvchi v. – to make a gift; to present; to give
Pronunciation – hah-be-nah-chi

1. Kvta hosh kaa himona chi habenvchi tuk?
Who gifted you with a new car?

2. Aki akosh sv habenvchi tuk.
It was my father who gave it to me.

3. Hattak mvt abinili chi habenvcha chi.
That man will give you the chair.

ima v. – to give
Pronunciation – ehm-ah

1. Chishnato, nanta ho chim vlla ish ima chi?
As for you, what will you give your child?

2. Ak ikhano kisha, nana ho ima la chi ka.
I don't know yet what I will give him/her.

ishi v. – to get
Pronunciation – ish-ih

1. Nanta ish im ishi tuk?
What did you get (for) him/her?

2. Nanta ish im isha chi?
What will you get (for) him/her?

www.choctawschool.com

CHOCTAW POW WOW
December 7-8, 2019 Choctaw Event Center | 3702 Choctaw Rd | Durant, OK 74701

Schedule of Events

Saturday, December 7
10 a.m.Gourd Dance
12 noonFirst Grand Entry
4 p.m.Break
7 p.m.Second Grand Entry

Sunday, December 8
10:30 a.m.Sunday Service
12 noonGrand Entry Contest

OVER \$120,000 IN PRIZE MONEY

HOTEL RESERVATIONS: 888-652-4628
RATE CODE POWWOW2019

CHOCTAWNATION.COM/POWWOW | #CNPOWWOW

Send us your stories!

The Biskinik is a free service to our tribal members. We want to be an outlet for all members to share their successes with the rest of the tribe.

Please send your submissions to us at biskinik@choctawnation.com

ANNUAL INTER-TRIBAL DAY OF PRAYER
JAN 11 • 9AM-12PM • LIFE CHURCH OF MCALESTER

1300 S. GEORGE NIGH EXPRESSWAY, MCALESTER, OK

Choctaw Nation Vocational Rehabilitation

- Evaluations and Assessments
- Counseling and Guidance
- Referral Services
- On-the-Job-Training
- Physical and Mental Restoration

Choctaw Nation Vocational Rehabilitation

| | | |
|---------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Jan. 6 | Durant | 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. |
| Jan. 7 | Wright City | 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. |
| Jan. 7 | Poteau | 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. |
| Jan. 8 | Antlers | 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. |
| Jan. 8 | Coalgate | 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. |
| Jan. 10 | Talihina | 10:00 a.m. - 2 p.m. |
| Jan. 10 | Atoka | 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. |
| Jan. 14 | Idabel | 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. |
| Jan. 14 | Wilburton | 10:30 a.m. - 2 p.m. |
| Jan. 15 | McAlester | 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. |
| Jan. 17 | Poteau | 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. |
| Jan. 17 | Coalgate | 11:00 a.m. - 1 p.m. |
| Jan. 20 | Durant | 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. |
| Jan. 21 | Talihina | 10:00 a.m. - 2 p.m. |
| Jan. 21 | Broken Bow | 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. |
| Jan. 22 | Crowder | 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. |
| Jan. 22 | Atoka | 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. |
| Jan. 24 | Antlers | 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. |
| Jan. 24 | Coalgate | 11:00 a.m. - 1 p.m. |
| Jan. 29 | McAlester | 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. |

Durant: Monday, Wednesday and Friday
Call 580-326-8304 for an appointment

Enjoy stopping for red lights

ROBBERS CAVE STATE PARK, OK

CHOCTAW COUNTRY
Hurry Up and Slow Down
CHOCTAWCOUNTRY.COM

Gregory Eli Pyle



Gregory Eli Pyle, beloved husband, father and grandfather, and former Chief of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, passed from this life into his heavenly home on Oct. 26, 2019. Gregory was born April 25, 1949 in Ft. Bragg, Calif. He spent his childhood in Mendocino, California, before moving to Hugo, Okla. in 1966. He graduated from Hugo High School in 1967, received his Bachelor's degree in Business from Southeastern Oklahoma State University, where he met the love of his life, Patti Gail Baker. They married Sept. 10, 1971, and were blessed with two beautiful children, Andrea and Eric.

Greg Pyle became Chief of the Choctaw Nation in 1997, after serving more than 13 years as the Assistant Chief of the tribe. One of his first initiatives as Chief was to build a long-awaited new hospital in Talihi-na, where his first grandchild was born. Many other facilities were established during Chief Pyle's tenure, including a Diabetes Wellness Center, new clinics in Stigler, McAlester, Atoka, Broken Bow and Idabel, a new Hospitality House adjacent to the hospital, Recovery Center, Women's Treatment Center and mail order pharmacy refill center. Six Independent Living Communities were established for elderly tribal members, giving them safe and affordable homes. In addition, a number of new community centers, Child Development Centers and wellness centers were completed.

Under the positive leadership of Chief Pyle, the Choctaw Nation put families first, with priorities on education, health care and jobs. He dearly loved his tribal members and would not hesitate to take off his coat and give it to anyone he saw in need. His renewed emphasis on economic development resulted in profitable tribal businesses such as gaming centers, manufacturing plants and travel plazas, creating numerous jobs and funding tribal programs. When Chief Pyle retired in April, 2014 after serving 17 years as Chief, the number of Choctaw Nation employees had grown to over 8,000 worldwide.

During Chief Pyle's tenure, many new programs and services were initiated, including education programs such as STAR, child development centers, the academic program at Jones Academy, and the Career Development Program. Other new services included the Veterans Advocacy Program, sports and cultural camps for youth, and the School of Choctaw Language to ensure the Choctaw native language would not be lost. He was asked to testify on numerous occasions before the U.S. Congress and addressed students at Harvard University.

His many accomplishments notwithstanding, Greg Pyle considered his greatest achievement in life was his family. He loved them unconditionally. Family vacations usually involved snow skiing, hiking, or a trip to the beach. He enjoyed nothing more than spending time with his precious grandchildren, teaching them to fish, ski and ride bikes. A day at Granddad's house included riding four-wheelers, paddling kayaks around on the pond, cutting bamboo to make frog gigs, and roasting marshmallows by a roaring fire out in the pergola.

Gregory Pyle is survived by his wife Patti of the home, daughter Andrea and husband Anton Pavlovsky of Mansfield, Texas; son Eric Pyle of Calera, Oklahoma; grandchildren Gabriel Pavlovsky, Addeline Pavlovsky, Skyler Pyle, Elias Pyle, Brynna Pyle, Chandler Fernandez, Parker Fernandez, special grandson Matthew Holday; brothers Alvin Pyle, Jr. and wife Joetta of Cold-spring, Texas, Shaun Pyle and wife Christy of Hugo, Oklahoma; stepfather Donald Wilmouth of Durant, Oklahoma; many cousins, nieces, nephews, family and friends. He was preceded in death by his father, Alvin Pyle, Sr., mother Juanita Wilmouth and sister Sharon Fleming.

For the full obituary, please visit [Holmes-Coffey-Murray Funeral Home](#).

Donald Edwin Thompson



Donald Edwin Thompson, 68, passed away Sept. 9, 2019.

Donald was born Sept. 26, 1950 in Talihi-na, Okla. to Turner Lee Thompson Sr. and Ferris Armstrong Thompson.

He was preceded in death by his parents; sister Betty Baken; brothers Bobby Thompson and Turner Lee Thompson Jr.; grandson Roman Lee Kirkes; and son-in-law Nathan Kirkes.

Donald is survived by his significant other Sandra Mantooth; daughters Marissa Guerrero, Maranda Kirkes, and Krisanne Thompson; grandchildren Agustín Guerrero Jr., Elisia Thompson, and Joni Thompson, Hunter Lee Brown and Teeaira Thompson.

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

Billy Wayne Torno



Billy Wayne Torno, 80, passed away Oct. 4, 2019.

Billy was born Nov. 3, 1938, in Floresville, Texas, to Otto Karl and Maggie Torno.

He was preceded in death by his parents; and brothers Oscar, Karl and Pat Torno.

Billy is survived by wife Marilyn Torno; daughters Cindy Minor and spouse Benny, and Connie Beseda and spouse Tim; sons Derald Torno and spouse Mary of Sandia, and Gary Torno and spouse Jana; sister Alpha Lee Rapach; nine grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

For the full obituary, please visit [Rest Haven Funerals](#).

Barbara Annette Scott



Barbara Annette Scott, 65, passed away Sept. 22, 2019.

Barbara was born July 25, 1954, in Talihi-na, Okla. to Thomas Willie and Ordie Marie (Anderson) Willie.

She was preceded in death by her parents; daughters Savannah Scott and Kelly King; siblings James Willie, Steve Willie, Bill Willie, Doyle "Butch" King, Gwen Impson and June King; brother Bruce Willie; and maternal grandmother, Millie Anderson.

Barbara is survived by husband Martin Scott of the home; son Keno King and spouse Johanna; daughter: Kacey Carney and spouse J.J.; grandchildren Kiah, Deacon, Bishop and Shepherd King; brother Roy King and spouse Connie; and numerous nieces, nephews, and other family and friends.

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

Billy Joe Childers



Billy Joe Childers, 81, passed away Sept. 4, 2019.

Bill was born Jan. 22, 1938, in Coalgate, Okla., to Andrew Jackson Childers and Ruby (Summers) Pebworth.

He was preceded in death by his parents; and brother Harvey Childers.

Bill is survived by wife Cherie Childers; sons Ricky Childers and family, Billy Joe Childers and family, and Brian Childers and family; daughters Vicki Bleak and family and Sandy Childers and family.

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

Billie Patsy Daney Engavo



Billie Patsy Daney Engavo, 85, passed away June 27, 2019.

Billie was born June 7, 1934, in Cromwell, Oklahoma to Benjamin and Edith Daney.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband Joseph Engavo Sr.; sisters Peggy Shoemaker and Louise Paddelty; brother Hershel Daney; sons Benjamin Engavo Sr., Harry Engavo and Joseph Engavo Jr.; four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Billie is survived by sister Jean Florence; brother Dan Daney; daughters Melody Brown and spouse Steve, Edith Woodley and spouse Randy, Vicki Engavo, Theresa Engavo, and Eunice Engavo; sons Eric Engavo, John Engavo; 24 grandchildren; 66 great-grandchildren; 21 great-great-grandchildren; as well as numerous family members.

For the full obituary, please visit [Biskinik](#).

Betty Louise (Cates) Pogue



Betty Louise (Cates) Pogue, 95, passed away Sept. 22, 2019.

Betty was born Feb. 8, 1924, in Roff, Okla., to Jethro Buel Cates and Bertie Mae (Moran) Cates.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband Raymond Pogue; and son-in-law, Thomas Weddle.

Betty is survived by children Jerry Pogue, and spouse Rosie; Paulette Canada and spouse Garvin; Brenda Potts and spouse Clyde; Janet Weddle, Bobby Pogue, and spouse Hazell, and Ray Pogue; grandchildren John Pogue, Rodney Pogue, Barbara Green, Bryan Canada, Jennifer Merchant, Joe Weddle, Inez Franko, Robert Pogue, and Lisa Jordan; great-grandchildren Kristi King, Katherine Rhodes, Brendan Smith, Reagan Smith, Peyton Canada, Aaron Canada, Conner Canada, Nolan Canada, Jayden Merchant, Jaxon Merchant, Katelyn Jordan, MaKayla Jordan, Bethany Pogue, Xavier Franko, Lucas Franko, Joeline Franko, Leighton Pogue, Waylon Pogue, Graydon Weddle, Londyn Weddle, Alexander Franco; and great-grandchildren Max Rhodes, Brodie Rhodes, Sawyer Rhodes and Margaret King.

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

Betty Faye Smith



Betty Faye Smith (Brooks), 81, passed away April 7th, 2019.

Betty was born February 12, 1938, in Poteau, Oklahoma, to JB and Jessie Pauline Brooks (Broome).

Betty was preceded in death by her parents; and son Luis Montes.

Betty is survived by daughters Juliana Smith and Rachel Cole, and Rebecca Mueller and spouse Dale; son Howard Smith; grandsons Tom Daly, Devin Sperling, Eddie and Alan Uthoff, and Dakota Smith; and granddaughters Jenna Scannell and Mercedes Shaw and spouse Chris Wilson; and numerous other extended family and special friends.

For full obituary, please visit [Biskinik](#).

Charlene Columbus



Charlene Columbus, 61, passed away Sept. 26, 2019.

Charlene was born March 17, 1958, in DeQueen, Arkansas, to Williston Lee Wesley Sr. and Delia (Carterby) Wesley.

She was preceded in death by her mother; grandparents Sema Battiest-Carterby, WWI Code Talker Ben Carterby; brothers Williston Wesley Jr. and Bobby Wesley; sister-in-law Sharon Summers; brothers-in-law William Lee Columbus and Michael Columbus; aunts Mary Neely, Margaret Billy and Josephine Taylor; uncles Calvin & Drex Carterby and Joseph Wesley; nephew Billy Joe Davis; niece Cheri Wallace; special friends Barbara Giddens and Charlene Harley.

Charlene is survived by her father; husband Johnny Columbus Sr.; children Charolette Pondexter (Randy), Johnny Columbus Jr. and Gary Ward (Brandi); brothers Bennie Wesley (Lisa), Jimmy Wesley and (Debbie), Howard Wesley and (Lemanda); sisters Geraldine Wright, Janelle Wesley (Frank), Jolene Davis (Greenedale), Edith Jones and (Danny); sister-in-law Virginia Wesley; grandchildren Shareece, Ethan, Cash, Donte, Randy, Allyssa, Jashawn, MeJon'e, Analia, Eden, Cecil, Taya and Takara; great-grandchildren Marquis and Kylee; mother and father-in-law, James and Ida Haddock; sisters-in-law, Patsy Columbus, Carol Nease (Dan), Malena Lewis (Mike); several nieces, nephews, special cousins, Naomi Billy, Louise Laney, Laura Gibson, Rhoda Taylor; a host of family and friends.

For the full obituary please visit [Bunch Singleton Funeral Home](#).

Gloria Jean Welch



Gloria Jean Welch, 77, passed away Sept. 27, 2019.

Gloria was born April 15, 1942, near Bennington, Oklahoma to Earl and Virginia Percell.

She was preceded in death by her parents.

Gloria is survived by her husband Clabe Welch; son Clete and spouse Myka Welch; son Chance and wife Leslie Welch; grandchildren, Jackson, Cale, Cyllie and Andrew.

For the full obituary, please visit [Holmes-Coffey-Murray](#).

Cleatus Faye Wickersham



Cleatus Faye Wickersham, 77, passed away Oct. 21, 2019.

Cleatus was born March 23, 1942, in Muskogee, Okla., to Lindsey and Sophia Greer.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband Davy Wickersham; mother-in-law and father-in-law Cecil and LaVerne Wickersham; and brother-in-law Paul Wickersham.

Cleatus is survived by son Cary Wickersham and spouse Lorna; daughter Renee Colburn and spouse David; grandchildren Cash Taylor and spouse Misty, Ashton Hinkle and spouse Brian, Victor Wickersham and spouse Jaimmie, Morgan Colburn, Joshua Wickersham; great-great-grandchildren Nauyda, Cali, Katelyn, Taylor, Chloe and Cairo Wickersham, and Eliot Hinklesisters-in-law Judy Drummonds and spouse Ray, and Paula Wickersham.

For the full obituary please visit [Mallory-Martin Funeral Home and Crematory](#).

Ella Byington



Ella Byington, 86, passed away Oct. 18, 2019.

Ella was born February 7, 1933 in Daisy, Okla., to Albert H. and Bessie (Cartledge) Byington.

She was preceded in death by her parents; and five siblings.

Ella is survived by numerous family members and friends.

For the full obituary, please visit [Bishop Funeral Service](#).

Bob Franklin



Bob Franklin, 83, passed away October 18, 2019.

Bob was born March 9, 2019, in Caney, Oklahoma to Alfus Ray and Ada Alga (Moran) Franklin.

He was preceded in death by his parents; son Dennis Franklin; brothers A.J. Franklin, James Franklin; sisters Louise Franklin Hauser, Patsy Avant; and grandson Caleb Franklin.

Bob is survived by wife Maxine Franklin; sons Mike Franklin and spouse Donna, Allen Franklin and spouse Ladonna; grandsons Robert Franklin and spouse Danielle of, Derik Franklin and spouse Melissa, Aaron Franklin and spouse Shana, Daron Franklin, Michael Franklin, Colt Franklin, Coby Franklin and spouse Alex, Cort Franklin and wife Sarah, Chase Franklin and spouse Rainy; granddaughters LaShona Lay and spouse Phillip, Caitlyn Franklin; brother Alvin Franklin and spouse Syble; 12 Great-grandchildren, numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and other extended family.

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

Anna Tallant



Anna Tallant, 95, passed away September 1, 2019, in Bakersfield, Calif.

Anna was born July 17, 1924, in Boswell, Oklahoma.

She was preceded in death by her parents and brother Billy.

Anna is survived by her sister Lillie Kwee; niece Karen Solomon; great-niece Dr. Megan Gau and spouse Leo; baby Madison and special friends Hermenia and her family Sandy, Rose, Robert and other extended family members.

For the full obituary, please visit [Biskinik](#).

Mozelle Irene Gatewood



Mozelle Irene Gatewood, 96, passed away Oct. 1, 2019.

Moselle was born Nov. 9, 1922, in McCurtain, Okla., to James Elmer Gatewood and Bertie Lorena (Davis) Gatewood.

She was preceded in death by her parents; siblings Lucille Ragains, Dorothy Scarbor and Vivian Reed; children Cecil E. Harrison, Shari K. Ruch and Dennis L. Harrison.

Mozelle is survived by son-in-law Jerry Ruch; granddaughter Debra G. Forzetti; grandson Robert J. Forzetting; and granddaughter-in-Law Brooke Forzetting; and her beloved and devoted dog Bella.

For the full obituary, please visit [Burkhart Funeral Service](#).

Clara Emmalou Pope Beal



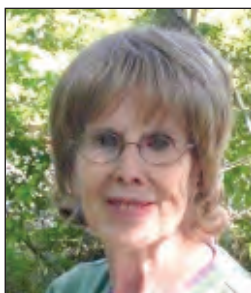
Clara Emmalou Pope Beal, 90, passed away Oct. 3, 2019.

She was born Nov. 5, 1928, in Caddo, Okla., to E. T. and Ida Mae Seago Pope.

Clara is survived by daughter Cindy Foor and spouse John; grandchildren RaNelle Durant, and Jeff Durant and spouse Jill; great grandchildren Angelica Lopez, Gloria Albright and spouse Sean, and Stevie Ann Durant; great-great-grandchildren Melony and Dominic Albright; step-grandson Jason Foor and spouse Michelle and step-great-granddaughter Emmerson Foor.

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

Maxine Leatherwood



Maxine Leatherwood, 84, passed away August 17, 2019.

Maxine was born August 31, 1934, in Grand Saline, Texas, to John and Ruby Hudson Combs.

She was preceded in death by her parents; three brothers; sister; and granddaughter Tracie Faye Land.

Maxine is survived by her sons Mike Humphreys and spouse Terrie, and Tim Humphreys and spouse Brandy; daughters Karen Harris and husband Rick, and Charlotte Paasch; sister Ruthie Joe Henderson; 11 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren; and numerous other relatives and friends.

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

ITI FABVSSA

Historic Preservation brings traditional Choctaw skirt back to life

Since March of 2018, the Historic Preservation department staff and tribal members have been working together to learn about Choctaw textiles that go back thousands of years. Through this community effort, we learned enough to create a completed an vlhkuna, a skirt, modeled after a 1700s bison wool and plant fiber skirt. According to an anonymous French chronicler writing in the mid-1700s, Choctaw women made “a fabric, partly of (bison) wool, and partly of fibre from a very strong herb which they spun. This fabric was double like two-sided handkerchiefs and thick as canvas, (about 22.5 inches wide and 33.75 inches long).”

The first step towards making the skirt was to use the 1700s description to help us plan for the materials and steps in the project. We determined how much yarn we needed, what size the skirt would need to be for the model, what pattern we would use, and how we would use the bison and plant materials together. We decided to use dogbane as our plant material. While it appears to be a simple stick, dogbane is a widely used native textile material in the Southeast and across North America. In the end, we needed about 400 yards of dogbane yarn, 2-ply or doubled. This likely took us about 450 stalks of processed dogbane. As for the yvvnvsh hishi, or bison wool, we needed 250 yards of 2-ply or double yarn. This ended up taking only about a third of the wool from one hide.

In order to get our materials for the project, we had to find these, process them, and spin them. The dogbane came partly from the Nan Awaya Heritage Farmstead in Antlers, Oklahoma and partly from the Morton Arboretum in Naperville, Illinois. The dogbane from Illinois was nearly twice the size of that in Oklahoma and would be more like the size of the plant in our homeland where the soil would allow for more growth.

Some of the dogbane sat out before and after harvesting on the grass and was exposed to the weather. This helped break down the bark and free the fiber for later use. Others we processed just with our hands. All of this had to be separated from the inside of the stalk and then arranged and spun into a single yarn. Then, to make the yarn stronger, we doubled these yarns and spun them together. For the bison hair, we used a blade to cut the

hair from half of a hide. The other half of the hide we removed the hair by soaking the hide in water and wood ash for several weeks. This loosened the hair and then we pulled the hair from the hide. The hair was then washed and carded (brushed) and spun like the dogbane yarn.

Once we had enough yarn to start with, we set up the skirt to begin the next step: twining. First, we measured out lengths of bison yarn to form the vpi, warp, and then arranged the cut lengths onto a dowel rod. This rod was hung from the ceiling or laid so the yarn hung down freely. The skirt was then ready to be twined. In order to twine, we took two long pieces of dogbane yarn and twisted them together around each hanging bison yarn on the dowel rod. This process is an older form of weaving and can be used to make clothing, bags, shoes, and baskets. We twined two loose cloths the same size and laid them side by side, joining them at the waistband. This was based off the skirt description from the 1700s and gave the skirt an airy and soft texture. The skirt finishing had looped edges and a fringe at the hem with a long braid to tie it up.

The best way to learn is to make. It is hard to understand just how much hair is on a bison or how many dogbane stalks it takes to produce a garment until you process them with your own hands. The skirt is beautifully soft, warm, and drapes nicely. Many modern spinners consider bison hair impossible to spin by itself. Bison down is short and does not have as much grab as sheep's wool. However, several of the group contributed to processing and spinning bison yarn for the skirt. It takes practice and patience to learn to spin this fiber, but the challenge is a testament to the imponna, skill and knowledge, of the many Choctaw makers before us. We also learned that dogbane is a fiber that does not handle friction well. When having to redo some weaving, it was clear that the fiber grew weaker. Again, women had to know their materials and their craft, being sure not to make mistakes that would cost time and materials.

Making the bison-dogbane skirt was part of a larger project to show the rich textile history in Choctaw lifeways for thousands of years. Consider that each woman



Submitted photos

Above, Textile group with near complete skirt. Below, Completed dogbane-bison skirt.

and community had their own spin on each item they made and each item had to have been made by multiple hands coming together on a project. Each item made was a unique creation and innovation continues to be a part of that process today. We learn, make, and use textiles as part of learning about our identity and appreciating the incredible skill of our ancestors. See past Iti Fabvssa articles at choctawnation.com/history-culture/history/iti-fabvssa to read about other crafts and textiles that our ancestors passed down to us. The Historic Preservation department has been coordinating textile classes, presentations, and projects since 2018. This item is just one of five twined skirts that will be on display in the upcoming Chahta Nowvt Aya Cultural Center.

Contact Jennifer Byram at jbyram@choctawnation.com or 1-800-522-6170 ext. 2512 for more information about Choctaw textiles and how you can get involved.



Bui celebrates birthday, graduation



Aysha Bui celebrated her 21st birthday on September 14. She is a graduate of Shawnee High School. She graduated from Seminole college in May.

She is now attending The University of Oklahoma and studying Psychology. She recently joined a sorority there for women in the professional field.

Aysha is the daughter of Christine Bui of Shawnee and Wiley and Jenny Bui of Shawnee. She is the granddaughter of Nhan And Noreen Bui of Shawnee and Olin and Bernice Williams of Bennington. She has two sisters, one brother and aunts and uncles who support her and are very proud of her accomplishments.



Historical book on Choctaw traditional food now available

“Choctaw Food: Remembering the Land, Rekindling Ancient Knowledge,” a beautiful 299-page hardback volume, written by Dr. Ian Thompson and published by the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, is now available for purchase. Thompson, who is the Senior Director of the Choctaw Nation Historic Preservation Department and Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, pulls together years of hands-on learning and focused research for a book published as a labor of love for the Choctaw community. It is an historically important book not only for the Choctaw people to be able to rekindle ancient recipes and wisdom, but it is equally important for those who study the Choctaw tribe, its foods, culture and traditions as well.

“Choctaw Food: Remembering the Land, Rekindling Ancient Knowledge,” is available for purchase online at www.choctawstore.com, the Choctaw Stores in Durant and Colbert, Okla. or at the Choctaw Nation Museum at Tvshka Homma (918-569-4465).

Wilson graduates from Vanderbilt

Daniel Christopher Wilson graduated with honors from the Peabody College at Vanderbilt University May 10, 2019, with a Bachelor of Science majoring in Mathematics and Education.

Daniel has accepted a position teaching math at Overton High School in Nashville, Tennessee.

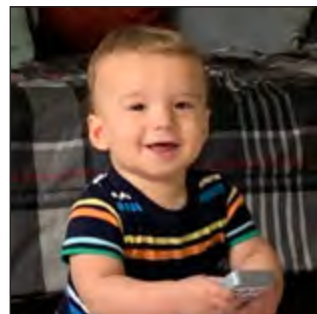
While at Vanderbilt, Daniel was a member of BYX fraternity and was on the Dean's list. He also had a scholarship which allowed him to have a paid summer internship at any place of his choosing. He chose to spend his summer teaching Afghan refugees in the sweltering heat of New Delhi, India.

While there, he met his fiancée, Jenny Sheeren. The couple plan to wed in late December.

The Wilson family would like to thank the Choctaw Nation for their financial support for both Daniel and his older brother Michael.



Curtis celebrates first year



Grayson Lewis Curtis celebrated his first birthday October 16. He is the son of Evan and Kelly Curtis, Grandson of John and Sheila Hampton Curtis and the great-grandson of the late Lewis and Lu Hampton.

Tamaka ties for first place



Choctaw member, Robert Bailey, a.k.a. Tamaka entered a Magic contest and tied for first place for the title of “2019 Northern California's Stage Magician of the Year.”

Tamaka is the son of Dorothy Durant, formerly living in the Holly Creek area. Tamaka has been doing magic for over 30 years and to win this title he says, renews his believe in the saying, “you can teach an old dog new tricks.”

Help Choctaws get counted during the 2020 census

The U.S. Census, which is conducted every ten years, will take place in 2020. Field workers hired by the Census Bureau will be coming to neighborhoods between now and next spring to verify residential addresses. If they come to your home, please make sure they have your address correct.

The Census questionnaire, due to be mailed on April 1, 2020, will include a question about the respondent's ethnic heritage. Federal agencies use the official Census results to determine the amount of money made available to the tribe through grants. The first step to correctly filling out the Census will be to ensure every potential recipient receives it.

Only 24,000 Choctaw Nation tribal members indicated their tribal affiliation in the 2010 U.S. Census. The tribal membership is over 200,000.

Shape
your future
START HERE >

United States®
Census
2020

James Parrish named distinguished alumni

By Charlie Clark

James Parrish, Executive Director of School Programs for the Choctaw Nation and an enrolled tribal member, has been named a Distinguished Alumni for Southeastern Oklahoma State University. The award was presented Friday, Oct. 25, at the Distinguished Awards Banquet held in SOSU's Visual and Performing Arts Center.

In his acceptance speech, Parrish repeated the refrain that SOSU offered him and his family, and continues to offer all who attend, “hope and opportunity.”

After retiring from 34 years in public education in positions that ranged from teacher to superintendent, Parrish began a new career in the Choctaw Nation's Language Department. Among other accomplishments, he is credited with working with the State of Oklahoma Department of Education to have Choctaw recognized as a “world language,” which allowed Choctaw to be taught in public schools.

Parrish received his bachelor's degree in Business Education from SOSU in 1975. In 1993, he earned his master's in Public School Administration, also from SOSU.



Photo by Chris Jennings

Choctaw Nation employees held an impromptu parade for James Parish at the headquarters office in Durant.

Thanksgiving Meals



The volunteers stage plates of Thanksgiving food ready to be served at the Poteau community center.



Bently Burrough plays with a pumpkin before the Thanksgiving dinner in Poteau.



Jade Cossey speaks with those waiting for the Thanksgiving meal to begin in Poteau.



Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. helps to serve the food at the Hugo Thanksgiving meal.



Tara Sloan helps prepare the food at the Hugo Thanksgiving meal.



Amanda Rinehart spreads joy and whipped topping during the Thanksgiving meal in Hugo.



The Coalgate Thanksgiving meal was enjoyed by all ages.



Volunteers prepare plates of food at the Wilburton Thanksgiving meal.



Maggie Anderson is excited to be served her plate at the Coalgate Thanksgiving meal.



Chief Gary Batton greets attendees of the Coalgate Thanksgiving meal.



The winner of a Thanksgiving turkey is presented with her prize at the Battiest Thanksgiving meal.



Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. and Chief Gary Batton talk with attendees of the Tvshka Homma Thanksgiving meal.



Everyone works together to prepare the Tvshka Homma Thanksgiving meal.

Thanksgiving Meals



Amanda and Nettie Zilliox wait for their Thanksgiving meal at Wright City.



Anthony Dillard and Trecia Alford share a conversation before the Atoka Thanksgiving meal.



"The Lord's Prayer" is performed by the American Indian Leaders Youth Council from Broken Bow.



Volunteers share a laugh while preparing to serve the Thanksgiving meal in Bethel.



Chief Gary Batton stopped by to help serve the Battiest Thanksgiving meal.



Turkey, dressing, and all the fixings were served at the Battiest Thanksgiving meal.



Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. hands out Thanksgiving meals in Broken Bow.



A large crowd gathered at the Bethel Thanksgiving meal.



Jack Austin Sr. talks to the crowd in attendance at the Wright City Thanksgiving meal.



District 12 singers entertain attendees of the Crowder Thanksgiving meal.



District 12 Little Miss Checotah McCoy and Choctaw Nation Jr. Miss, Cheyenne McCoy at the Crowder Thanksgiving meal.

Infrastructure work improving the Nation for all

By Bradley Gernand

The car was a strange invention in that it preceded the means available to use it. “The automobile was born into a practically roadless world,” one observer noted in 1916, as sales were beginning to take off. That was certainly true in the 10.5 counties of the Choctaw Nation, where automobile sales were brisk through the advent of the Great Depression, but the roads on which to drive them were almost nonexistent.

All-season, all-weather, paved roads were not widespread in the Choctaw Nation until the 1950s, due to the mountainous terrain. Great Depression-era works projects were a big boost, adding grading, culverts, and gravel to what had been dirt trails. It remains an expensive and difficult task to maintain the roads which exist, much less paving additional miles of roadway. And roads are not the only regional need.

Parking lots cost tens of thousands of dollars to construct. A typical school parking lot costs at least \$60,000—the Choctaw Nation Transportation Program knows—as it has paved more than one. Roads, however, remain in the greatest demand, and Choctaw transportation officials work with county commissioners across the 10.5 counties to know when, where, and how to assist.

The criterion for determining Choctaw Nation involvement is whether tribal members will be impacted materially by the work. From time to time hundreds of Choctaw families are impacted by these road projects. Over one



Photo Courtesy of Oklahoma Historical Society

This was the state of Indian Highway, ten miles south of Talihi-na, Okla., in 1947. Highways in this region of the Choctaw Nation weren’t fully paved until the early 1980s due to the mountainous terrain and sparse population. The Choctaw Nation now constructs and maintains roads in the region, such as this one, in cooperation with county commissioners.

thousand Choctaw families continue to enjoy 13 miles of road improvements made in 2016, for example; and families, particularly school students, in the Battiest and Bethel areas save seven miles per trip between the two areas thanks to the “Bethel cutoff” from Broken Bow, constructed by the Choctaw Nation. It brought the two communities much closer by connecting them more directly.

In June, the Choctaw Nation paved several miles of Pigeon Roost Road near Boswell, in cooperation with the local Choctaw County commissioner, Ronnie Thompson. The three-mile project benefits 15 Choctaw families and is traveled by 75 to 100 vehicles per day. In December, the tribe paved Holiday Road east of Antlers, a project which benefits 10 Choctaw families, in coordination with County Commissioner Mike Brittingham. These relatively small-scale interventions have a major impact on the families—both tribal and non-tribal—who live along those routes.

In certain circumstances road projects are intended to help the municipalities in which Choctaw Nation facilities are located. A recent example is the Durant Casino and Resort, which is currently undergoing a large expansion. A new hotel tower is rising, along with a multistory parking garage. The tribe will build an intersection on South 9th Avenue in Durant, in order to help the city.

Construction continues, with many projects in various stages of design or construction. Biskinik will report on these as they come to completion.

Governor and tribes still at odds on gaming compact

By Kellie Matherly

On Nov. 14, Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt held a press conference to reaffirm his belief that the state’s tribal gaming compact will expire at the end of December, a position that could lead to a legal clash with Oklahoma tribal nations. In 2004, the state approached tribal leaders with a proposal for expanding gaming over time in exchange for the exclusive right to operate casinos in Oklahoma. Upon approval from the Department of the Interior, the compact went into effect early in 2005.

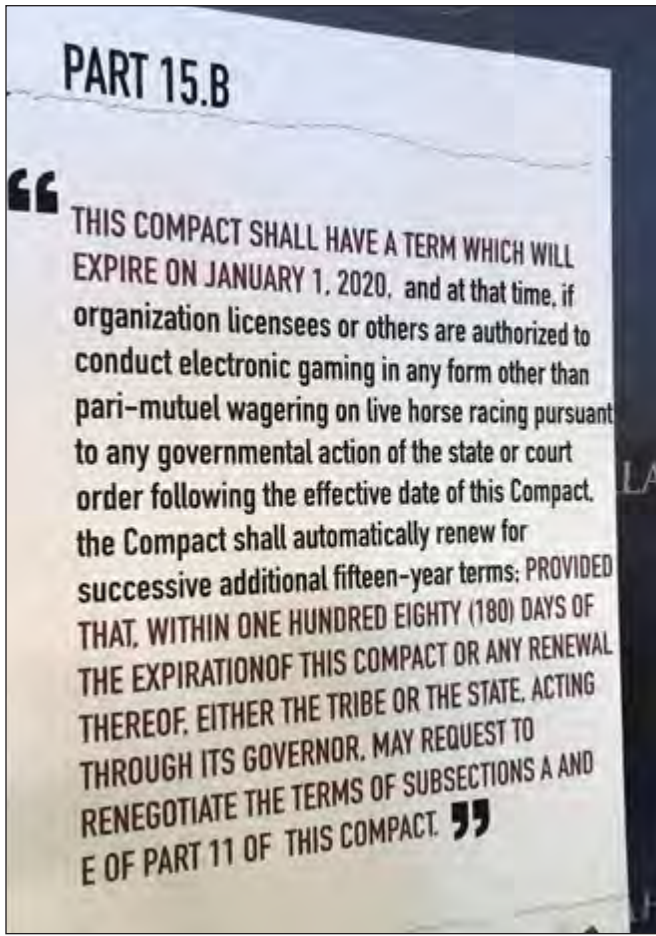
During the press conference, Stitt repeatedly focused on the opening words of the first sentence of the compact which state, “This compact shall have a term which will expire on January 1, 2020.” Tribal leaders maintain, however, that the existing gaming compact language allows for automatic renewal if certain factors are triggered. Legal advisors for the tribes are confident that these auto-renewal factors are in place.

In response to the governor’s message, Stephen Greetham, Senior Attorney for the Chickasaw Nation, pointed out that the governor did not mention the auto-renewal. “The most immediate question the state has never been able to answer for us is how do they make sense of the clause in there that says, ‘Shall automatically renew’.” According to Greetham, the state was trying to save the horse racing industry in 2004 when the compact was originally written, which led to the language in the compact indicating that the agreement would automatically renew as long as electronic gaming is conducted at horse tracks.

In August, at least 30 tribal leaders signed a resolution pledging to maintain a unified stance on the gaming compact. Without acknowledgment of the automatic renewal provision, there will be no negotiation of new exclusivity rates. Communications between the governor’s office and tribal leaders broke down in October when Attorney General Mike Hunter failed to recognize the automatic renewal provision of the compact officially.

The current gaming compact does allow for the renegotiation of certain terms, including the percentage tribes pay to Oklahoma for the exclusive right to operate casinos. Stitt claims the tribes pay 4%-6%, an amount considerably lower than tribes in Connecticut, New York, and Florida who pay up to 25%. When asked what he considered to be a fair deal with the tribes, Stitt indicated he would start at 25%.

In a response to Governor Stitt’s press conference, Matt Morgan, Chairman of the Oklahoma Indian Gaming Association took issue with these figures. According to



A photo of the display provided by Governor Stitt during a Oklahoma City press conference containing the portion of the document that is under question.

Morgan, the three states Governor Stitt chose as examples are the only three currently paying more than Oklahoma tribes. “95% of compacts fall at our rate or below,” Morgan said. “I do want to clarify, our maximum rate is 10%, not six...We’re well with in the norms of paying in exclusivity with the rest of the country,” he added. Morgan also pointed out that there are far fewer tribes operating gaming in Stitt’s examples, and most do not have compacts with their state.

In addition, Morgan says the governor has failed to offer anything of value to the tribes in exchange for higher fees. Under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act of 1988, there has to be a “concession of beneficial value.” According to Morgan, the IGRA prevents tribes from paying more unless the state offers more, which has not happened yet. “We live up to our side of the bargain; we continually have met our responsibility; we’ve exceeded our projections and we feel like it’s a good deal for tribes and the state,” Morgan continued.

Governor Stitt claimed in his press conference that the tribes’ refusal to work with him on this issue will cause “extreme uncertainty if we don’t have a new compact before Jan. 1, 2020,” but Morgan calls this line of reasoning a false narrative. Greetham also responded to the governor’s mention of uncertainty. “The only uncertainty is that which [the governor] is trying to put over a negotiation table as a leverage play. That’s unfortunate. Tribal leaders deserve better than that. Oklahoma deserves better than that,” said Greetham.

According to Morgan, Greetham, and tribal leadership, the tribes will continue to operate as usual on January 1, 2020. “[The governor] would have to go to court, and he would have to get some type of order to shut the casinos down. Barring that, we’re just going to continue to operate, and we’re going to continue remitting our revenue sharing payments to the state, and we’re going to continue to grow as we’ve been doing for the past fifteen years,” Greetham added.

“I think there’s plenty of opportunity to move forward, but Governor Stitt needs to be able to come to the table after reading the entire document and talk to tribes on a government to government basis,” said Morgan.



Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma TOGETHER WE’RE MORE

December 2019

In This Issue

- 2 Faith Family Culture
- 3 Chief Pyle
- 4 Council Corner
- 5 Health
- 6 Education
- 7 Notes to the Nation
- 8 Obituaries
- 9 Iti Fabvssa
- 10 Thanksgiving Meals
- 11 Thanksgiving Meals



Page 1:
Nation mourns passing of Chief Pyle.



Page 4:
Thanksgiving Meals



Page 11:
Domestic violence awareness at the Choctaw Nation.

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

ACHIEVE YOUR DREAM OF BEING A DISTRICT PRINCESS OR TRIBAL ROYALTY

CHOCTAW PRINCESS IN TRAINING

JANUARY 4
WRIGHT CITY COMMUNITY CENTER
IDABEL, BROKEN BOW, BETHEL, ANTLERS AND WRIGHT CITY

JANUARY 18
DURANT COMMUNITY CENTER
ATOKA, DURANT AND HUGO

FEBRUARY 8
MCLESTER COMMUNITY CENTER
COALGATE, CROWDER, MCLESTER AND WILBURTON

FEBRUARY 15
TALIHIINA COMMUNITY CENTER
POTEAU, SMITHVILLE, SPIRO, STIGLER AND TALIHIINA

ALL TRAININGS ARE 11 AM - 2 PM | PARTICIPANTS AGES 8 - 22

CONTACT
800-522-6170 EXT 2192 OR 2504 | FSELF@CHOCTAWNATION.COM

Choctaw Nation Cultural Services

CHOCTAWNATION.COM

Stay Connected to the Nation
CHOCTAWNATION.COM

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

CHOCTAW NATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
AUTO
PRESORT STD

BISKINIK
P.O. Box 1210
Durant OK 74702-1210