



January 2018 Issue

Talihina Child Care Center Receives ABCD Award

Went Above and Beyond the Call of Duty to Save Child’s Life

by KENDRA GERMANY

On Dec. 8, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma honored the Talihina Child Care Center with the Above and Beyond the Call of Duty (ABCD) Award.

The ABCD Award pays tribute to an employee or group of employees that have performed above or beyond their job description and requirements of their position. This award is the highest award given each year by the tribe.

The group was nominated for the award due to their courageous act of saving a child’s life.

On Sept. 21, Assistant Director of Child Care Shelly Osborn received a call no one ever wants to receive. It was from the Talihina Child Care Center Director Jackie James, stating that a child at the facility had stopped breathing.

Those are words no one wants to hear. The events that transpired that day would change the lives of everyone involved.

According to the center’s staff, the day began like any other typical day. However, that all changed when the children went to lunch.

During lunch, Toddler Classroom Master Teacher Teresa Autry noticed one student had spilled their milk and was slumped over leaning to one side. In that same moment, Three Year Old and Up Classroom Lead Teacher Odessa Hamilton noticed the child was either choking or having a seizure.

Both Autry and Hamilton sprang into action to help the child. They first began doing back thrusts in hopes of clearing any food that may be blocking the child’s airway. Autry then looked into the child’s mouth for food particles, only to find that the child’s teeth were clenched and she was foaming at the mouth, which meant that she was in fact having a seizure.

Both teachers knew that they needed to do something quickly. Autry called for Center Director Jackie James for help. James immediately instructed a cook to call 911, as she helped administer first aid. In a dramatic turn of events, the ambulance would not be able to make it to the center for at least 30 minutes. The Child Care Center employees knew that the child couldn’t afford to wait that long, as she was already turning blue.

“At that point, we knew time was precious and that there was no time

for mistakes,” said Hamilton. “I looked at Jackie and she looked at me. I said Jackie, we don’t have 30 minutes.”

“She was turning blue and wasn’t breathing at all, so I said we need to take her to the emergency room now,” said James. “I handed her to Odessa Hamilton, and we took her to the emergency room. When we got there it was chaos. They took her from us, and we stayed there with her. Odessa dropped to the ground and started praying. I prayed with her to save this baby. It was one of the scariest things we’ve ever had to deal with in our lives,” said an emotional James through tears.

The doctors and nurses worked diligently to resuscitate the child. Hamilton and James kept the faith that the child would pull through.

“Jackie had stepped out to call Mrs. Shelly and I was sitting in the lobby. I could hear this kid crying. I thought to myself please let this be our child. One of the doctors stuck his head through the door, and I looked at him and said, please tell me that’s her. He said yeah, she’s going to be okay. You guys did good,” smiled Hamilton.

The center employees exemplified courage and selflessness during a very stressful time and worked as a team.

Hamilton praised her co-workers for their bravery and teamwork.

“I think, for one thing, we all remained calm. We still had children in the lunchroom that needed to be watched. The children were even great that day. It took all of us. It seemed like a very, very long time but I don’t even think it was 10 minutes. Everybody just remained calm, the kids stayed in their seat. I think we handled it so well that they didn’t even realize what was going on,” said Hamilton.

In the chaos and commotion, the center employees stayed calm. They did all they could to not only keep the child in danger safe, but the other children who witnessed this event calm.

“Jackie James and Odessa Hamilton took the child to the hospital, and the other staff handled the center while they were gone, keeping the other children calm and safe,” said Osborn.

Osborn was very proud of the center employees for their quick thinking and using their training skills.

According to Teresa Autry, the safety of the children is a top priority for the center employees.

“We talk about safety all the time. I’m sure I’m not the only one; I think we all feel the same way. Safety is a priority here. That we keep them safe and protected as much as we can. We never know when something could happen. Life is constantly changing, and we just never know when incidents will happen. We want to be prepared,” said Autry.

Osborn was the one who nominated the Talihina Child Care Center employees for the ABCD Award to recognize them for their efforts.

“I think every day they are impacting children’s lives and they aren’t looking for the recognition, but it is well deserved. I wanted them and other people to realize what these women are doing. I felt that we needed to recognize them.”

That was true. None of the women at the center wanted to take credit or be recognized for their actions. Their only concern was keeping the children in their care safe.

“The only thing that we were worried

about was the child. We were worried about her safety. That’s one thing that we think about daily, we just want to keep the kids safe and not necessarily for recognition. We just worry about these babies. They are just like our own children, that what we look at them as. We don’t look for recognition. I know it sounds crazy, but you just do what you need to do to keep the babies safe,” said James.

The Talihina Child Care Center selflessly went above and beyond the call of duty and inevitably saved a child’s life in the process. There is no doubt why these ladies won this award.

There were three other deserving nominees for the ABCD Award. The nominees were Assistant Chief Pharmacist Ashlee Hardin, Reintegration Coordinator Cynthia Mose, and Technical Support Manager of the School of Choctaw Language JT Wallace.

Each nominee exemplified the Chahta Spirit, going above and beyond the call of duty to bring quality service to the people of the Choctaw Nation.



Photos by Deidre Elrod

Chief Gary Batton presents the Talihina Child Care Center with the 2017 ABCD Award on Dec. 8. The center’s employees showed true bravery and courage when they saved the life of a child in their care on Sept. 21. The ABCD Award is the highest award given each year by the tribe.

CELEBRATING 20

The Chahta Spirit Continues to Grow in the New Year



Chief Gary Batton

Halito and Happy New Year to everyone! We have been growing and changing since the Trail of Tears and I consider every day another opportunity to carry forward the legacy of our ancestors. As we grow, we need to remain true to who we are. Growth and change are normal. As we move forward, we strive to uphold the Choctaw Nation's values in every decision we make and with everyone we meet. One of the things that excites me the most about beginning 2018 is the anticipation of growing more in the Chahta Spirit. This year is going to have some milestone events to celebrate that will impact all of the Choctaw Nation. Twenty years ago the Choctaw Nation had approximately 48,000 members. Today we are closer to 200,000. The new headquarters, which will be opening later

this year, is being constructed to make it easier for members to access programs and services in one location. It is going to increase effectiveness because the staff can work more closely together to meet members' needs. In addition to the increased functionality, the headquarters campus is going to be one of the most striking, significantly important sites in the Choctaw Nation. It will literally be a *chukka lukonli*, or community, where members can visit the headquarters, have a checkup at the clinic, work out in the wellness center, gather at the community center for fellowship, or attend events at the amphitheater by the pond. It will also be near the Choctaw Nation's Child Development Center and Food Distribution Center. The campus is being built on the east side of Hwy. 69/75, a short distance from the Choctaw Casino & Resort Durant, Choctaw Travel Plazas, and the Choctaw KOA RV Park. Construction will begin this year on the west side of Hwy. 69/75 as the dream of a new culture center takes shape. Sue Folsom and her staff in the Cultural Services division have been planning for years, consulting with people across the country, and putting together a plan for a culturally influential destination for everyone to learn about the Choctaw Nation. Folsom, a 35-year employee of the Choctaw Nation, wisely says we don't live in the past, but we remember what the past has done for us. The culture center will

have information and classes to benefit all ages. It isn't only the young who hunger to learn more about our tribe and its culture. There are also adults who haven't had an opportunity to embrace their heritage. As the Choctaw Nation continues to grow, we need to remain true to who we are. Faith, family and culture are guiding principles influencing our goals and decisions. We are united in efforts to raise the standard of living for tribal members, improve effectiveness in operations, and heighten awareness of the tribal culture for everyone. This year, if you have never had the opportunity, I hope you have time to visit our capitol, Tvshka Homma, in the heart of the Choctaw Nation in Pushmataha County, the headquarters complex in Durant, or any area that is important to you and your family. May God bless you in 2018.



Rendering by Frankfurt Short Bruze

Once the new headquarters is completed visitors will be able to use the walking track around the pond and attend events at the amphitheater. The new headquarters is scheduled to be completed later this year. Tribal members will be able to use a variety of services at the new campus.

Jones Academy Guiding Students and Creating Future Leaders



Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.

It's known as a "place to call home." The Choctaw Nation's Jones Academy has been providing a home and education to Native American children for 127 years. I visited the campus of Jones Academy last month to join in its Christmas celebration. As I turned from the highway to begin the drive onto campus, I noticed several brightly colored flags lining the road—each with inspirational words such as integrity, leadership and dedication. The Christmas celebration began with a visit from Santa just after classes ended for the day. Santa and his elves delivered two activity buses to the students, a gift from the Choctaw Nation Division of Commerce. Chief Batton and I had hitched a ride with Santa to deliver the buses as the students filed out of the elementary building. I will never forget the look on their faces—excitement and pure joy. The activity buses, currently white, will be wrapped with a distinctive Choctaw design in black and will be available for transporting stu-

dents round-trip from home or the airport. They will be used to take the newly formed basketball teams to games and their field trips will be much easier for everyone. The students also visit cultural sites, festivals, and museums throughout the year, as well as academic competitions and fun days bowling, skating, and going to the movies. The residential learning center has welcomed students from at least 29 different American Indian tribes. Jones Academy has an Indian Club and provides cultural and traditional programs such as traditional dances and pow wows on campus. Jones Academy is involved in determining a student's interests. They start focusing as early as first grade to find out what the students want to do with their lives and guide them along the right pathway. There are many programs within the Choctaw Nation that can also help along the way. In addition to an award-winning academic program, focus is on developing artistic expression and social skills. Its agriculture program has produced many champions. They are busy now preparing for the Choctaw Nation's annual livestock show in February, county shows, and state fairs in both Oklahoma and Arkansas. Encouragement and drive are accomplishing the best environment at Jones Academy for learning and allowing student-led decision making. They are truly creating leaders.



by Lisa Reed

Jones Academy students greet Santa as he arrives for the Christmas celebration on one of the activity buses. The buses will be used to transport the newly formed basketball team to games. They will also be used to transport students to academic competitions, fun days, pow wows and field trips.

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Youth Work Program

Applications Available:

Monday, January 1, 2018

Eligibility Requirements: Ages 16 – 21 on or before the 1st day of work, reside within 10 ½ counties of the Choctaw Nation, Tribal Membership or CDIB Card... Stay tuned for more details and eligibility requirements.

Applications will be available online only.

For more information contact: WIOA Staff at 1-800-522-6170.

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

BISKINIK

January 2018

KOINCHUSH HVSHI

wildcat month

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The Above and Beyond the Call of Duty, or ABCD Award, is the highest award given each year by the Choctaw Nation. The 2017 recipient is the Talihina Child Care Center. The quick thinking of staff at the child care center saved the life of a child in their care who had to be rushed to the emergency room.

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

Stay Connected.

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

- www.facebook.com/ChoctawNationofOklahoma
- www.twitter.com/ChoctawNationOK
- www.instagram.com/ChoctawNationOK
- www.youtube.com/ChoctawNation



CHOCTAW
COUNTRY

www.ChoctawCountry.com



3

Shopping Simplified

Choctaw Nation WIC Implements E-cards

by APRYL MOCK

Choctaw Nation WIC made receiving WIC benefits easier for families.

On Nov. 6 the new e-card was released three years ahead of the deadline set forth by the USDA.

WIC is a federally funded supplemental nutritional program for women and children.

The new cards offer a variety of benefits for WIC recipients, notes WIC Deputy Director and Nutrition Coordinator Shelly Rector.

Recipients can now purchase the quantities of food they need or want, instead of in bulk.

One card will hold all of the benefits for every household member receiving WIC, whereas before, separate checks were needed.

Recipients may also shop with “mixed baskets,” according to Rector.

“They don’t have to separate their WIC foods from their shopping items because the card separates them during the transaction,” Rector said.

The card has also made the WIC program more environmentally friendly by eliminating paper checks and folders.

Apart from the direct benefits, the card will also help recipients avoid stigma. According to Rector, “The card can stay in a wallet, just like personal credit cards and participants will not have the stigma of being identified as a WIC participant.”

The Choctaw Nation partnered with six other tribal programs to make the new e-card a reality.



The new e-cards supplied by the Choctaw Nation WIC program will make obtaining healthy groceries simple. Recipients will be able to manage multiple WIC accounts within their household, eliminating the hassle of multiple checks. Sleek and discreet, the e-card works to end the stigma of being a recipient.

NURSERY NEWS

Micah Ray Kenneth Toussaint



Micah Ray Kenneth Toussaint was born June 25, 2017. He weighed 7 pounds 13 ounces and was 20.5 inches long.

Micah is the son of Cassandra Toussaint. He is the grandson of Stephanie John-Schafer and Scott Schafer of The Woodlands, Texas, and Kenneth and Tina Toussaint of New Orleans, Louisiana. Micah is the great-grandson of the late Stephen John and great-

great-grandson of the late Raymond and Adaline John.

Lillie Susanna Able



Lillie Susanna Able was born on Nov. 1, 2017. She weighed 6 pounds, 15 ounces and was 19 3/4 inches long.

Lillie was welcomed into the world by her parents David Able and Bethanie Walters.

Lillie is the granddaughter of Charity Hope, the great-granddaughter of Elvajean Smith-Hope, and the great-great-granddaughter of Dora Jones-Smith and Willie Smith.

Dawson Boe Jackson



Dawson Boe Jackson was born on Sept. 18, 2017, at 11:45 a.m. He weighed 9 pounds, 15 ounces and was 22.5 inches long.

Dawson is the son of Matt and Kalee Jackson of Maypearl, Texas. He was happily welcomed by his big brother Meridian Jackson.

He is the grandson of Rick and Lisa Jackson and Belinda and Greg Gibbons. Dawson is the great-grandson of Eva

Ann Pogue, Bobby Harkins and Jerolene Weaver.

Jackson Newman Tisho



Jackson Newman Tisho was born on Sept. 12, 2017 at the Choctaw Nation Hospital in Talihina. He weighed 7 pounds, 4 ounces and was 20 3/4 inches long.

His parents are Derek and Veronica Tisho of Battiest.

He is the grandson of Vernon and Dorothy Willis, Robbie and Tracie Tisho and Doris and Johnny Webb. Jackson is the great-grandson of

the late Newman and Mary Tisho and the late Larry and Mary Jackson.

Makiaha Louise McDonald



Makiaha Lousie McDonald was born on July 26, 2017. She weighed 8 pounds, 15 ounces and was 21 inches long.

Makiaha is the daughter of Delia and Shawn McDonald. She was welcomed into the world by her big brother Orion McDonald.

Makiaha is the granddaughter of Scott Schafer and Stephanie John-Schafer of The Woodlands, Texas

and Jimmy McDonald and Leslie McDonald of Magnolia, Texas. She is the great-granddaughter of the late Stephen John of Idabel, Oklahoma and great-great-granddaughter of the late Raymond and Adaline John.

Ava Althea Coffman



Ava Althea Coffman was born Sept. 14, 2017 at the Choctaw Nation Health Care Center in Talihina. She weighed 7 pounds, 8 ounces and was 20 inches long.

Ava is the daughter of Melissa Althea and John Coffman II of Haywood.

Ava is the granddaughter of Doug and Althea Johnson of Haywood, Becky Coffman and the late John Coffman. She is the great-granddaughter

of Jim Gibson and the late Marie Gibson, Patricia Johnson and the late Grover Johnson, Joyce Dervey, the late Wayne Myers, the late Jimmy and Sadie Coffman and Elisabeth Ann Cook.

CHOCTAW NATION FOOD DISTRIBUTION

WAREHOUSES & MARKETS

Open 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday

Thursday: 9:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

Antlers: 400 S.W. “O” St., (580) 298-6443

Broken Bow: 109 Chahta Road, (580) 584-2842

Durant: 2352 Big Lots Pkwy, (580) 924-7773

McAlester: 3244 Afullota Hina, (918) 420-5716

Poteau: 100 Kerr Ave, (918) 649-0431

February 2018

ANTLERS

Market open weekdays February 1-28, except for:

Closed: February 19, 27 & 28.

Cooking with Carmen: February 7 & 12, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

BROKEN BOW

Market open weekdays February 1-28, except for:

Closed: February 19, 27 & 28.

Cooking with Carmen: February 1 & 6, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

DURANT

Market open weekdays February 1-28, except for:

Closed: February 19, 27 & 28.

Cooking with Carmen: February 2 & 15, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

MCALESTER

Market open weekdays February 1-28, except for:

Closed: February 19, 27 & 28.

Cooking with Carmen: February 5 & 16, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

POTEAU

Market open weekdays February 1-28, except for:

Closed: February 19, 27 & 28.

Cooking with Carmen: February 8 & 13, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

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This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Recipe of the Month

Ham Salad



Recipe by Carmen Robertson

Ingredients

- 2 cups ham, minced
- 1/2 cup celery, minced
- 1/2 cup onion minced
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1/4 cup relish
- 2 tablespoons mustard
- pepper to taste

Preparation

1. Mix ingredients together.
2. Place in bowl.
3. Serve with crackers or make a sandwich.

Nutrition Facts:

Servings 6

Serving size 130g

(per serving)

Calories 110, Total Fat 3 grams, Trans Fat 0 grams, Cholesterol 38 milligrams, Sodium 610 milligrams, Total Carbohydrates 8 grams, Dietary Fiber 1 gram, Sugars 5 grams, Protein 13 grams, Vitamin A, 4 percent, Vitamin C, 2 percent, Calcium, 2 percent and Iron 7 percent.

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

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

From the Choctaw Nation Mail Room

When sending mail to the Nation please address as follows:

**Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
(Name of Department)
P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702**





Top: (Left to Right) Jones Academy seniors Alexis Lyons, Danielle Enriquez, Cherokee Madden and Preston Stoliby get ready to tour Texas.
Bottom Left: Danielle Enriquez and Cherokee Madden perform a heart experiment at Texas Instruments by coding to create voltage through Playdough and electrical probes.
Bottom Right: Gabriela Bernal speaks with college recruiter at Eastern Oklahoma State College College Fair.



Jones Academy Seniors Prep for the Future

by DAVID SANCHEZ

By the time the Jones Academy Senior Class graduates from Hartshorne High School in May of 2018, the group will have a variety of paths from which to choose toward their futures. Attending Jones Academy has afforded these students many opportunities to visit and tour post-secondary institutions of higher learning including junior colleges, universities, and career vocational training centers. This group of seniors has been on the move since ninth grade. They have participated in numerous college and career fairs, academic workshops, financial aid seminars, STEM camps, and have listened to a plethora of motivational speakers. They have logged countless hours of career counseling from their high school, college, GEAR UP, Talent Search and Choctaw Nation High School Services counselors as well. Jones Academy Superintendent Jay McAdams has remarked that “the mission of the Academy and all its efforts have been made to develop future leaders not just for the nation, but for the world.” He adds, “We want to cultivate capable young people who will impact the culture for good and lead their generation into the future.” The Choctaw Nation and GEAR UP have made many contributions toward this goal. To date these students have toured over

20 colleges, universities, and facilities of training and employment including: the University of Oklahoma, Oklahoma State University, Texas A & M University (College Station), Baylor University (Waco, TX), University of Texas (Dallas), University of Arkansas at Fort Smith, University of Central Oklahoma, Northeastern State University, East Central University, Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Eastern Oklahoma State College, Conners State, Murray State, Rose State, Carl Albert State College, and Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology to name a few. Jones Academy seniors have also made outings to the Oklahoma State Capitol, Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum, OKC Science Museum, Tulsa Air and Space Museum & Planetarium, Texas Instruments Fab Plant, Ft. Smith National Historic Site, Oklahoma Aquarium, Texas State Fair, and who can forget the Battle of Honey Springs Civil War site?

It is overwhelming being a senior in high school and knowing that graduation is just around the corner. Through the efforts of the Choctaw Nation, Jones Academy, GEAR UP, and other educational agencies, these students have been amply assisted in planning and pursuing their educational goals and careers for life after high school. They have been allowed to examine, explore, and expand their horizons.

Siron Inducted into Alpha Chi National Honor Society

Stormie Siron of Atoka was recently inducted into the Southeastern Oklahoma State University Theta Chapter of the Alpha Chi national honor society. Siron and 55 other SE students were inducted into the lifetime membership. Members of Alpha Chi are identified and elected by the faculty of their schools as ranking in the top 10 percent of juniors and seniors. Alpha Chi was founded in 1922 and has more than 400,000 members. Stormie recently passed her nursing exam and will be entering the nursing program at SE. She is the daughter of Buck and Melissa Wilson; and Joyce Brady.



Sells’ Market Goats Win Champion Titles

Cody Sells and his market goats placed Grand Champion and Reserve Grand Champion Overall at the Williamson County Youth Expo. Cody a ninth-grade student at Thrall High School in Thrall, Texas. This is his third consecutive year to win the Grand Champion Overall in the competition.

LittleBull Earns Honor Roll and Perfect Attendance Awards

Brianna LittleBull was awarded for 1st quarter eighth grade honor roll with a 3.95 gpa and perfect attendance. She participates in the school drill team. She is also the vice president of Native American Club at the Wapato middle school. Brianna is the daughter of LeRoy and Kathy LittleBull. She is the daughter of Lyda Ann Thompson and the late Truman “Mack” Thompson, and the great-granddaughter of the late Simon and Sammy Peters.



TAG Group Participates in College Connect

Tigers Achieving Greatness (TAG) from Talihina High School visited with Chief Batton during the Choctaw College Connect on Nov. 4. TAG is a comprehensive college and career readiness program at Talihina High School made possible by the Choctaw Nation and US Department of Education. TAG serves students in grades 8-12.

Two Choctaw Members Among Those Recognized as SE Top Ten Freshman

Southeastern Oklahoma State University recognized the 2016-17 Top Ten Freshmen during a ceremony on Nov. 9 in the Glen D. Johnson Student Union Auditorium. The honorees were selected by a committee consisting of representatives from faculty, student government, and University administration. The Top 10 Freshmen have a collective 3.84 grade-point average and are involved in numerous campus and community activities. Sarah Winnett, an elementary education major from Colbert, and Katelynn Hester, a history major with social studies certification, are both Choctaw tribal members.



Laws-Rodriguez Graduates From OU with Bachelors

Timothy Laws-Rodriguez graduated from the University of Oklahoma with a BA in Interdisciplinary Studies in December. Tim’s culminating project honored the Choctaw Nation by exploring Native American depictions and participation in sports.



NOW OPEN!

New Fall 2018 Awarding Period

December 1, 2017 - March 1, 2018

Submit online at
www.starapplication.choctawnation.com




Choctaw Nation HSE/GED Classes

The class will meet each week for approximately 12 weeks. Books, supplies, and testing fees are provided. If you have turned in an application with our Adult Education Program for HSE classes and wish to attend the upcoming class, please contact our office. If you have not applied and wish to attend these or future classes, please contact Lisa Bebout at the Durant office, (800) 522-6170, ext. 2122. A Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) is required.

Bryan County, Durant
 Beginning date and time
 Tuesday, January 2, 2018
 Tuesday and Thursday
 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
 Choctaw Nation Tribal Complex
 South Bldg. 1st Floor
 529 N. 16th, Durant

Leflore County, Poteau
 No session scheduled at this time.
 Online Academy is available for students in the area.
 Please contact Lisa Bebout at Adult Education(580) 924-8280 ext. 2122 for more information.

Pittsburg County, McAlester
 Beginning date and time (2 class options)
 Tuesday, January 2, 2018
 Tuesday and Thursday
 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
 Kiamichi Technology Ctr.
 301 Kiamichi Dr. McAlester
 Wednesday, January 3, 2018
 Monday and Wednesday
 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon
 Eastern Oklahoma College
 McAlester Campus, Clark Bass Building, McAlester

Choctaw County, Hugo
 Beginning date and time
 Tuesday, January 2, 2018
 Tuesday and Thursday
 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
 Choctaw Nation Community Center

A Grand Success

13th Annual Pow Wow Garners Large Crowd



The 13th Annual Choctaw Nation Inter-Tribal Pow Wow received a large crowd and 578 dancers who participated in the Grand Entry. The event was held at the Choctaw Event Center in Durant. The event included a dancing competition and a “Native Nativity” performance.





—YOUTH OF THE NATION—

Journey Toward a Masters Degree

by
Mackenzie Davis

In the fall of 2016, I wrote the first chapter of my life beyond high school by deciding to pursue a degree in Speech-Language Pathology.

Speech-Language Pathologists assess and treat patients (young to elderly) who have speech, language, voice fluency, or accent/oral motor disorders; as well as assisting people improve their communication skills through changes in vocal pitch or quality.

Treatment can be provided in a plethora of institutions from schools, colleges, hospitals, hearing centers, home health agencies, residential facilities, rehabilitation centers, to research laboratories.

My parents stressed the need to find a career where I would be able to find a job after college without having to move out of this region. In our rural setting, it is often hard to find a job with a competitive salary. The job outlook for Speech Pathologists is strong with recent statistics showing only 1 percent of the country's speech professionals work in Oklahoma.

I have applied and been accepted to the University of Oklahoma (Norman campus), where I plan to complete my preparatory work beginning in the Fall of 2017. With the 18 hours I have already acquired through concurrent classes, I will have a head start on the 64 required semester hours needed to apply for the Communication and Science Disorders program at OUHSC.

I would begin my undergraduate work in the Fall of 2019, and graduate with a Bachelor's of Science in Communication and Science Disorders in the Spring of 2021. The last leg of my trek would start in the Fall of 2021, ending with a Master of Arts in Speech-Language Pathology in 2023. From there, I would be open and excited to begin my career where and whenever an opportunity is available. Although, working with children would be my dream job.

This is a highly competitive program, but I am ready for the challenge. I feel I am a worthy candidate for this scholarship and commit to continue strong work and study ethics needed to become a successful student. I will also strive to exemplify the characteristics of leadership, academics, and citizenship the Choctaw Nation values. I would appreciate your consideration for this scholarship and look forward to sharing my future accomplishments with you.

Editors Note: This was the second place essay for the CDIB Scholarship sponsored by the Choctaw Nation Youth Advisory Board. The first place essay was in the December 2017 issue of the Biskinik. The third place essay will be in an upcoming issue of the Biskinik.



Photo Provided

Youth Advisory Board Atoka County Chapter Secretary Maci Wagoner, left, presents the second place CDIB scholarship to Mackenzie Davis, right.

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contact the Member-
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(800) 522-6170 Ext.
4030 or cdib-membership@choctawnation.com

The application can
be mailed, or emailed
if requested.
OR

Get your application
online at: <https://www.choctawnation.com/contacts-applications/cdibmembership-information>

2018 Annual Choctaw Nation Livestock Show

Entries Due Thursday, Jan. 25, 2018

Wilburton
(EOSC Campus)

Saturday, Feb. 3
Swine Show, Doe Show, Wether
Show and Lamb Show
Sunday, Feb. 4
Steer Show and Heifer Show

Durant
(Bryan County Fairgrounds)

Saturday, Feb. 3
Swine Show, Doe Show, Wether Show
and Lamb Show
Sunday, Feb. 4
Steer Show and Heifer Show

For more information:
www.choctawnation.com
Shalon Roe at Jones Academy
(888) 767-2518

Chahta Anumpa Aiikhvna

◆◆◆ Lesson of the Month ◆◆◆

Conversational Phrases

1. I want to tell you something. Na chim anoli sv bvna.
2. I want to speak with you. Chim ittimanumpuli sv bvna.
3. I want to talk to you. Chim anumpuli sv bvna.
4. I want to say this... Pako, maka sv bvna...
5. Can you tell me? Is svm anola hinla ho?
6. Come and tell me. (future) Ant is svm anola chike.
7. You go and tell him/her. Ont ish im anolikma.
8. You tell it or announce it. Ish anolikma.
9. Who's this? Pato kvta or Ilvppvt kvta?
10. Who's that? Mato kvta or Ymmvt kata?
11. Do you believe him/her? Ish i yimmi ho?
12. No, I do not believe him/her. Keyu, i yimmi li kiyo.
13. Did you believe him/her? Ish i yimmi ha?
14. No, I did not believe him/her. Keyu, ak i yimo tuk.
15. No, I did not believe him/her. Keyu, i yimmi li tuk kiyo.
16. Who do you believe? Kvta ish i yimmi?
17. That's what I believe. Mak or makv sv yimmi.
18. What are you listening to? or What do you hear? Nanta ish haklo?
19. Did you hear me? Is sv haklo ha?
20. I didn't hear you. Ak chi haklo tuk.
21. He/she heard me. Sv haklo tuk.
22. I hear you. Chi haklo li.
23. I didn't hear (about it). Ak haklo tuk.
24. He/she did not hear or listen to me. Ik sv haklo tuk.

STSB

Alben C. McDonald

Alben C. McDonald, 77, passed away Dec. 4. Alben was born Dec. 8, 1939, to Chester E. McDonald and Dena (LeFlore) McDonald Hensley in Bat-tiest, Oklahoma. Alben was preceded in death by his parents, sister Barbara McDonald, brother Henry “J” McDonald and sister-in-law, Joyce McDonald. He is survived by his children, Cordell McDonald, Casey McDonald, and Darcie McDonald and spouse Shaun; brother, Glen McDonald and spouse Trish; six grandchildren, Aubrie, Anna, Mason, Sawyer, Swayzie, and Myla and many nieces and nephews. For the full obituary, please visit [Cullen Funeral Home](#).

Leona McGarry

Leona Mattie McGarry, 102, passed away Nov. 29. She was born July 27, 1915, to Ed Taylor and Effie (Spencer) Taylor near the Unger community. Leona was laid to rest at Restland Cemetery in Boswell, Oklahoma. For the full obituary, please visit [Miller & Miller Funeral Home](#).

Edna Mae Hardaway

Edna Mae Hardaway, 80, passed away Dec. 2. Edna was born May 1, 1937, to Andrew John Jackson and Mary (Baker) Jackson. Edna is preceded in death by her parents and siblings, Dutch, LeRoy, Leslie, Melvin, Vernon, Virgil, Lucille, Velma and Phoebe. She is survived by husband Claud Hardaway, children, Johnny Hardaway, Claudia and spouse Mike Hodge and Carla and spouse Terry Noah; grandchildren, Amanda and spouse Steven Koen, Andrea Hardaway, Trenton Dodd and spouse Aimee, Corey Todd and spouse Kelli, Shyla and spouse William Smith and Sasha Hardaway; 24 great-grandchildren, Christian, Cutter, Cordell, Cambre, Stevie, Everly, Dalton, KayeLynn, Nate, Sophie, Brecken, Cadden, Breanna, Tatum, Channing, Willow, Alyssa, Lydia, Lillian, Lyla, Miles, Destiny, Oliver and Olivia; and great-great-grandson Corden. Edna was laid to rest at South Rock Creek Cemetery, Red Oak, Oklahoma. For the full obituary, please visit [Jones Harkins Funeral Home](#).



Janis Ellen Calmes

Janis Ellen Calmes, 80, passed away Nov. 14. Janis was born May 12, 1937, in Marlow, Oklahoma, to Kermit Whitfield Calmes and Inez (Martin) Calmes. She was preceded in death by her parents. She is survived by her sister, Carole (Calmes) Brence and spouse W.A. Brence; two nephews, Kermit Whitfield Brence and spouse Linda and their daughters, Alexis and Ashley; William Alexander Brence, his spouse Vickie and their son Dillon. Janis was laid to rest at Duncan Municipal Cemetery in Duncan, Oklahoma. For the full obituary, please visit [Holloway Funeral Home](#).



Jimmy Lee Hallcom

Reverend Jimmy Lee Hallcom, 89, passed away, Nov. 10. Jimmy was born Aug. 25, 1928, in Waurika, Oklahoma, to William Henry and Emma Lee Hallcom. Jimmy is preceded in death by his parents William and Emma Hallcom and one son, Milo Hallcom. He was survived by his wife of 67 years, Bonnie Hallcom, three children, Jimanne Hayes and spouse John Hayes, Leah Teague and spouse Charles Teague and David Hallcom and spouse Debby Hallcom; seven grandchildren, Briana, Andrew, Alexandre, Aaron, Hannah, Haley and Heather; and four great-grandchildren. For the full obituary, please visit the [Cremation Society of Pennsylvania](#).



Van Wesley Linn

Van Wesley Linn, 56, passed away Nov. 25. Van was born March 16, 1961, in Talihina, Oklahoma to Jerry William Linn and Billie Ruth Strickland. Van was preceded in death by his parents; his wife Lisa Linn; son Van Wesley Linn Jr., grandmother Lillian Rogers and great-grandmother Viola Marie Gray. He is survived by his sons, Kenneth Blake Linn and Tarron Wayne Horner; daughters, Candice, Kayla and Keena Linn; siblings; John, Larry, Brenda and Robert Linn; and 12 grandchildren. For the full obituary, please contact [Miller & Miller Funeral Home](#).



E.R. “Randol” Keltner

E.R. “Randol” Keltner, 89, passed away, Nov. 18. Randol was born on June 27, 1928, in Wilson, Oklahoma, to Sylvester Goodwin “Chief” Keltner and Alma (Bennett) Keltner. Randol was preceded in death by his parents; wife Patsy M. (Witten) Keltner; and his brothers, S.G. Keltner and Donnie Lynn Keltner. Randol is survived by his daughter Rita McKnight; grandson Scott Hoppie; great-grandson Cody Hoppie; and sister Dixie Lou Keltner. Randol was laid to rest at Hewitt Cemetery in Little City, Oklahoma, with full military honors and Masonic Rites. For the full obituary, please visit [Alexander Funeral Home](#).



William “Bill” Veazey

William “Bill” Paul Kellogg Veazey, 88, passed away Dec. 2. Bill was born on Dec. 17, 1928 to William Paul Kellogg and Violet Mary Cross. Cross was later married to Stephen Franklin Veazey, who Bill called “Dad”. Veazey was preceded in death by his stepfather and mother, Stephen and Violet Veazey; his father, William Kellogg; grandson, William Veazey; and wife of 64 years, Marguerite Jane (Daves) Veazey. He is survived by five children, Cynthia (Veazey) Pullin and spouse J. Michael, Marijane Veazey, Stephanie Veazey and significant other Gary Warmack, Debra Kay (Veazey) Lankenau and spouse Kip, and William Veazey, Jr.; 13 grandchildren, J. Michael II, C. David, and spouse Ginger, William “Will”, Anne , Rachael, Sean and partner Angie, Deborah and spouse Eric, Tatyanna and Vladimir Lankenau, Kyle and Kaylie Veazey, and 14 great-grandchildren. For the full obituary, please visit [Hahn-Cook/Street & Draper Funeral Services](#).



Dorothy Wayne Bishop

Dorothy Wayne Bishop, 89, passed away Nov. 3. Dorothy was born on Oct. 7, 1928, to Chester and Flossie Carter. Dorothy was proceeded in death by her husband of 54 years, Joseph Bishop and two sons, Otis and Wayland Bishop. Dorothy is survived by her daughter, Joanna White and grandson whom she raised as her own, Curtis Bishop, six other grandchildren; Rebecca White Schuetze, Rita Bishop, Jerry Bishop, Debbie Bishop, Tony Bishop and David Bishop; and many great-grandchildren. Dorothy was laid to rest at Jefferson Cemetery, in Jefferson, Oregon. For the full obituary, please visit [Driskill Memorial Chapel](#).



Karlie Dawn Clearman

Karlie Dawn Clearman, 23, passed away Nov. 11, 2017. Karlie was born June 13, 1994, to Curtis Eldon Clearman and Stephanie Luclie Wynns. Karlie is survived by her mother Stephanie Wynns, father Curtis Clearman and stepfather, Timothy Hickman; brother, Taylor Clearman; sister, Kara Clearman, niece, Kadence West, aunt Regina Clearman; maternal grandparents, Earsell and Dortha Bratton; uncle Troy Clearman; aunt Donna Hargrave; paternal grandmother, Gladys Hargrave, grandfather; Troy Clearman, uncle David Wynns, Uncle Tommy Boyett, and uncle Bobby Boyett and aunt Janey Bratton. For the full obituary, please visit [Griffin-Hillcrest Funeral Home](#).



Lois “Jerry” Geraldine Colby

Lois Geraldine “Jerry” (Choate) Colby passed away Dec. 6. Jerry was born Nov. 27, 1922, to George Rudolph Choate and Lois Olivette Edens, in Choate Prairie, Oklahoma. Jerry was preceded in death by husband John Wilson Colby; parents George Rudolph Choate and Lois Olivette Edens; brothers James Frederick Choate and Lt. George R. Choate Jr.; and sister Mary Katherine (Kay) (Choate) Johnson. She is survived by sister Ramona Choate Schrader, brother David E. Choate and spouse Sharon, children John Colby Jr. and spouse Ann, George G. Colby and spouse Kathy and Deirdre Sato, 10 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren. For the full obituary, please visit [Faulkner-Funeral Home](#).



Nikki Jean Pierce-Crisp

Nikki Jean Pierce-Crisp, 31, passed away Nov. 24. Nikki was born Sept. 9, 1986, to Jimmy Pierce and Barbara (Bohanon) Todd-Fulmer. Nikki is survived by her husband, Jason Crisp; daughters, Cheyenne Nicole Buell, Alyssa Leann Buell, Chealsey Ann Cox, Makaylah Renee Cox and Tawnie Marlene Crisp, as well as numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, family and friends. Nikki was laid to rest at Wade Cemetery, in Unger, Oklahoma next to her late brother, Nathan. For the full obituary, please contact [Miller & Miller Funeral Home](#).



Diana Rose Adams

Diana Rose (Warren) Adams, 70, passed away Nov. 17. Diana was born at home in Lequire, Oklahoma, on May 27, 1947, to Paul Warren and Lona (Noel) Warren. Her grandmother, Janie Warren was the midwife. Diana was preceded in death by her brother, John Wayne Warren; sister, Helen Warren Barbee; two aunts, Geraldine Roye and Nellie Markham; paternal grandparents John and Janie Warren; and her parents. Diana is survived by daughter Michele Meza, son Norman Adams, and two granddaughters, Jada and Gianna. Diana was laid to rest at Antioch Cemetery in Stigler, Oklahoma. For the full obituary, please contact [Mallo-ry-Martin Funeral Home](#).



Bobby Gene Coleman

Bobby Gene Coleman, 66, passed away Nov. 22. He was born June 29, 1951, in Fort Smith, Arkansas, to Billy Gene and Ruth Ann (Broom) Coleman. Bobby was preceded in death by his parents. He is survived by his wife, Martha Ann (Martin) Coleman; two sons, Alexis Enbarr Coleman and Nicholas Aubrey Coleman and his spouse Mary Frederica “Marika” (Dahlstrom); two grandchildren, Wyatt Francis and Lucy Josephine Coleman; one brother, Billy Dale Coleman and his spouse Ruth Ann (Combs); two nieces, Christiana Beth (Coleman) Mathews and her spouse Derek and Carrie Lynn (Coleman) Hill; one grandniece, Chloe; and three grandnephews, Noah, Jeremiah and Coleman; one brother-in-law, John Franklin Martin and spouse Doris Mae (McKaughn). Bobby was laid to rest at U.S. National Cemetery in Fort Smith, Arkansas, with full military honors. For the full obituary, please visit [Ocker-Putman Funeral Home of Fort Smith](#).



Betty Mae Ketcheshawno

Betty Mae Ketcheshawno, 79, passed away Nov. 28. Betty was born Sept. 24, 1938 in Wynnewood, Oklahoma to Lewis Frazier and Semiah (John) Frazier. She was preceded in death by her parents and two brothers, Tecumseh John Frazier and Elam Frazier. Betty was laid to rest in Antlers City Cemetery, Antlers, Oklahoma. Betty is survived by two sons, Cedric and Tyrone Ketcheshawno; one sister, Adeline Hudson, one brother, Timothy Frazier, several nieces and nephews along with a host of other family and friends. For the full obituary, please visit [Miller & Miller Funeral Home](#).



Mamie Oleta Schockley

Mamie Oleta Shockley, 79, passed away July 13. She was born Oct. 3, 1937, to Luther and Anna (Sewell) Wilkins. Mamie was preceded in death by her parents; daughter, Judy Clough; brothers, Gary and Jimmy Wilkins; sisters, Pat Greenwood, Joyce Bruce and Maxine Stevens; and grandchildren, Mark Cryer and Shannon Clough. She is survived by her daughters, Wanda DeBord and Hope Shockley; brother, Roger Wilkins; grandchildren, Dee DeBord, Matthew Elmore, Shelly Blanton, and Jamie Frasier; 11 great-grandchildren and seven great-great-grandchildren. For the full obituary, please visit [Griffin-Hillcrest Funeral Home](#).



Thomas C. Toole

Thomas C. Toole, 99, passed away Oct. 27. Thomas was born Feb. 4, 1918, in Crowder, Oklahoma, to Joseph Yates Toole and Maude (Burba) (Foster) Toole. Thomas was preceded in death by his parents; his first wife, Alta Lee in 1957; and second wife, Joyce Gamble in 1996; brothers Burba Foster and J.Y. Toole; and sisters Ada Howard, Elizabeth Fields and Helen Fant. He is survived by his sons, David Toole and Michael Lewis; daughters, Glenda Rudolph and Cynthia Lilly and spouse Joe; grandchildren, Kelly and Darrell Rudolph, Robin Beall and spouse Jerimiah and Devin Watkins and spouse Matt; and seven great-grandchildren. Thomas was laid to rest at Fairview Cemetery in Salida, Colorado. For the full obituary, please contact [Lewis and Glenn Funeral Home](#).



Obituary Policy

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

Send official obituary notices to:

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

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9

Questions to ask:

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- What education resources are available through Choctaw Nation?

SPIRIT OF EDUCATION

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Living out the Chahta Spirit

Photo Provided by Dan Hoke

Southeastern Oklahoma State University President Sean Burrage congratulates Brenner Billy during Commencement. Burrage and Billy are both members of the Choctaw Nation.

HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

High School Student Services

Assists Choctaw students in the 9th-12th grade with academic information to promote education and/or career path beyond high school.
Padyn Stanley: (580) 924-8280 ext. 2297

Higher Education

Provides financial assistance to Choctaw Nation tribal members who are actively pursuing a higher education degree at an accredited institution. High school students who are concurrently enrolled may be eligible to receive a book allowance for current courses.
Allison Britton: (580) 924-8280 ext. 2518
Spring Semester Deadline: Jan. 2-March 1
Fall Semester Deadline: July 15-Oct. 1
Technology Allowance Opening Date: Third Monday of every January.

College Freshman Year Initiative (FYI)

Students are empowered to make informed decisions and develop academic and life skills to become confident, proactive, and accountable participants in their college education.
Jamie Irwin: (580) 924-8280 ext. 2292

Educational Talent Search Program

More than 2/3 of Talent Search participants are first generation, or the first in their families to attend college. They receive services related to the postsecondary application process and federal financial aid, campus visits, career inventories, and other workshops related to help them prepare for postsecondary education.
Linda Powers: (580) 924-8280 ext. 2711

College Clothing Allowance

One-time payment to post high school students who have completed and passed at least one semester of higher education.
Jason Campbell: (580) 924-8280 ext. 2787

CAREER, TRADES AND BEYOND

Career Development Program

Provides career guidance, workforce skills development, academic skills enhancement, and financial assistance for tuition to enable members to obtain certifications needed to enter careers and/or to advance their career.
Robin Counce: (580) 920-2260, or (866) 933-2260
ChoctawCareers.com

Adult Education Program

Provides educational activities for adults who did not finish high school and provides classes needed to acquire their HSE/GED diploma.
Lisa Bebout: (580) 924-8280 ext. 2122

WIOA

Prepares youth and unskilled adults for entry into the labor force and provides job training to economically disadvantaged individuals.
Patty Hyde: (580) 924-8280 ext. 2209

Vocational Development

Assists Native Americans with ¼ degree or more of blood quantum living within the boundaries of the 10 ½ counties to obtain training assistance. Full-time students must attend accredited colleges or Oklahoma State Technology centers.
Tim Amos: (580) 924-8280, ext. 2613

Choctaw Asset Building (CAB)

Savings program that assists in starting or expanding a business, attending college, career tech, or looking to buy first home.
Dawn Hix: (580) 920-2260, or (866) 933-2260
Sherlynn Kennedy: (580) 920-2260, or (866) 933-2260
Choctawcab.com

Language

Offers Choctaw classes in high schools, colleges, communities, and to employees. Classes are also available online at www.choctawschool.com.
Jim Parrish: (580) 924-8280 ext. 2250

EARLY EDUCATION

Johnson-O'Malley Program (JOM)

The Choctaw Nation JOM program is responsible for administering supplemental funding to help contracted schools meet the educational needs of eligible Native American students.
Shane Haddock: (580) 924-8280 ext. 2258

Student School and Activity Program

Provides yearly donation of \$100 for financial assistance in obtaining school clothing, supplies, or activities equipment.
Jason Campbell: (580) 924-8280 ext. 2787

Jones Academy

Jones Academy is a Native American residential learning center for elementary and secondary school age children. The facility is located in Hartshorne, Oklahoma, and houses students grades 1 through 12. Enrollment requires all students must be a member of a federally recognized Indian tribe.
For more information call
David Sanchez: (888) 767-2518

Child Care Assistance Program

Assists eligible families with their financial obligation for child care for children under the age of 13.
Monona Dill: (580) 924-8280 ext. 2391

Youth Empowerment

Youth leadership program that works within the communities and schools to promote healthy living and wellbeing.
Martina Hawkins: (580) 317-6237

STAR Program

Provides incentives to Choctaw students for all A's, A's & B's, and/or perfect attendance.
Jason Campbell: (580) 924-8280 ext. 2787
Star.choctawnation.com

Head Start & Pre-School

A comprehensive early childhood development program providing education, health, family services, and special needs resources and referrals. Head Start serves children and families of all races and ethnicities with a Native American preference policy.
Amanda Johnson (580) 924-8280 ext. 2436

Early Head Start

Federally funded Early Education program for low income families with children 6 weeks- age 3. It focuses on the family to help achieve a self-sufficient future.
B.J. Robinson-Ellison: (580) 924-8280 ext. 2437

Child Care

Provides care for infants from 6 weeks of age to 12 year olds. Children are provided a learning environment and varied experiences to help them develop socially, intellectually, physically, and emotionally in a manner appropriate for their age and stage of development.
Amanda Johnson (580) 924-8280 ext. 2436

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Trail of Tears Tale Tingle Thrills Students With Ghostly Novel

BY APRYL MOCK

Award-winning Native American fiction writer Tim Tingle paid a visit to Durant Intermediate School on Dec. 5, much to the delight of students and teachers.

Tingle's newest book, "How I Became a Ghost" was read by every sixth grade class at Durant Intermediate school.

Charlene Hibbs, Director of Indian Education at Durant Public Schools, helped to facilitate the project.

"The teachers have

done a fantastic job incorporating it in to their literature," according to Hibbs.

Five teachers (Kathy Moore, Sandi Feuerhelm, Laurie Curtis, Juanita Daniel and Heather Dobbins) and approximately 240 children participated.

"How I Became A Ghost" is a fictional story of a young Choctaw boy named Isaac and his experiences on the Trail of Tears.

Tim kept the students engaged and even gave them a few frights as he

read excerpts from his novel and answered a flood of questions.

"They were on the edge of their seats, they loved it. They really want to read the second book," said Curtis.

The teachers who read the books with their classes and prepared supplementary materials were overjoyed with Tim's presentation.

Juanita Daniel said, "They were in awe. Connecting something they read with a real person really helped clarify their

understanding of the story."

Although fiction, "How I Became A Ghost" is influenced by real events.

Tingle spent countless hours in the Library of Congress researching the Trail of Tears, as well as interviewing Choctaw elders.

According to Tingle, the best information comes from elders.

"They tell stories passed down through generations and everyone has a story," Tingle said.

Because the book is historical fiction, students

learned about Choctaw culture, as well as the Trail of Tears and had fun doing it.

"I actually had students giving up their recess to come in and read," said Feuerhelm.

According to Tingle, his grandmother serves as his main source of inspiration.

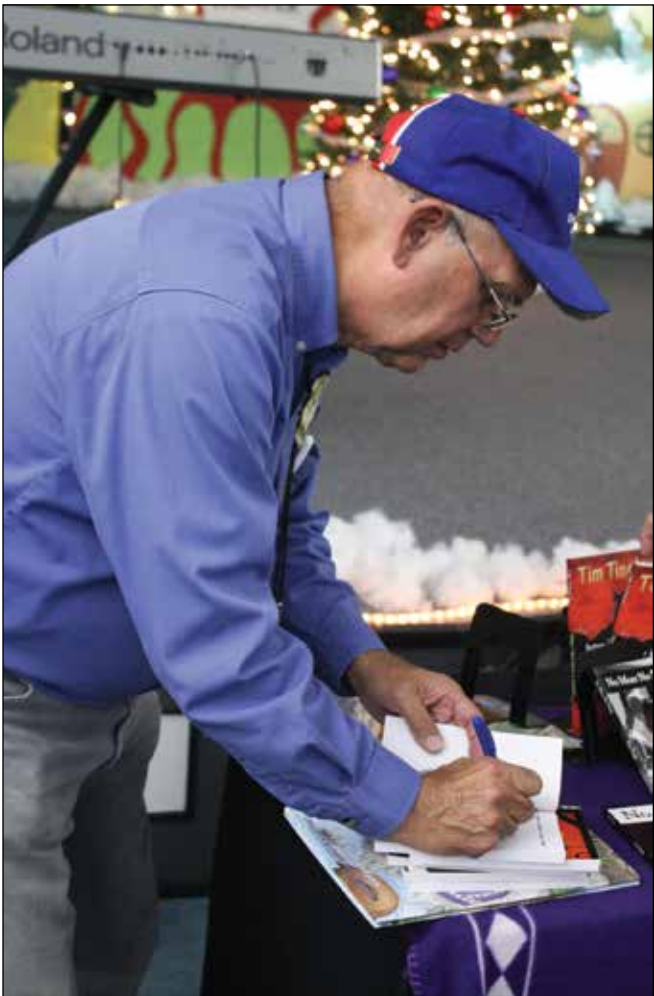
"I want to please my grandmother. I just want her to be proud."

The second book in the series "When A Ghost Talks, Listen" will be on sale nationally April 10, 2018.

(Left to right) Kathy Moore, Sandi Feuerhelm, Tim Tingle, Laurie Curtis, Juanita Daniel and Heather Dobbins pose with copies of Tingle's books. Tingle was recently named the 2018 winner of the Oklahoma Center for the Book Arrell Gibson Lifetime Achievement Award.



Tim Tingle reads an excerpt from his latest book "How I Became A Ghost" to excited sixth grade students and teachers on Dec. 5.



Tim Tingle autographs a few of his books for adoring fans.

Roldan Celebrates Reaching Eagle Scout Rank



Logan Roldan is honored by his mentor, Billy Harrison, during his Court of Honor, which is the ceremony where he received his Eagle Scout pin and certificate. Logan is one of only four percent of Boy Scout members who earn the Eagle Scout rank.

Logan Roldan, age 16, has accomplished the highest rank attainable within The Boy Scouts of America, Eagle Scout.

This rank is only accomplished by four percent of Boy Scout participants and takes years of dedication and hard work to acquire. Logan has been a member of the Boy Scouts since he was 6 years old.

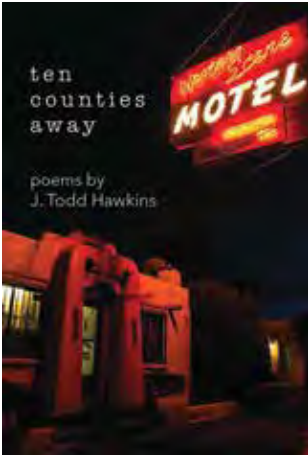
Logan is the son of Vince and Wendy Roldan and the brother of Aimee Roldan, who is the reigning Miss Okla Chahta. He attends Ontario High School and hopes to attend college at MIT or Cal. Baptist and study engineering

Billy Harrison, President of the Okla Chahta board and Logan's mentor said, "He is a special young man that people are naturally drawn to."

Harrison chose to honor Roldan at the 2017 Okla Chahta Gathering by presenting him with his first Eagle Feather in honor of him becoming an Eagle Scout.

Roldan said "Eagle Scout rank requires a person to be the best of who they are...Each requirement is a lesson..."

"The badges which accompany advancement are not to show that I have passed certain tests, there should be no past tense. Each badge cries out, 'I can, right here and now.' My mother, father and family have built me to be the person I am today by pushing me through scouting."



Hawkins Releases New Chapbook

Choctaw poet J. Todd Hawkins recently published a chapbook titled "Ten Counties Away." To keep up with news and events concerning Hawkins, you may visit www.jtoddhawkins.com. If you are interested in purchasing the chapbook, please visit <https://www.finishinglinepress.com/product/ten-counties-away-by-j-todd-hawkins/>.

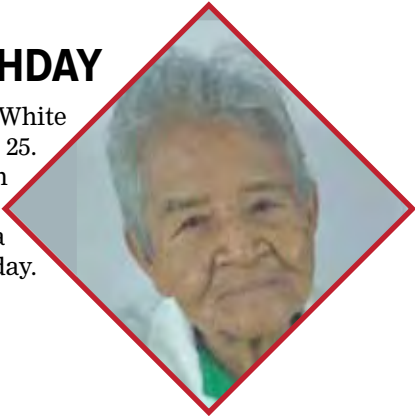
Amos named Outstanding Elder



Left to right: Randi Sunday, Larry Amos and Tierra Fudge-Roberts. Larry Amos was awarded the title of Outstanding Elder by the Oklahoma Indian Education Council on Dec. 5. Larry is a Career Development Counselor for Choctaw Nation.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Lucy (Watson) White turned 87 on Nov. 25. Lucy was born on Nov. 25, 1930. Her family wishes her a very happy birthday.



We want your good news!

Send your accomplishments, anniversary announcements and birthday wishes to the Biskinik. Announcements are printed in order received.

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

Cole Selected for Modeling Competition



by Stacy Hutto

Chief Gary Batton poses for a photo with Lilyan Cole. Cole will be a contestant on "Making A Model", a reality television modeling competition. "Making A Model" premieres on Jan. 11.

A Choctaw teenager is taking her shot at super stardom.

Lilyan Cole, 17, of Coalgate, Oklahoma, has been selected to compete on the new reality television show "Making A Model".

The series will follow six teenagers alongside their "momagers" through an "intensive training program focused on the physical, mental and emotional" led by former super model Yolanda Hadid.

Hadid is a world famous super model, whose daughters, Gigi and Bella are two of the most famous models in the industry today.

The series will premier on Jan. 11 at 9 p.m. CST on Lifetime.

TO YOU

Cailee Lynn Murphy turned 19 on Oct. 12. She is the daughter of William "Billy" Murphy, the granddaughter of Opal McKinney Wilson, and the great-granddaughter of the late William T. and Ella Carmen Murphy. She is from Idabel, Oklahoma.



AND YOU

James Berg turns 65 on Jan.15. James participates in many volunteer projects at United Methodist Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma and serves as State Chaplain of the Sons of the American Legion of Oklahoma. James lives in Tulsa with his brother, Walter Berg. Happy birthday James!



Iti Fabussa

A Look Back: Oklahoma Presbyterian College

You might have noticed our yearly Christmas tree ornament was a beautiful portrait of our current Tribal complex building, once the Oklahoma Presbyterian College.

Before we move into our new space in the coming months, this month's Iti Fabussa will highlight the Presbyterian missionary efforts in the Choctaw Nation, honor a lesser-known Presbyterian missionary, and take a look back at the history of this building.

Each time we use our Choctaw language dictionary or turn the pages of a Choctaw language Bible, we experience the legacy of the Presbyterian mission efforts among the Choctaw people in Mississippi.

Beginning in 1818, Presbyterian missionaries were the first to faithfully serve Choctaw people both in Mississippi and in Indian Territory (Heimstra 1949:459).

The Methodist mission began in 1827 and the Baptist mission followed in 1830 after removal to Indian Territory.

The Presbyterian mission published religious texts in the Choctaw language, along with grammar, spelling, and arithmetic school books, which assisted countless Choctaw children in becoming familiar with these subjects.

The Presbyterian mission among the Choctaw people did not end after removal. In fact, after missionaries accompanied Choctaw people along the Trail of Tears to Indian Territory, new mission sites dotted the landscape very soon after their arrival.

Choctaw people, just as in our homeland, wanted the focus to be on educating our youth. So the Presbyterian mission concentrated their attention on building schools.

First with the Wheelock Academy in 1832, then, other smaller mission schools. Between 1870 and 1890, increasing support for mission schools dominated the Presbyterian mission focus.

The Oklahoma Presbyterian College was the end result of a long-term goal of a series of pioneer Presbyterian missionaries that would become the board of managers: W.J.B. Lloyd, C.J. Ralston, J.J. Read, and Judge James H. Franklin.

R.R. Halsell purchased a small tract of land from Dixon Durant, a Choctaw tribal member. At this location, Halsell built a two-story frame school building known as Halsell Hall in 1892, but this wasn't big enough to support a growing school.

This land was sold to a Scottish Presbyterian missionary, Calvin James Ralston. Days before the purchase was finalized, Ralston was addressing the Choctaw Nation Tribal Council when a telegram arrived informing him that his youngest son, Calvin Jr., drowned tragically that morning.

Ralston used a \$256.56 donation from the young boy's grandmother and \$888.50 from the Executive Committee of Home Missions to construct the Calvin Institute in his memory, which opened in 1894.

It was such a success that it was closed, expanded and reopened as the Durant Presbyterian College in 1896.

Despite initial success, the Durant Presbyterian College stood to close its doors early for lack of enrollment.

It was the hard work and insight of a lesser-known Presbyterian missionary, Mary Semple, which saved the college from closure.

A young missionary of 19 years old, she began to serve in Indian Territory in 1857. Within her first year of teaching at Wheelock Academy, she managed a full classroom of Choctaw students, helped each of the students learn English, and became fluent in the

Choctaw language. They would go on to serve several missions in Indian Territory and have 12 children.

She was a devoted school teacher, often teaching classes with her own babies in her lap as their family grew. It was Mary's dedication that saved the college in 1896, when she stepped in to reform the curriculum.

Her devotion to teaching is heard in her words, "the best heritage you can leave your children is trained hearts and minds" (Hotchkin 1957:15).

From then on, under the direction of Mary's son, Ebenezer Hotchkin Jr., the college offered standard courses and swelled to an enrollment of 315 students.

Since the Durant Presbyterian College stood to continue to grow, the school would need more space. After expansion, Oklahoma Presbyterian College for Girls opened in 1910 as a combination dormitory and all-in-one school plant. It originally had a fourth floor, but was damaged in a fire in 1941. It was reconstructed without the top story.

It served as a four-year degree institution offering degrees in Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Literature, and Bachelor of Science. The students participated in many social engagements including parties, teas, luncheons, dramatic performances, recitals, and class competitions in athletics and academics.

They enjoyed two swimming pools located in the basement. While students swam in one pool, the other was cleaned.

In 1916, these degrees were reduced to three years and by 1920 the institution reduced its status to a junior college.

As the school fell on financially hard times, in 1935, the Oklahoma Presbyterian College focused on religious and music education for students and made arrangements with Southeastern State College to oversee the rest of the curriculum for their students.

In 1951, the OPC became co-educational, but by 1966 the rising cost of higher education finally forced the college to close its doors. It was left

vacant and fell into disrepair until 1975.

The next year, Semple relocated to the Bennington Mission Station and served under Ebenezer Hotchkin Sr.

Here, she met her husband, Henry Hotchkin. They would go on to serve several missions in



by Sailing Away blog

Mary Semple Hotchkin was instrumental in keeping the doors open at the Durant Presbyterian College. She was 19 when she began her missionary work.

vacant and fell into disrepair until 1975.

In 1975, the building began to serve the community in a number of ways. First, as the Oklahoma Presbyterian Center, then as a head start, day care center and other welfare services.

Also in 1975, the Red River Valley Historical Society purchased the building to use as its headquarters and regional museum. Mary Claude Parks was tasked with curation of the museum.

The museum was located in the basement, from where the ICW offices are to what used to be the small conference room.

Just south of the museum was an open space where beading, painting and other craft classes were held along with a gift shop, both managed by Julia Knight, a descendant of Ann Semple.

This same year, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Chief Clark David Gardner moved Choctaw Nation's administrative offices from the Montgomery Ward building in downtown Durant to this building. A nomination for the National Register of Historic Places was approved for listing in 1976.

Gradually, Choctaw Nation offices started filling the building. In the 1990s when head start, the day care center, and other welfare services moved from the building, add-on buildings began to be built to accommodate the nation's growing needs.

First with finance, then membership and the Bishinik newspaper, now Biskinik. Now, every room of the former school is occupied with employees serving the tribe.

As we move to our new complex building, let us take time to reflect on the rich history of the OPC building.

The author would like to thank Justin Banks, Judy Allen and Jerry Tomlinson for their enthusiastic support and assistance with this article; they were immensely helpful.

For a list of the sources mentioned in this article please go to www.ChoctawNation.com and click on the History tab.



Burke Library Archives of Columbia

ABOVE: The Oklahoma Presbyterian College started as the Calvin Institute in 1894. It expanded and reopened as the Durant Presbyterian College in 1896. After another expansion in 1910, it became the Oklahoma Presbyterian College for Girls.

BELOW: The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma headquarters has been located in the Oklahoma Presbyterian College building since 1975. It is located on the corner of North 16 Avenue and Locust Street. The building was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976.



by Deidre Elrod

Reserve your 2018 Labor Day RV Site

In order to reserve an RV site with electric and water hookups for the 2018 Labor Day Festival, please mail the reservation request form below no earlier than January 2, 2018. RV sites will be reserved on a lottery style basis.

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

PLEASE DO NOT SEND ANY MONEY AT THIS TIME.

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

No phone reservations will be accepted.

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

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

2018 RV Space Reservation

Name _____

Address _____

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Daytime Phone Number _____

CELL Phone Number _____

Email Address where you can be contacted _____

RV Camper description: Year: _____ Make: _____ Model _____

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

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

No reservations will be accepted prior to January 2, 2018

Please return to:

**Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
Attn: Janita Jeffreys
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2101 West Arkansas Street
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Colorado Elder Lives Long and Interesting Life

by JUDY ALLEN

Editor’s Note: The author, Judy Allen, interviewed Tom Toole in 2017 and sadly he has since passed away. We hope you enjoy this highlight of a Choctaw Elder who lived life to the fullest.

Tom Toole enjoys sitting on the front porch when he waits for visitors. He doesn’t look his age. He will be 100 on February 4, 2018.

Tom still drives around the town of Salida. In fact, he still parallel parks—a skill some of the younger drivers wish they could master!

He was born in Crowder, Oklahoma to Joseph Yates Toole and Maude Burba Foster Toole. He and brother J.Y., along with half-brother Burba Foster and half-sisters Helen and Elizabeth, were a farm family. “We had cows and livestock.”

He and J.Y. had horses, “One of the things we loved to do was run the horses fast through town while standing up on them!”

Tom’s eye’s twinkled as he thought about those days of pony tricks and the people watching him and his brother on the wild rides.

Most of the time on the farm was hard work. They raised cotton and other crops, and even tried peanuts once. Talking about the tiresome hoeing in the hot sun and long days of picking cotton, Tom’s shoulders began to droop a bit, as if he were actually carrying that sack of heavy cotton.

“During the depression, we would slaughter an extra hog for winter and cure it in the smokehouse.”

They wanted to be able to feed people if they stopped by and were hungry. “We had a big table and could seat a lot of folks,” said Tom. “Every Sunday we had a full table of family.” He said they had the preacher over sometimes, too.

Dan Tom Boatright was his best friend growing up and remained his friend long into adulthood. Dan Tom’s mother was killed in a tornado in Crowder when they were boys.

He remembers holidays such as Christmas as simple affairs. They would cut a cedar tree and put it in the corner for a Christmas tree.

Tom continued in the farming tradition, then decided to try his hand as a car dealer.

He began buying and selling cars, driving all the way to Detroit to bring vehicles back to McAlester and sell them

to locals. He told a story of once seeing a beautiful black car in town and asking several times to buy it. The owner kept turning offers down.

Finally, Tom was able to purchase the car. He found there was a big piece of steel under the bumper with an empty area—for bootlegging! Tom knew about this, because he used to do some bootlegging, too.

Tom has done a lot of different jobs to earn money during his lifetime. He was related to John Griffin of Griffin Grocery and was able to get work through them when he needed a job. And for a while, he even had a job at an atomic energy plant in Texas.

When asked what Tom did for a hobby while he was living in Oklahoma, he just laughed and said with firmness, “On a ranch, you have all the ‘hobbies’ in the world!”

He loves to fish—crappie was a favorite in Oklahoma and salmon is the favorite in Colorado. He had a shop in the back yard where he could embrace his love for rocks.

A long-time rock hound, Tom would actually climb local mountains seeking out the perfect stones to polish and shape, then place in preformed silver castings of belt buckles, necklaces, rings and other jewelry and keepsake items.

Nearby Mount Antero is known for aquamarines. Tom wears a beautiful tiger eye belt buckle he made.

Tom was a Navy man. He served in World War II in the South Pacific.

“We had to push mines away from the ship with sticks,” he said. Some of the jobs he remembers doing in the Navy includes welding jobs and working in the engine room.



by Judy Allen

Tom Toole sits on the porch of his home in Salida, Colorado. One of Toole’s hobbies is looking for stones to polish, shape and place in preformed silver castings. He made the tiger eye belt buckle he is wearing in the picture.

After he got out of the service, Tom and his wife needed a place to live, so they got an old bunker, cut it in half and lived in one half, allowing another family to have the other half.

He met his second wife in Borger, Texas. The story Tom told is she saw him mowing without his shirt and “that was that.”

He and his wife used to go riding around in the jeep—he enjoys those memories.

What is his favorite food? Chili dogs and McDonald’s burgers. Breakfast is usually cereal (he likes Red Berries), and he loves special days when his daughter, Cynthia, makes him pancakes and scrambled eggs. He enjoys his life in Colorado, and enjoys his wealth of memories of the past century.

Connect Home Program Connects People Around the World

by STACY HUTTO

Curtis Pugh has the world at his fingertips without leaving the comfort of his home thanks to the Choctaw Nation Connect Home Program.

Pugh is a retired Baptist preacher. He has spent the mail part of his life doing mission work.

He spent 15 years in Canada. Pugh did mission work on the Six Nations Indian Reserve for five years and in the Yukon

Territory for 10. Pugh spent 11 ½ years in Romania, where he helped start a church. The Connect Home program helps Pugh stay in touch with contacts he has made in Romania, Phillipines, Slovenia, India, among others. Pugh also writes historical materials and uses the internet for research. He feels the Connect Home Program is a great program for seniors. “Internet access is important to seniors because so

much can be accomplished on the internet. So many things can be accomplished if the weather is bad, or you don’t feel like leaving home,” Pugh said.

Before the Connect Home Program, Pugh had to get a land line to have internet access, which he said was a very, very expensive service.

He was a little bit afraid to go to other places to use wifi due to the potential of his computer getting hacked. Now, he does not have to worry.

Pugh’s story is just one of many who have been helped by the Choctaw Nation Connect Home Program.

For the rest of Pugh’s story, along with the stories of those helped by the program, visit the Choctaw Nation’s YouTube page on Monday, Jan. 15, when the Connect Home video is released on the Biskink Season Two playlist.

Choctaw Nation’s YouTube page can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/user/ChoctawNationVideo>.

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Pastor Olin Williams

The New Year



Pastor Olin Williams
Employee Chaplain

“The eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.” Deuteronomy 11:12 (KJV).

Moses is speaking to the Israelites concerning their future. Ahead of them lies victories and defeats as they trek to the Promised Land.

The eyes of the Lord will always be there. Nothing is hidden from His eyes, and nothing is hushed from His ears.

His eyes will be there when they wander in the wilderness. His eyes will be there when they have the victory battle at Jericho.

His eyes will be there when they lose the battle at Ai. The eyes of the Lord are there from beginning to end.

Knowing someone is watching with care makes a person have guidelines and security. It gives a sense of purpose and importance. We do not know what the year holds for us, but we do know that the eyes of the Lord are upon us.


Perhaps some of us will walk in the wilderness. Perhaps our hearts will be crushed and think the sun will never shine again.

We may lay in a hospital bed and await the results of the tests. Or there may be a financial loss that shatters our dreams. Or we may sit in the funeral home to say good-bye to a loved one. Perhaps a broken home will leave us wandering in the wilderness of the heart. Be assured we will not escape the eyes of the Lord.

His eyes are also upon our victories. A new baby may come into our lives and restore our faith in the human family. The sun may glow brighter as our hearts fill with pride to witness our foolish children grow up and walk across the graduation platform to receive a prestigious honor.

Or we may be offered the job position that will make us complete. The freshness of the spring morning may restore our communion with the nature around us. The New Year may bring some to the wedding altar after a long season of doubtful anticipation. The eyes of the Lord are still upon us.

Not knowing what the new year holds for us, but that we know the eyes of the Lord are upon us, we can truthfully say with the psalmist, “I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.” Psalm 121:1 (KJV). Happy New Year!



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

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

Contact Roger Hamill
Deputy Director
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