



# OKLAHOMA

November 2017 Issue



Left: (pictured from left) AARP OK Associate State Director Outreach Mashell Sourjohn, Jack Austin Sr., AARP OK State President Joe Ann Vermillion, and AARP National President Eric Schneidewind are pictured at the AARP Indian Elder Honors. Right: Jack Austin Sr. walks the red carpet prior to the AARP Ninth Annual Indian Elder Honors held in Oklahoma City.



Left: Gilbert Mike "Choc" Charleston walks the red carpet prior to the AARP Ninth Annual Indian Elder Honors held in Oklahoma City. Right: (pictured from left) AARP OK Associate State Director Outreach Mashell Sourjohn, Gilbert Mike "Choc" Charleston, AARP OK State President Joe Ann Vermillion, and AARP National President Eric Schneidewind are pictured at the AARP Indian Elder Honors.



Left: (pictured from left) AARP OK Associate State Director Outreach Mashell Sourjohn, Chief Gary Batton, AARP National President Eric Schneidewind, and AARP OK State President Joe Ann Vermillion are pictured at the AARP Indian Elder Honors. Chief Batton accepted the award for Maricie Smith (right), who was unable to attend.



Photos Provided

by Choctaw Nation

## Choctaw Elders Recognized During AARP Ninth Annual Indian Elder Honors

by STACY HUTTO

Three Choctaw elders were recognized during the AARP Oklahoma's Ninth Annual Indian Elders Honors celebration on Tuesday, Oct. 3.

The event honored the accomplishments of 50 Indian Elders, including Jack Austin Sr., Gilbert Mike "Choc" Charleston and Maricie Smith, at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City.

According to the AARP press release, a medallion was presented to each honoree.

"This event celebrates a lifetime of service from these distinguished elders who have positively impacted their community, family, tribe and nation," Master of Ceremonies and AARP State Director Sean Voskuhl said.

"Whether they are well-known, or exhibit quiet devotion to family and community, this year's AARP Oklahoma Indian Elder honorees represent what is best about Native American people; love of family, dedication

to culture and respect for all people," continued Voskuhl.

During his welcome remarks AARP National President Eric Schneidewind stated, "Tribal elders are the guardians of legacy and younger generations are the guardians of the elders. Leaving the world a better place for our children and grandchildren has always been AARP's goal, and I see the same values alive in each of the elders honored."

Jack Austin Sr. is familiar to many people in the Choctaw Nation. Especially Choctaws living in District 7, where he has been their Tribal Councilman since 2001.

He has spent his life in service to his tribe, country and community.

Each year Councilman Austin travels more than 80,000 miles across the Choctaw Nation to meet and help tribal members.

He has helped many people and advocated for communities searching for infrastructure funding.

The Army veteran also supports local law enforcement, fire departments and churches. Part

of his holiday traditions include food baskets and presents for children and elders.

He also honors other veterans and salutes their service.

Councilman Austin is a Lighthouse Cathedral board member in Clayton, Oklahoma.

Gilbert Mike "Choc" Charleston has been a leader in Oklahoma City Business and cultural affairs.

He served his country with honor during World War II at the Battle of the Bulge.

Early in his career Mr. Charleston worked in the oil industry.

In the 1970s he, along with his wife Billie, owned the Choctaw Trading Post in Oklahoma City.

The store's authentic Indian artifacts attracted visitors such as Cary Grant, Frank Sinatra, Lauren Bacall and Pearl Bailey.

Mr. Charleston became well-known in the 1970s when Choctaws wanted to elect their own chief and refused to accept the chief appointed by the President of the United States.

A lengthy court battle ensued. Eventually, David Gardner was

elected Chief at Tvshka Homma.

Mr. Charleston's honors are extensive. He served on the board of directors at the fourth Oklahoma State Indian Association Annual Fair, where he presented war bonnets to Generals Edwards, Lowe and Dozier.

He also served as a Goodwill Ambassador for the Chamber of Commerce, received the Wall of Fame Award from the Oklahoma City Better Business Bureau and was honored at the Veterans Powwow in 2009.

Mr. Charleston has done much to serve his heritage, his family and his country.

He truly exemplifies the Chahta spirit of Faith, Family and Culture.

Maricie Smith is a retired educator. She is also the Outstanding Female Elder for 2016-2017.

At a very young age she began working alongside her parents pulling cotton, cutting broomcorn, sawing logs, or whatever labor was required to feed the family.

Attending school was difficult as the family moved constantly. However, Ms. Smith never

gave up. She graduated high school when she was 21 years old.

After graduating high school she went on to college and earned a bachelor's degree in elementary education.

She followed that by earning a master's degree in early childhood education.

Ms. Smith has a giving heart. She helps with fundraisers at the Atoka Choctaw Community Center.

She also volunteers at her church, sings Choctaw hymns and grows award-winning vegetables in her garden.

Ms. Smith was unable to attend the festivities and Chief Gary Batton accepted the award on her behalf.

Although she was unable to attend, Ms. Smith's contributions to the Choctaw Nation help keep the Choctaw culture alive and allows the next generation of Chahtas to learn more about their heritage.

According to aarp.org, "AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, social welfare organization with a membership of nearly 38 million."

## Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes Meets

The Inter-Tribal Council (ITC) of the Five Civilized Tribes represents approximately 750,000 Native Americans, an increase of about 100,000 since 2016, according to the council's president, Muscogee (Creek) Chief James Floyd. He made the announcement at the group's final quarterly meeting for 2017 held in Durant.

Chief Floyd said the updated citizenship figure illustrates the Five Civilized Tribes speak for 25 percent of all Native Americans in Indian Country and the number "raises the bar in the work that we need to do to achieve the things that we do," he said of the ITC's influence on issues important to all Native Americans.

Member tribes and top leaders include Choctaw Nation Chief Gary Batton;

Chickasaw Nation Governor Bill Anoatubby; Cherokee Nation Chief Bill John Baker; Muscogee Creek Nation Chief James Floyd and Seminole Nation Chief Greg Chilcoat.

Cherokee Chief Baker said the ITC is respected because "we are not only good partners (with Oklahoma), we're good partners with America and humanity."

The tribes have sent swift water rescue crews into hurricane ravaged Houston and into Florida, Chief Baker said.

Chickasaw Nation Governor Anoatubby said many of the issues affecting Indian Country across America affect the Five Tribes.

"We have to be in close touch with those things that are happening. You always have changes with a new administration, and

every administration has its own priorities and its own method of doing business. We stay in touch with that ... all of us. We want to know what's happening in (Washington) D.C.," Governor Anoatubby said. "We want to know what kinds of decisions are being made that affect Indian tribes in this country. We're going to be right up front in defending our interests," he added.

ITC leaders welcomed its latest member, Seminole Nation Chief Greg Chilcoat. He won election in August to lead the Seminole Nation.

"It is an honor to be here with these fine leaders and this organization," Chief Chilcoat said.

Six resolutions were passed unanimously by voting delegates. They include:

Support for the re-election of Joe Byrd, Cherokee,

as vice president of the Eastern Oklahoma Region of the Congress of American Indians.

Support for election of Chickasaw Nation Lt. Gov. Jefferson Keel as President of the National Congress of American Indians.

Opposition to restructuring of the Tribal Technical Assistance Program (TTAP) by the Federal Highway Administration.

Support for the nomination of Ronald Etheridge, with Chuck Hoskin as an alternate, to the Bureau of Indian Education Standards, Assessments and Accountability System Negotiated Rulemaking Committee. Etheridge is Cherokee Nation Deputy Director of Education Services with more than 40 years' experience. Hoskin is Cherokee Nation Chief of Staff and

member of the Oklahoma House of Representatives.

Asking Congress to include additional funding for the Muscogee Creek Nation Joint Venture Project in Eufaula, and W.W. Hastings Hospital in Tahlequah for Cherokees in the 2018-2019 fiscal budget.

Support for the United States Department of Treasury to continue, and increase, funding for Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI); New Markets Tax Credits (NMTC) and Community Development Entities (CDE) within Indian Country primary service areas.



by Lisa Reed

Brad Joe sings as Choctaw royalty signs the Lord's Prayer during the ITC meeting held at the Choctaw Casino Resort-Durant as Choctaw Chief Gary Batton, Chickasaw Governor Bill Anoatubby, Cherokee Chief Bill John Baker, Muscogee Creek Chief James Floyd and Seminole Chief Greg Chilcoat look on.



# CELEBRATE

## Choctaw Celebrates a Rich and Colorful Culture



Chief Gary Batton

November is recognized every year as National Native American Heritage Month. The Choctaw Nation has a very rich heritage, one that is full of faith, family and culture.

The Chahta who made the long journey from Mississippi built homes, churches, schools and businesses on the foundation of those values.

We are still strong today because of the dedication to uphold them. We should be proud of the deep roots our people have as a sovereign Nation in this country.

Our heritage is evident in many ways. The most obvious is the Choctaw culture we see through traditional dress, jewelry, art, and dance.

We hear conversations in the Choctaw language and the words are beautiful in the lyrics of Choctaw hymns. The School of Choctaw Language and the Cultural Ser-

vices department offer classes throughout the Choctaw Nation, as well as demonstrating Choctaw culture and traditions as we visit locations outside the 10 1/2 counties.

It's heartwarming to be able to connect with Choctaws around the country and see their reaction when they hear the language spoken, when they learn to make a piece of jewelry or hold a basket woven the old way.

The strong sense of pride in our heritage also guides us as we make decisions on services and businesses. Businesses such as the casinos and resorts, travel plazas, Choctaw Printing Services, and more generate dollars that help provide health and tribal services, education, employment, and housing options.

The diversity and success of the Nation's businesses help to make a difference in peoples' lives and provide sustainability for our children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren so they are imbued with the wisdom and tools to continue the legacy.

That is what our ancestors did for us and it is our mission to continue offering opportunities for growth and prosperity.

In the last three years, there has been a 5 percent increase in the number of Choctaw tribal members. In the last three years, there has also been a 59 percent increase in ser-

vices and a 53 percent increase in jobs.

The Choctaw Nation employs more than 9,000 people in positions inside and outside of the tribal boundaries. As the largest employer in southeast Oklahoma, we are a strong partner with the cities and other businesses in helping lift up the communities.

The future is bright for the Choctaw Nation. We stand proud of who we are and the country in which we live.

Our heritage is what inspires us and it is evident not just in November, but in everything we do.



by Kendra Germany

During the Labor Day Festival in Tvshka Homma, social dancers share the Choctaw culture by demonstrating Choctaw social dances. The social dancers also teach some of the dance steps to people from the audience.

## Throughout History Choctaw Warriors Have Volunteered When Needed



Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.

Choctaw history shows multiple instances when Chahta tvshka stepped up to protect what they loved.

Choctaw Chief Pushmataha was considered a great warrior. According to historical accounts, he fought in a war for the first time at the age of 13.

He continued to fearlessly protect his homeland in the War of 1812 by forming a company of Choctaw warriors who fought for the United States. He worked tirelessly for years as a Choctaw leader and mediator.

Pushmataha received full military honors as he was buried in the Congressional Cemetery in Washington, D.C.

Almost a century later, the Choctaw Code Talkers of World War I, who were not considered United States citizens at the time, volunteered to join the armed forces.

Several were handpicked to experiment with sending messages. The unique Chahta language had never been heard by the enemies and they

were able to create messages that totally confused the other side. They ingeniously crafted phrases using the Choctaw words for "little gun shoot fast" which meant a machine gun. "Big gun" was field artillery, and "twice big group" was battalion. These codes within a code were extremely effective. The telephone squad was instrumental in winning several key battles and ending the four-year-long war.

Choctaw men and women continue to guard our country, our families, and the life we hold dear. This is done not only by literally protecting our freedoms in battle but also offering assistance when needed. I speak often of servant leadership because it is close to my heart and it has been very evident during the last few months.

There are many of our Choctaws and employees who volunteered or were deployed to assist in southeast Texas, Florida and Puerto Rico. Staff members from Choctaw Nation Public Safety and Emergency Management traveled to the ravaged areas to assist in assessing the damage and providing emergency relief. Choctaw Nation Health Services also provided supplies and the Choctaw Nation received calls from tribal members in the area with referrals to housing, social and emergency assistance services.

The wildfires in California are another devastating travesty. Members of the Choctaw Nation's wildland firefighter group have often assisted throughout the country with ravaging fires such as these in the past.

We hear of mass shootings, bombings and other terrible attacks in addition to natural disasters. I am very thankful for the military, law enforcement, and emergency personnel who face each day with one thought in mind—to protect. The efforts of these courageous people are not to be taken lightly. There are many accounts of bravery and sacrifice.

Yakoke to you all.



by Deidre Elrod

During a 2016 trip to Washington, D.C., Chief Gary Batton and Assistant Jack Austin Jr. laid a wreath at Chief Pushmataha's gravesite in the Congressional Cemetery.

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

## Youth Work Program

Applications Available:

### Monday, January 1, 2018

*Eligibility Requirements: Ages 16 – 21 on or before the 1<sup>st</sup> day of work reside within 10 1/2 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

## Pastor Olin Williams Building Blocks



Pastor Olin Williams Employee Chaplain

Faith is the primary foundation of our salvation. By grace through faith we place all trust and all dependency on Jesus Christ and his work of salvation, we accept him as our Savior.

We do not trust or depend upon our good works for salvation. However, after this there is more to do to add to the faith that has been established. The Second Epistle of Peter, verses 5, 6, and 7 instruct us, "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity."

Notice how we are to add. We are not to add all these building blocks to Faith. We are to add each block in succession. We are building a stairway from the foundation of faith to charity which is Godly love.

The first block added to faith is virtue. This is conformity to a higher standard of excellence. This is submitting ourselves to a better quality of walk in this life.

The second block added to virtue is knowledge. This is more than just knowing something. It is a knowledge based on research, study and cross examination.

And to knowledge we add temperance. Temperance is self-control of the knowledge we receive. Without self-control, knowledge will have no direction or purpose.

After this patience is added to temperance. Patience is endurance. Self-control must have endurance. Victory comes to those who endure. The first four attributes refer to our development as a person or human trait.

The next block to add is godliness. Godliness is to love, worship, reverence, and honor God in heart and life. Worship without virtue, knowledge, temperance, and patience leaves us too far from the object of worship. By having the first blocks in place, we are getting close to our object of worship.

Then we add to this, brotherly kindness. This is a fraternal affection. We can't have love for our neighbor, or fellow man until we come to love Christ and learn rightful worship. The pinnacle block is charity. This is agape love. This is the love that God gave us at salvation. This is His kind of love. It is unconditional love.

BISKINIK

# November 2017

## HOHCHVFFO CHITO HVSHI

### big famine month

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The Choctaw Nation hosted the Inter-Tribal Council's final quarterly meeting for 2017 in October. The group represents approximately 750,000 Native Americans, an increase of about 100,000 since 2016.

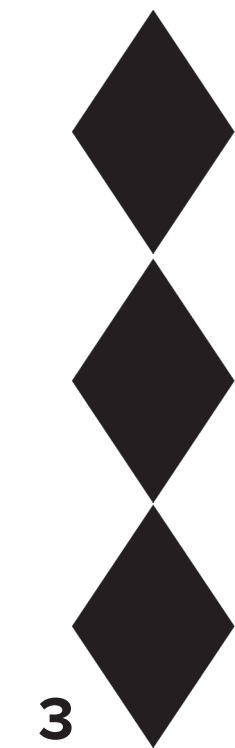
*Biskinik Mission Statement: To serve as the source of information for Choctaw Nation tribal members by delivering community news through a variety of communication channels.*

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**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](http://www.facebook.com/ChoctawNationofOklahoma)
- [www.twitter.com/ChoctawNationOK](http://www.twitter.com/ChoctawNationOK)
- [www.instagram.com/ChoctawNationOK](http://www.instagram.com/ChoctawNationOK)
- [www.youtube.com/ChoctawNation](http://www.youtube.com/ChoctawNation)





# Crossfit Founder Visits the Choctaw Nation

CrossFit Founder Greg Glassman recently visited the Choctaw Nation to speak with tribal members and health providers about avoiding chronic disease through exercise and proper nutrition. It's no secret that Diabetes is a major health issue in Native American communities. According to the Center of Disease Control, Native Americans and Alaskan Natives have the highest total percentage of diagnosed Diabetes cases in adults 18 and over. These are staggering



CrossFit Founder Greg Glassman visits with Carole Ayers. Carole is now more mobile thanks in large part to her workouts at the Choctaw Nation Wellness Center in Durant.

numbers, and it is a priority of the Choctaw Nation to prevent those numbers from increasing in our community. According to Glassman, the solution is simple, yet complex. Glassman explains that the root of the problem is sedentarism and excessive consumption of carbohydrates. Glassman's mission is, "To make sugar public enemy number one." "Most of the suffering we see could be avoided if we just eliminated the sugar," said Glassman. "We say you want to get off the couch and off the carbs. That is simple, but I've got to admit that it is really simple, but really hard." Glassman understands that getting motivated to get moving and cut out bad foods is hard to do, but encourages individuals to push through and take those steps to live a healthy and productive life. For a more in-depth information on Glassman's visit, check out the Anumpuli podcast or the video on the ChoctawNationOK Youtube page.

# WIC Receives Award for Breast Feeding Services

by APRYL MOCK

On August 31, the Choctaw Nation WIC program received a Loving Support Award of Excellence for Exemplary Breastfeeding Support and Practices from the United States Department of Agriculture. Erin James, a Breastfeeding and Peer Counseling Coordinator, accepted the award on behalf of the Choctaw Nation. According to James, all of the peer professionals working for Choctaw Nation WIC are certified lactation counselors. Darrell Allen, Branch Chief of the Southwest region of WIC, presented the award. He said, "The USDA is aware of how valuable the Choctaw Nation WIC Program is. We are consistently proud of their services." James said, "I'm really excited to be able to share the accomplishments of this team. They've worked really hard all year long to support these moms." James made sure she gave credit to her fellow peer counselors, Linda Woolbright, Meagan McCarthy and Samantha Christy. Claudene Williams, Health Services Administrator and Director of WIC said, "Over 40 percent of our mothers are breastfeeding right now, hopefully by next year, we'll be at 50 percent." James said she starting working with the breastfeeding program because she cares about new moms. She said, "Breastfeeding solves a lot of problems, giving mothers that tool really helps in the long run. The smile on a mom's face when she figures it out is just amazing."



Director of WIC, Claudene Williams and Breastfeeding and Peer Counseling Coordinator, Erin James are presented with the Loving Support Award of Excellence for Exemplary Breastfeeding Support and Practices by Branch Chief of the Southwest Region of WIC, Darrell Allen.

# NURSERY NEWS

## Presley Marie Goodness



Presley Marie Goodness was born on July 1, 2017. She was welcomed into the world by her parents Michael and Sharlene Goodness of Livermore, California. Presley is the granddaughter of Charlene Torres of Brentwood, California. She is the great-granddaughter of James V. and Mary John of Fremont, California.

## Archer Nolan Beesinger



Archer Nolan Beesinger was born on July 20, 2017. He weighed 7 pounds, 1 ounce. and was 20 inches long. He is dearly loved by his parents, Eric and Rhianon Beesinger of Wichita Falls, Texas and his proud big brother Wyatt. He is the grandson of Ronnie and Cheryl Beesinger of Archer City, Texas, Rhonda Reynolds of Bowie, Texas and Robert Baugh of Henrietta, Texas.

## Evelyn Grace Brooks



Evelyn Grace Brooks was born on August 31, 2017, in Lawton. She weighed 7 pounds, 3 ounces and was 20 inches long. Evelyn's parents are Lyn Thomas and Janie Brooks of Randlett. She was also welcomed by her big brother Michael Lyn Brooks. Evelyn is the granddaughter of Louis Hutchinson III of Iowa Park, Texas and the late Georgia Gallaher, Mike Brooks of Wichita Falls, Texas and Lois Bartz of Perryton, Texas. She is the great-granddaughter of the late George and Gennive Gallaher of Duncan. The late Louis Hutchinson II and the late Temple Hutchinson.

### FREE ACT PREP WORKSHOP

Thursday, December 7, 2017  
Kiamichi VoTech Center  
3205 NE Lincoln Rd  
Idabel, OK 74745

**8:00 -8:30 a.m.**  
**8:30 a.m.-noon**

**Registration Workshop**

**Requirements for eligibility:**

- Must be a Choctaw COB card holder OR a Talent Search Student
- Must be enrolled in grades 9-12
- Pre-registration is required (call 800-522-6170, ext 2711)
- New Students may apply


**EDUCATIONAL TALENT SEARCH**

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma  
800-522-6170, EXT. 2711

FAITH • FAMILY • CULTURE  
WWW.CHOCTAWNATION.COM

### Recipe of the Month

#### Pumpkin Roll



Recipe by Carmen Robertson

#### Ingredients

**Pumpkin Roll:**

- 3 eggs
- 1 cup sugar
- ¾ cup flour
- 3 teaspoons pumpkin spice
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- ¾ cup pumpkin
- 1 tablespoon baking soda

**Cream Cheese Filling:**

- 8 ounces cream cheese
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 4 teaspoons butter
- ½ teaspoon vanilla

#### Preparation

**Pumpkin Roll**

- Preheat oven to 375.
- Mix all together and spread onto cookie sheet, lined with tin foil.
- Bake 15 minutes
- While hot lay a piece of tin foil on top and roll cake.
- Let cool 1 hour

**Cream Cheese Filling**


- Mix well, unroll cake, spread filling and roll up.
- Place in fridge and let set.

#### Nutrition Facts:

Servings per container 12  
Serving size 1/12 of recipe (161g)

(per serving)  
Calories 275, Calories from Fat 92, Total Fat 10g, Saturated Fat 4g, Trans Fat 0g, Cholesterol 269mg, Sodium 283mg, Total Carbohydrate 36g, Dietary Fiber 1g, Sugars 29g, Protein 10g, Vitamin A 57%, Vitamin C 1%, Calcium 7% and Iron 10%.

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.



**Practice safe cooking this Thanksgiving.**

Home cooking fires happen most often on Thanksgiving. Stand by your pan: if you are cooking at high temperatures, turn off the burner before leaving the kitchen.

Choctaw Nation Office of Emergency Management

U.S. Fire Administration

FEMA

## Choctaw Elders

### age 80 & up

...

You have stories to tell, let us preserve them.

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

wic CHOCTAW Women, Infants and Children		
Location	Days	Hours
<b>Antlers</b> 580-298-3161	Every Tue.	8:30 a.m.– 4 p.m.
<b>Atoka</b> 580-889-5825	Mon. Wed., Thurs. & Fri.	8 a.m.– 4:30 p.m.
<b>Battiest</b> 580-241-5458	1st & 2nd Tue. Every Month	8:30 a.m.– 4 p.m.
<b>Boswell</b> 580-380-2518	1st Thurs. Every Month	8:30 a.m.– 4 p.m.
<b>Broken Bow</b> 580-584-2746	Daily Mon. - Fri	8 a.m.– 4:30 p.m.
<b>Coalgate</b> 580-927-3641	1st Wed. of Every Month	8:30 a.m.– 4 p.m.
<b>Durant</b> 580-916-2100 x 83517	Daily Mon – Fri.	8 a.m.– 4:30 p.m.
<b>Hugo</b> 580-326-5404	Daily Mon. – Fri.	8 a.m.– 4:30 p.m.
<b>Idabel</b> 580-286-2510	Daily Mon. – Fri.	8 a.m.– 4:30 p.m.
<b>McAlester</b> 918-423-6335	Daily Mon. – Fri.	8 a.m.– 4:30 p.m.
<b>Poteau</b> 918-649-1106	Daily Mon. – Fri.	8 a.m.– 4:30 p.m.
<b>Smithville</b> 580-244-3289	1st Thurs. Every Month	8 a.m.– 4:30 p.m.
<b>Spiro</b> 918-962-5134	Wed., Thurs. & Fri.	8 a.m.– 4:30 p.m.
<b>Stigler</b> 918-867-4211	Mon. & Tue.	8:30 a.m.– 4 p.m.
<b>Talihina</b> 918-567-7000 x-6792	Mon., Tue., Wed. & Fri.	8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
<b>Wilburton</b> 918-465-5641	Every Thursday	8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.

### 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

#### December

##### ANTLERS

Market open weekdays December 1-31, except for:  
Closed: December 15, 25, 26, 27, 28 & 29.  
Cooking with Carmen: December 11, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

##### BROKEN BOW

Market open weekdays December 1-31, except for:  
Closed: December 15, 25, 26, 27, 28 & 29.  
Cooking with Carmen: December 18, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

##### DURANT

Market open weekdays December 1-31, except for:  
Closed: December 15, 25, 26, 27, 28 & 29.  
Cooking with Carmen: December 4, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

##### MCALESTER

Market open weekdays December 1-31, except for:  
Closed: December 15, 25, 26, 27, 28 & 29.  
Cooking with Carmen: December 8, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

##### POTEAU

Market open weekdays December 1-31, except for:  
Closed: December 15, 25, 26, 27, 28 & 29.  
Cooking with Carmen: December 13, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

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

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider.*





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## Five-Year-Old Choctaw Takes Part in National Motocross Championship

Niko Colby of Scottsdale, Arizona recently competed in the world’s largest motocross race. Niko and his family traveled from Scottsdale to Hurricane Springs, Tennessee to compete in the 36th Annual Rocky Mountain ATV/MC AMA Armature National Motocross Championship. The race took place at the historic Loretta Lynn Ranch, where legendary motocross racers such as Travis Pastrana and Ryan Dungey have competed and taken home titles.

Niko, who is only 5 years old, trained for months to qualify for this event. He took on over 22,000 racers from across the country to earn one of 1,482 qualifying positions. The championship competition took place July 31 through Aug. 5, 2017. Niko competed in the 50cc 4-6 Shaft Drive class, and placed 31st overall.

Niko is a kindergartner at Cochise Elementary School in Scottsdale, and has been riding motocross since he was 4 years old.

With the support of his sponsors Valley Car Group and his parents, Niko has been able to pursue his dreams. Niko travels nearly every weekend to various tracks across Arizona and California to compete.

Niko is the son of Malena and Daren Colby, and the brother of Stone, Slater and Cruze Colby.



## Koebele Brothers Compete in Lacrosse Classic

Brothers Spencer and Fletcher Koebele, sons of Steve and Danette Koebele, played on the sixth and seventh grade lacrosse team representing the State of Texas at the 2017 Brine National Lacrosse Classic held July 18 through 21 in Richmond, Virginia. Residents of Austin, Texas, seventh-grader Spencer and sixth-grader Fletcher are students and active lacrosse players throughout the year. The Texas team performed well, including success in games against tough teams from Maryland and New England.

The National Lacrosse Academy featured more than 2,400 top youth lacrosse players from across the United States and Canada in one venue, competing on teams coached by NCAA lacrosse coaches.



## Jones Academy Chosen to Host Science Technology Engineering and Math Camp

High school students from the 10 ½ counties were chosen for this camp through a competition based application process.

Facilitators included NASA, Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigations, public education STEM Teachers, BioMedical Science Instructors, The University of Tulsa, and The University of Central Oklahoma School of Forensic Sciences (these included overnight visits to both universities).

## Susan H. Garry Named National Merit Semifinalist

Susan H. Garry has been named a National Merit Semifinalist. She is a senior at the Legacy Early College High School in Taylor, Texas, where she is a Superintendent’s Scholar and a member of the National Honor Society, Chess Club, Music Club and the Beginners Learning Alternative Designs for Energy. She is a Tae Kwon Do instructor, a lifeguard and has done research for the Taylor Conservation and Heritage Society.

The nationwide pool of semifinalists represents less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors. Susan is the only semifinalist in her high school. Her parents are Madeleine Garry and Kyle Hensley. She is the descendant of original enrollees Josephine Hickman Hill Terrell and Elizabeth Lewis Hickman.



## Pittman Wins First in NRA YHEC National Competition

Austin Pittman, 14, and the Oregon Junior team won first place overall in the 2017 National Rifle Association Youth Hunter Education Challenge national competition held in Raton, New Mexico July 24 through 27. The YHEC is an outdoor skills event for youth under 18 and consists of eight separate events; muzzle loader, 22LR, shotgun, archery wildlife ID, hunter safety trail, orienteering, and the hunter safety and responsibility exam. Oregon’s junior team earned the top spot by outscoring 140 other talented teams.

The road to the completion was not an easy one. Pittman tore his rotator cuff and associated tendons in a wrestling match. Pittman worked hard to rehabilitate in time for the regional THEC.

Even though he was not able to compete in all eight competitions in the regional event, he came in 17th place out of 56. Pittman went on to finish in fifth place in the state competition, securing his spot on the junior national team.

## Paxton Graduates From SOSU

Jesse Gabe Paxton graduated from Southeastern Oklahoma State University on May 6 with a Bachelor’s of Science in Occupational Health and Safety. He had double minors in Business and Native American Studies. Jesse is the son of Ronald Gabe and Valeria Paxton and the grandson of Swinney Gabe Paxton Jr. His brothers Adam and Scott Paxton, sister-in-law Jill Paxton, aunts Barbara Hornick and Dee Paxton, uncle Dale Paxton, nieces Leah, Ella, Megan and Scarlet Paxton, nephew Luke Paxton, cousin Ryan Mackay and family friend Dan Bertran were all in attendance and wish Jesse great success in the future.



## Bui Sisters Graduate as Valued Members of Band



Aysha Lynn Bui graduated from Shawnee High School on May 15. She was a member of the band, named an ECU honors band member, and a member of the Oklahoma Symphonic Orchestra. She will be attending college in Seminole in the fall.

Caryssa and Cynthia Bui graduated from the eighth grade on May 18. They are also members of the band. Aysha, Caryssa and Cynthia are the daughters of Christine and Wiley, and Jenny Bui of Shawnee, Oklahoma. They are the granddaughters of Nhan and Noreen Bui and Oline and Bernice Williams and the sisters of Nick Bui.

## Hirsch Graduates from Texas A&M

Madeleine Hirsch graduated from Texas A&M University on May 13, 2017 with a Bachelor’s of Science in Civil Engineering. Madeleine would like to extend her thanks to the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Higher Learning Education Program. She said, “I graduated on time, in four years, with no debt, which hardly ever happens nowadays, thanks to the Choctaw Nation. I am now set up to have a great career in civil engineering. Yakoke!”



## Dahl Earns Registered Nurse Degree

Jonathan Michael Dahl of Springfield, Oregon graduated from Lane Community College with his Associates Degree in Registered Nursing in June 2017. He passed the Oregon State Board of Nursing examination in July and was hired at McKenzie Willamette Medical Center as a CVICU Cardiovascular Critical Care Staff Nurse in Springfield. Jonathan is the eldest son of Stephanie Southerland (Dahl) of Eugene, Oregon. His grandfather was Ransom R. Southerland, originally from Oklahoma. His family wishes to thank the tribal Higher Education Program for the financial support and encouragement to complete his course of study.



## James Completes Navel Training

Leila James graduated from the U.S. Naval Training Center in Great Lakes, Illinois on June 23. She is the daughter of Mack and Loyce Polk and the granddaughter of Virgil James and Joyce and Manuel Gonzales.

She has three brothers, Nikeem Cherry, Brendon Polk and Tristian Polk.

Leila will complete four weeks of speciality training in Virginia before she is stationed. She will serve in the 196 division, Ship 03, USS Hopper.



## Talihina Students Attend Project Impact Weather Camp

On June 8, sixth through eighth grade students from Talihina School attended the TAG Weather Camp. TAG Campers were given a two-hour extensive tour of the National Weather Center in Norman. Students watched a short video at the beginning of the tour about the history of the weather center. From there, they were able to visit the observation deck, control room, meteorology classrooms, and use interactive weather board. A question and answer section was held at the conclusion where students asked many questions regarding weather predications, equipment used and training needed to become a meteorologist.

After the tour, they traveled to Andy Alligators conference room for lunch and guest speakers. Kyle Allison, owner of Andy Alligators, spoke to the group about his degree in recreational management and how he has used it to manage his business. Blake Jackson, a native speaker, is an attorney with the Chickasaw Nation. He gave a brief history of himself and spoke to the students on the importance of good grades, attendance in school, and college entrance exams. He gave them an overview of his job duties with the Chickasaw Nation. The last speaker was Hannah Blackwell, Choctaw Nation Success Coach at OU. She did an interactive activity with the students and explained her job duties at OU. She also spoke on the importance of a solid high school foundation in order to be prepared to start training for a career. She handed out “goody” bags to each student with information about OU and various careers.

After lunch, students enjoyed games and fun at Andy Alligators Fun Park. Project Impact/TAG is a college and career readiness program for eighth-12th grade students attending Talihina Public School. This is a grant with the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and Department of Education. Along with summer camps, students are offered elective classes such as: ACT Prep, Career Exploration, and College Prep during the school year. If you would like more information on Project Impact/TAG Program, please contact Program Coordinator, Marianne Akins at (580) 775-7547 or Talihina High School Counselor, Julie McClain at (918) 567-2259.



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NOTES

Tribal Council Holds Regular Session

The Choctaw Nation Tribal Council met in regular session Saturday, Oct. 14, in their chambers at Tvshka Homma.

During the regular session committee reports were presented.

New business included approval of the following items:

- Disposal of surplus capital assets.
- Authorized Chief Gary Batton to place property in Choctaw County in Trust Status with the United States of America.
- Application for funding from the Bureau of Indian Affairs to construct new Forestry/Fire officer and shop facilities.
- An investment in JTS Capital SPIV, LLC.
- A limited waiver of sovereign immunity–Choctaw Defense Munitions, LLC.
- A limited waiver of sovereign immunity–Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.
- Approved FY17 budget for the Choctaw Nation Child Care Development Fund.
- Funds and budget for the Tribal Historic Preservation Fund Operations grants.
- Funds and budget for the Victims of Crime Act grant.
- Funds and budget for the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.
- Funds and budget for the Injury Prevention program.
- Funds and budget for the Tribal Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting grant program.
- Funds and budget for the Tribal Management grant program.
- Funds and budget for the Cooperative Agreements to Implement Zero Suicide in Health Systems–Project Zero Suicide.
- Funds and budget for the Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention Initiative–Project Strong.
- Funds and budget for the Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention Initiative–Project Homakbi Ribbon.
- Funds and budget for the Cooperative Agreements for Tribal Behavioral Health–Project Embrace.
- Funds and budget for the Cooperative Agreements for First Responders.
- Funds and budget for the Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers.
- Funds and budget for the Rural Business Development grant–Commercial Business Space Resource Center.
- Funds and budget for the Rural Business Development grant–Lending Program Feasibility Study and Planning Project.

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

The next Tribal Council meeting will be held on Saturday, Nov. 11, at 10 a.m. in Tvshka Homma.

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

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

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

Gary Batton  
Chief

Jack Austin Jr.  
Assistant Chief

The Official  
Monthly Publication  
of the  
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

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

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

The BISKINIK is a nonprofit publication of the Choctaw Nation.

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

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



LETTERS

My grandmother was Nancy Knee Gibson. I am looking for the families of her brothers; Joseph, Diron, Issac and Josiah. They lived around Pailo, Pauls Valley and Foster, Oklahoma. I would love to hear from anyone in her family.

Jean Harper (Running Bear)  
(580) 470-6533

Thank you for sending me the articles I asked for. I have been a member of the Choctaw Nation for several years. I was born to John Franklin Williams on Sept. 19, 1928, in Spiro, Oklahoma. I celebrated 89 years of life this year. I am the mother of five boys and three girls. I have three granddaughters, five grandsons, three great-granddaughters and six great-great-grandchildren.

Catherine Stallings  
Bakersfield, California

I have been visiting the Idabel Clinic now for over a year. I can say without any doubt they have gone above and beyond the expectations. The staff, doctors, nurses and dental personnel are truly professionals. They have gone out of their way to help me since day one. I know Chief Gary Batton is very proud of the staff there. I am a proud Choctaw.

Ronald Jones

I am an avid reader of the *Biskinik*. I think you all do a great job and have done so for many years. I love being a member of our highly distinguished tribe and I enjoy being informed of the Choctaw Nation's activities.

Max Simean Lewis Williston  
Ft. Supply, Oklahoma

Choctaw Nation Housing Authority Post Purchase Education Workshop

11-14 Calera 12-12 Wilburton

Pre-registration required.  
Please contact Amanda Russell at (800) 522-6170 ext. 4127 or [arussell@ChoctawHousing.com](mailto:arussell@ChoctawHousing.com) to pre-register.

Choctaw Nation Housing Authority Pre-Homeownership Education

November

11-9 Atoka 11-16 Stigler  
11-9 McAlester 11-17 Broken Bow

No Fees. All materials furnished. Pre-registration required.  
Please contact Amanda Russell at (800) 522-6170 ext. 4127 or [arussell@ChoctawHousing.com](mailto:arussell@ChoctawHousing.com) to pre-register.

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Legal Assistance

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

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

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

November Community Center Schedule

11-2 Idabel: 10-1 & 1:30-3  
11-9 Poteau: 10-1 & 1:30-3  
11-30 Antlers: 10-1 & 1:30-3

December Community Center Schedule

12-7 Stigler: 10-1 & 1:30-3  
12-14 Wilburton: 10-1 & 1:30-3  
1-4-18 McAlester: 10-1 & 1:30-3

Southeastern Oklahoma Indian Credit Association and Choctaw Revolving Loan Fund

The Southeastern Oklahoma Indian Credit Association offers small business, home, home improvement, and agriculture loans. To be eligible to apply, a person must reside within the 10 1/2-county service area of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and must possess a Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) from a federally recognized tribe. Micro-loans are available for emergency home improvements and small businesses. The loans are available up to \$2,500 and are to be repaid within 24 months. To be eligible to apply you must be Choctaw, possess a CDIB and reside within the 10½ county area of the Choctaw Nation.

For more information, please contact Susan Edwards at (580) 924-8280 ext. 2161 or toll-free (800) 522-6170.

If you are interested in applying for a loan from the SOICA or the Choctaw Revolving Loan Fund, there will be a representative from the Choctaw Nation Credit Department at the:

Stigler Community Center  
November 9  
9:30 a.m. – 11 a.m.

EVENTS

Silas & Lorene Blaine Memorial Gospel Singing

Saturday, Nov. 11  
Sulphur Springs United Methodist Church  
Three miles south of Bennington, Oklahoma

Supper is at 5 p.m. with singing to follow the meal.  
The MCs are Roger and Mike Scott.  
Choctaw singing led by Edward and Eleanor Palmer.  
All groups are welcome. The singing is sponsored by the Blaine Family.

For more info call (580) 380-1559 or (580) 380-2084.

Horton-Umber Family Reunion

Thursday, Nov. 23–Friday, Nov. 24  
Memphis, Tennessee

Descendants of Ida Umber Dorsey, Joe Umber, or Bob Horton are invited to spend Thanksgiving celebrating their Choctaw history and meeting new relatives at the first ever Horton-Umber Family Reunion. Due to family members coming from Alaska, Texas, Michigan and everywhere in between, the reunion will be held in Memphis, Tennessee.

For more information please call or text:  
Bernard Walker Jr. at (907) 631-1037  
Ramsey Horton Jr. at (281) 638-0256

Pastors Celebration Concert

Saturday, Nov. 25 at 7 p.m.  
316 N. Main St.  
Caddo, Oklahoma

Musicians singing at Cornerstone Full Gospel Church include Reborn, The Crosby Family, Flo Wise, The Johnsons, Lisa Thompson, and Travis & Sheala.

For more information call (580) 760-6127.

Choctaw Nation Head Start, Early Head Start & Child Care Programs

(Name of Institution)  
announces its participation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). All participants in attendance are served meals at no extra charge to the parents. In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;  
(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or  
(3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Biskinik Announcement Policy

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

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

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

Send to:  
Biskinik, Attn: Notes to the Nation  
P.O. Box 1210  
Durant, OK 74702  
or email to:  
[biskinik@ChoctawNation.com](mailto:biskinik@ChoctawNation.com)

Thanksgiving Dinners

LOCATION	DATE	TIME
Antlers (Seniors)	11/15	Noon
Atoka	11/8	Noon
Bethel/Battiest	11/2	6 p.m.
Bethel/Battiest (Seniors)	11/8	11:30 a.m.
Broken Bow	11/9	6 p.m.
Broken Bow (Seniors)	11/22	Noon
Coalgate (Seniors)	11/8	Noon.
Coalgate	11/12	1 p.m.
Crowder (Seniors)	11/15	11:30 a.m.
Durant (Event Center)	11/7	6 p.m.
Hugo	11/15	11:30 a.m.
Idabel	11/16	6 p.m.
McAlester (Seniors)	11/15	11:15 a.m.
McAlester	11/19	1 p.m.
Poteau	11/16	6 p.m.
Smithville	11/15	Noon
Spiro	11/15	11 a.m.
Stigler	11/8	11:30 a.m.
Talihina	11/16	11:45 a.m.
Tvshka Homma (Cafeteria)	11/2	6 p.m.
Wilburton	11/15	Noon
Wright City	11/16	Noon

All dinners are held at the community centers unless otherwise noted.



Choctaw Nation Vocational Rehabilitation

December 2017

Durant - Monday, Wednesday and Friday  
Phone: (580) 326-8304; Fax: (580) 326-0115

Broken Bow - Monday, Wednesday and Friday  
Email: [ddavenport@choctawnation.com](mailto:ddavenport@choctawnation.com)

Idabel by appointment

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



### Billie Rae Sexton

Billie Rae Sexton, 88, passed away Oct. 8. Billie Rae was born Sept. 7, 1929, to Floyd Sexton and Ora Lee Hunter in Heavener, Oklahoma. Billie is survived by her children, Jerelyn Sampson and spouse, Ken, Dennis Roberts and spouse, Patricia Muniz, Jake Hulsizer and spouse, Kim; brother, Lindel Sexton and spouse, Betty, Sister, Dortha Sexton Wickstrom, brother, Michael Sexton and spouse, Debbie; eight grandchildren; several great-grandchildren; many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends. She was preceded in death by her parents; sister, Jackie Sexton Rinks; brother, Charles Sexton. A private interment will be held at Glen Abbey Cemetery in San Diego, California at a later date. For the full obituary, please visit [Gabaldon Mortuary](#).

### JD Wallace Sr.

JD Wallace Sr.,73, of Oklahoma City, passed away July 4. JD was born May 15, 1944, to Laura (Lewis) Wallace and Samuel Wallace Sr. in Roxton, Texas. JD is survived by his children, Harrison Wallace, Lenette Wallace, Tonya and her spouse Rodney, Chad and his spouse Norma, Athena and her spouse Keith and JD Wallace Jr.; two sisters, Rozella Williams and Susie Aarons and four brothers; Larry Wallace, Leroy Wallace, Robert Wallace and Sammy Wallace, 10 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. JD was preceded in death by his parents and two sisters, Ruth Wallace and Wanda Wallace.



### Pinkie Pamplin

Pinkie Mae Pamplin, 96, of Lawton, Oklahoma passed away Sept. 10. She was born Oct. 22, 1920, to Jim and Rosie Ann Karr in Coleman, Oklahoma. Pinkie is survived by two daughters, Marion Smith and Patricia Pamplin Arnet; three sons and their spouses, Howard E. “Shep” Pamplin, Jr., Tommy and Jan Pamplin and Billy and Karen Pamplin; 14 grandchildren, 32 great-grandchildren and 10 great-great-grandchildren; her sister, Dathney Greeno; and her brother, Wesley “Sonny” Karr. Pinkie was preceded in death by husband Howard E. Pamplin, several brothers and sisters, and her son-in-law, Roger Smith. For the full obituary, please visit [Becker Funeral Home](#).



### Wanda Poulis

Wanda Fay (Bohannon) Poulis,87, passed away Oct. 5. Wanda was born Sept. 10, 1930, to Dennis Bohannon and Minnie Woolbright Bohannon in Poteau, Oklahoma. Wanda is survived by three children; Jeananette (Bobby) Parker of Ventura, Charles R. Poulis and Toney (Jane) Poulis, six grandchildren; Sara Harwood, Stephanie LaCrosse, Alicia Poulis Carlson, Nicole Poulis, Jack Poulis and Sam Poulis, six great-grandchildren and six great-great-grandchildren. She was predeceased by her husband of 65 years, Charlie, her parents and siblings; Emogene, Luther, Leon Dennis (LD), Mood, Tony, Irlene, Ann, Charles, Jerry and Bobby Allen. For the full obituary, please visit [Joseph P. Rear-don Funeral Home and Cremation Service](#).



### 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](mailto:biskinik@ChoctawNation.com)

### Carla Anita Filmore-DeCoteau

Carla Anita Filmore-DeCoteau, 58, of Oklahoma City, passed away July 12. Carla was born on May 19, 1959, to Juanita Mae Cass-Filmore and Ben Henry Filmore. Carla is survived by her son Sergeant Jamie DeCoteau, her sister, Priscilla Filmore-Clark and her cousins, Felicia Wells, James Clark, Monica Clark, Ciani Filmore, Shelia Long and Leslie Leighting. Carla was preceded in death by her parents, her sisters, Sheila Filmore, Margaret Long and Debra Filmore and her brothers, Ben Filmore, Millard Filmore and Mark Filmore.

### Christyan Boswell

Christyan Boswell, 18, of Haworth, Oklahoma passed away Sept. 23. Christyan was born Oct. 12, 1998, to Tommy and Michelle (Devance) in Tyler, Texas. Christyan is survived by his father, Tommy Boswell and spouse, Alyssa; grandfather, George, grandmother, Melba Lily; siblings, Daniel Boswell, Destiny Boswell, Sierra Boswell, Jamie Devance, Tiffany Miller, Jordan and Cristian Cervantes; two uncles, Curtis Boswell; two aunts, Melba and Linda Boswell; five great-uncles, Tommy Davis and spouse Donna, Green Dale Davis and spouse, Jolene, Charley Davis and spouse, Charles Wayne Davis and spouse, Sue and Clifford Davis; his girlfriend, Emily Ray. He was preceded in death by his mother, Michelle Boswell; cousin, Billy Joe Davis; great-grandmother, Mable McKinney; great-grandfather, Charley Davis; grandmother, Dorothy Boswell, and uncle, Eric Boswell. He was laid to rest at McGee Cemetery, Broken Bow, Oklahoma. For the full obituary, please visit [Brumley Funeral Home](#).



### Eliza ‘Jane’ Smith

Eliza “Jane” Smith, 75, of Nixa, Missouri passed away Aug. 11. She was born on Dec. 23, 1941, to Sidney and Gladys (Garland) Cass in Stigler, Oklahoma. Eliza is survived by two daughters and their spouses, Kim and Tim Brower and Kari and Karen Smith, two grandchildren, Max and Sam Brower, two sisters and their spouses; Sophina and Dean Dunn and Vonetta and Don Busse, one brother, Dennis Howard and spouse Betty, three sisters-in-law, Linda Howard, Doris and Goldie Smith, five nieces, Sydney Kellett, Amiee Gonzales, Vynell Howard, Regina Dodd and Jeanette Barber, and five nephews; Aaron Dunn, Phillip and Donald Busse, Randy and Troy Howard. Eliza was preceded in death by her parents, husband Lon William Smith, brothers Sidney Wallace Cass and Dwayne Howard, sisters Juanita Bowen and Connie Goins, brother-in-law John Smith and nephew Steve Smith. For the full obituary, please visit [Green Lawn Funeral Home](#).



### David Lee Falconer

David Lee Falconer, 80, of Prague, Oklahoma passed away Feb. 2. David was born Aug. 28, 1936, to Leonard and Alva Falconer. David is survived by his wife, Florence, his son Ronny Wayne, daughter, Eva Marie, two stepsons, Davey Petty and spouse Patty, and David Lipert and spouse Becky, three brothers, Norman and spouse Barbara, Donald and spouse Kathy, and Ronald and spouse Sharon, two sisters, Betty Johnny and spouse Bill and Joyce Parker and spouse Hershel, uncle, Perry Falconer and aunt, Dora Lund. David was laid to rest in Old Cache Cemetery. For the full obituary, please visit [Park Brothers’ Funeral Home](#).



### Samuel Ludlow

Samuel Ludlow, 80, passed away Aug. 11. He was born Sept. 13, 1936, to David and Annetta Ludlow. Samuel is survived by his sisters, Rozella Ludlow and Geraldine Rowell; brothers, David and Paul Ludlow; six children, son Terry Ludlow; daughters, Annetta (Donald) Jurgensen, Beverly Ludlow, Gail Logan, Christine (John) Nusom and Barbara Cline, 16 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents, sisters Sarah Ludlow, Gladiola Burch, and brother Joel (Dean) Ludlow. Samuel will be laid to rest with his father in Honobia, Oklahoma in the spring. For the full obituary, please visit [Cascadia Cremation](#).



### Elsie Taylor

Elsie (James) Taylor, 84, passed away Sept. 10. Elsie was born Nov. 1, 1932, to Harbor James and Sally (Tom) James in Ravia, Oklahoma. Elsie is survived by two nieces, Betty Baptiste and Linda Dean, and six nephews, Gary Brown, Arnold, Charlie and Dilan Lewis, Simon and Isaac Johnson. She was preceded in death by her husband, Otis Taylor, her parents, two sisters, Amelia Campos and Hannah Johnson, two nieces, Minnie and Jean Stapleton, and nephew, Randy Baptiste. For the full obituary, please visit [Griffin-Hillcrest Funeral Home](#).



### Brittany Love

Brittany Love, 28, passed away July 12 in Coos Bay, Oregon. Brittany was born March 2, 1989, to Robert and Cheryl Love in Modesto, California. Brittany is survived by her sons, Joshua and Tyler and their father Andrew Cadwalader; parents; brother, Jonathan Love; sisters, Cally Summers, Meranda Oakes and Faith Love; grandparents, Floyd and Laura Smith, Richard Love; uncle and aunt Timothy and Stephanie Smith; and cousins, Nick Love and Olivia McLane. For the full obituary, please visit [Coos Bay Chapel](#).



### Melissa Karen Jones

Melissa Karen Jones, 31, passed away Sept. 28, at the Sparks Medical Center in Ft. Smith, Arkansas. Melissa was born Jan. 21, 1986, in Talihina, Oklahoma to Albert Leon Jones and Pearl Renee (James) Jones. Melissa is survived by husband, Shane Selig; children, Kayley, Shane Ray, Chalen and Jordan Selig; mother-in-law, Brenda Carver; mother, Pearl Jones and spouse, Ben Austin; father, Albert Jones and spouse, Lanette; maternal grandmother, Shirley James; paternal grandmother, Joyce Jones; sisters, Jennifer Jones and spouse Silas Dildine, Stephanie Jones and spouse Rain Koepke; brothers, Dylon Sullivan and spouse Natasha, Hunter and Dalton Jones; stepsister, Amy; nieces and nephews: Nahali Phillips, Zoe Armstrong, Lily and Rose Sullivan, Michael Jones, Stephen and Stanley Phillips and Chipper Jones; along with numerous other nieces, nephews, cousins and other family and friends. For the full obituary, please visit [Jones Harkins Funeral Home](#).



### Wanda Lou Anne Sanders

Wanda Lou Anna Sanders,69, of Broken Bow, Oklahoma passed away Sept. 8. Wanda was born Oct. 2, 1947, to Jacob and Martha (Anna) Sanders in Broken Bow, Oklahoma. She was preceded in death by her parents, two brothers, Emmett Austin, James “Skeet” Anna; one sister Faye Reining, and two brothers-in-law, Len Reining and Preston Bohanan. A Celebration of Life Service was held Sept. 12 at Myrtlewood Baptist Church, in Broken Bow. Wanda was laid to rest at Myrtlewood Cemetery. For the full obituary, please visit [Brumley Funeral Home](#).



### Robert ‘Butch’ Steele

Robert Dale “Butch” Steele, 74, passed away Sept. 5. He was born on Feb. 7, 1943, to “Son” and Ethel Webster Steele in Idabel, Oklahoma. Butch is survived by his wife, Robyn Steele; daughter, Lori Mayes and spouse, Chris; sons, Zak Graff and spouse, Katrina Mosher and Logan Graff and spouse Lindsay; six grandchildren, Bradley Monroe, Andrew Mayes, Haley Mayes, Braden Mayes, Cole Graff and Cate Graff; several nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends. Butch was preceded in death by his parents; a son, Kevin Monroe; brothers, Earnest Jr. and Charles Wright; and a sister, Beulah Fay Tapley. For the full obituary, please visit [White Family Funeral Home](#).



### Jackie ‘Lewis’ Allen

Jackie “Lewis” Allen Jr., 51, passed away Sept. 21. Lewis was born Sept. 21, 1966, in Hugo, Oklahoma. Lewis is survived by his parents, Jackie Lewis Allen Sr. and spouse Vicky Allen, and Mildred Parmley; one daughter, Miranda Nicole Allen; one brother, John Allen; three sisters, Virginia Burkhalter and spouse Jerry Don Burkhalter, Tanya Impson and spouse Aaron Impson, and Jonie Brown and spouse Stacy Brown. Lewis was preceded in death by his brother, Robert Wayne Allen; grandparents, John and Alma Parker Allen, Farrell Sanders and Noreen Sanders Darling, Robert Bus and Vernie Hartsell Parmley. For the full obituary, please visit [Miller & Miller Funeral Home](#).



### Wesley Dukes

Wesley Edwin Dukes,50, passed away Aug. 8. He was born July 16, 1967, to Edwin and JoAnn (Baskin) Dukes. Wesley is survived by his parents, children, Charleigh and Ledger Dukes, two sisters, Donna Dukes and partner Mike Posey, and Deborah and spouse Greg McDuffey; nieces, April Anniboli, Britney Fuller, Lindsey VanBlaricom and Lilly McDuffy; nephews Elijah Mason and Tim McDuffy, and numerous aunts, uncles, cousins and friends. For the full obituary, please visit [Moore Funeral Home](#).





### William ‘Dub’ Powell

William “Dub” Turner Powell, 85, passed away July 21.

Dub was born Feb. 14, 1932, to Julius and Violet Powell in Bokoshe, Oklahoma.

Dub is survived by one sister, Melba Mecom and spouse Barney, five nephews; Lendell Mecom and spouse Jan, Richard Mecom and spouse Debbie, Bryan Mecom and spouse Cindy, Scott Rainey and spouse Martha and Chris Rainey; one niece, Robin Fisher and spouse Kevin and many other friends and loved ones.

Dub was preceded in death by his spouse Gayle Powell, sister Patsy Rainy and daughter, Donna Gayle.

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

### Ruth ‘Ruthie’ Timberman

Ruth Ann “Ruthie” Timberman, 65, passed away Aug. 28.

Ruthie was born Aug. 11, 1952, to Melvin and Mary (Watson) Timberman.

Ruthie is survived by her sister Ann (Jack) Camper, brother Charlie (Candy) Timberman, nephews Jody, Andy, Jack Jr., David and Greg, and nieces Gena and Christine.

Ruthie was preceded in death by her parents, brother Melvin, Jr., and nephew Randy Timberman. She was laid to rest near her brother Mel. Ruthie was loved and will not be forgotten.

For the full obituary, please visit [Affordable Cremation Service](#).



### Ella Van Boutwell

Ella Van Boutwell, 77, of Noble Oklahoma, passed away Aug. 16 at her home.

Ella was born June 16, 1940, to Monroe Andrew and Ellen Margaret (Ginn) Wiles in Eufaula, Oklahoma.

Ella is survived by two daughters, Gayla Austin and Jolynda Loyd; two grandchildren, James Boutwell and his spouse, Marianna Boutwell, and Treda Pribnow and her spouse, Casey Pribnow; four great-grandchildren, Bailey Ruiz, Billy Pribnow, Emily Boutwell and Brandon Boutwell; two brothers, Andrew Wiles and spouse, Loretta Wiles and Ronnie Wiles and spouse, Myra Wiles and many other friends, family and loved ones.

Ella was preceded in death by her parents, her husband, Reverend Bill Boutwell, one grandson, D.J. Loyd; two brothers, Jack Wiles and Joe Wiles, and one sister, Sylvia Ingle.

Ella was laid to rest in the Blanchard Cemetery.

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



### John Jay Bull III

John Jay “Bunny” Bull III, 72, of Buffalo Valley, Oklahoma passed away July 8.

John was born Sept. 16, 1944, to John Jay Bull Jr. and Elizabeth (King) Burnett in New York City, New York.

John is survived by his wife, Genevieve Bull, three sons and their spouses, John “Zeke” and Linda Bull, Reverend Jeremy and Rachel Bull and Joshua and Amber Bull; one daughter, Kim Rice and spouse Tom Rice, one daughter-in-law, Susie Holly Bull; 14 grandchildren; J.J., Cody, Will, Jaeleigh, Chris, Colby, Shyla, Kambri, Jalyn, Jaycie, Jeron, Cyrena, Eli and Faith; three sisters, Jane Mobra and spouse Mike Mobra, Janelle Kirkes and spouse Jimmy Kirkes and Kathy Glenn and spouse Monte Glenn; three brothers Wayne Burnett, Keith Burnett, and Albert Burnett and a host of other friends, family and loved ones.

He was preceded in death by his parents, his stepfather George “Buck” Burnett, one brother, James Norton and one sister-in-law, Maria Burnett.

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



### Billy Coleman

Billy Gene Coleman, 90, of Fort Smith, Arkansas passed away July 2.

Billy was born on Sept. 27, 1926, to Gus O. and Sybil (Goff) Coleman in Bokoshe, Oklahoma.

Billy is survived by two sons, Billy D. Coleman and spouse Ruth and Bobby G, Coleman and spouse Martha; four grandchildren; Carrie Hill, Alex Coleman, Christi Mathews and spouse Derek and Nick Coleman and his spouse Marika; six great-grandchildren, Noah and Jeremiah Mathews, Coleman and Chloe Hill and Wyatt and Lucy Coleman.

He was preceded in death by his wife Ruth Ann Coleman.

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



### Glendell Wayne Beames

Glendell “Glen” Wayne Beames, 77, passed away Sept. 6.

Glendell was born Aug. 19, 1940, to Mary Rhodes Beames and George W. Beames.

Glendell is survived by his wife Modena; three sons, Terre Beames, Daren Beames, and Eric Beames and his spouse Lisa, seven grandchildren, Melissa, Ashleigh, Daren II, Garrett, Courtney, Tarra and Erica, eight great-grandchildren, Asher, Lilly, Hezekiah, Josiah, Molly, Ian, Ella and Jack, two sisters, Margie Sutton and Evelyn Bell and many other friends, family and loved ones.

He was preceded in death by his parents and five siblings; Juanita Cox, George Beames, Bill Beames, James Beames and Laveta Keeling.

For the full obituary, please visit [Clayton Kay Vaughan Funeral Home](#).



### Mahala Thompson

Mahala Maud (Houston) Thompson, 84, passed away on Sept. 28.

Mahala was born March 29, 1933, to Charles Oris Houston and Lillie (Bohanan) Houston in Kemp, Oklahoma.

Mahala is survived by her husband of 67 years, Hoil Albert Thompson; her children, son Michael Thompson, and spouse Billie Jean Thompson, daughter Karen Russell and spouse Richard Russell; grandchildren, Jennifer Russell, Jessica Pesch and spouse, James Pesch, Kyle Thompson and spouse, Carly Thompson, Tyler Thompson and spouse, Whitney Thompson; great-grandchildren, Hunter, Jayce, Cooper, Cash, Emery and Vivian; sisters, Vivian Tyler and Wynette Colvin; and brother C.O. Houston.

Mahala was preceded in death by her parents, brothers Earles Houston, Delbert Houston, Loftis Houston, Rudolph Houston and James Houston, sisters Edith Sitton and Joy Rinehart.

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



### Bryan Laymon Taylor

Bryan Laymon Taylor, 41, passed away July 31.

Bryan was born July 6, 1976, to Wilson Taylor Jr. and Rubye Samuels Taylor in Antlers, Oklahoma.

Bryan is survived by his children, Eryn Taylor, Camryn Taylor and Jady Boman, mother, brothers; Ryan Taylor, Byington Taylor and spouse Megan, Kirk Taylor and spouse Nicole, and Caleb Taylor and spouse Meggan; sisters; Candice Rogers and spouse Shane and Priscilla Martin; nieces and nephews; Ariel, Vanessa, Brianna, Brice, Paisley, Payton, Clay, Keaton, Brayson, Urijah, McCayla, Cason, Myka and Kyleigh; and one great-nephew, Kanyon.

He was preceded in death by his father, twin sons, Blayn Taylor and Eastyn Taylor; paternal grandparents, Wilson Taylor Sr., and Delores Taylor, and maternal grandparents, Eli Samuels and Minerva Samuels.

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



### Michael “Ray” Wickson

Michael “Ray” Wickson, 75, passed away Oct. 11.

He was born Aug. 22, 1942, to Dave Wickson, Sr. and Suzanna (Nehka) Wickson in Soper, Oklahoma.

Ray is survived by his wife of 27 years, Dora Wickson; sons, Raymond Wickson, and Randy Wickson and spouse, Candy; daughter, Melinda Wickson; brother, Hoss Wickson, sisters, Annie Wickson, Judy Phillips and spouse, Tommy and Ethel Ishcomer; 14 grandchildren, 12 great-grandchildren, several nieces and nephews along with many other relatives and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, a daughter, Brenda (Wickson) Plunk; brothers, Dave Wickson, Jr., Fred Wickson, Edmond Wickson and James LaFlore; and sisters, Marian Aaron and Gladys Moore.

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



### Laura B. Deer

Laura B. Deer, 73, passed away on July 22 in Oklahoma City.

Laura was born to Nora Jefferson and Willie Gus Bohanon on Dec. 7, 1944, in Lawton Oklahoma.

Laura was laid to rest in Sunnyside Cemetery in Del City, Oklahoma.

Laura was preceded in death by her mother Nora Jefferson, her stepfather Woodrow Ward and her stepdaughter Michelle Deer.

She is survived by her husband, Alvin Deer, her sisters, JoAnne Ward and Charlene Nestell, her daughter, Rachel Deer-Escobar and spouse Armando, three stepchildren; Linn, Georgia and Genny Deer, four grandchildren; Makayla Knight, Ethan Guice, Sophia Deer-Escobar and Alan Sean Deer-Escobar.

To read the full obituary, please visit [Vondel Smith Mortuary](#).



### William ‘Randy’ Harris

William “Randy” Harris, 66, passed away on Oct. 4.

He was born June 4, 1951 to Fletcher “Buster” Ray Jr. and Margaret Lorene (Pedigo) Harris in Durant, Oklahoma.

Randy is survived by his wife of 47 years, Parry Harris, son Jason Harris, daughter Mandy Rapley, daughter-in-law Ashley Harris, sister Raylene Bureson and grandchildren Koby Harris, Kale Harris, Ella Tapley and Axton Tapley.

Randy was preceded in death by his parents and brother, Johnny Harris.

Randy was laid to rest in Mt. Home Cemetery, Daisy, Oklahoma.

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



### Barbara Bowen McMurtry

Barbara Alta “Sue” Bowen McMurtry, 86, passed away on June 8.

Barbara was born March 29, 1931, to Ebb and Hazel (Muncrief) Bowen in Bakersfield, California.

Barbara is survived by two daughters, Hazel Sullivan and spouse Bob and Tangi Zumwalt and spouse Johnny. Three grandchildren, Corey Martin and spouse Lucy, Tanner Zumwalt and spouse April and Maci Zumwalt; three great-grandchildren, Rilyn Martin, Jerne Martin and Gage Berry; two brothers, Wendell and David Bowen, sisters, JoAnn Bowden, Helen Benigni, Becky Colvin and Gaylon Wadsworth.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Bill; her parents, three brothers, Don, Kenneth and Larry Bowen, and one sister, Maxie Chaney.

Barbara was laid to rest at Fairlawn Cemetery.

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



### Jennifer Elaine Wilson

Jennifer Elaine Wilson, 28, of Durant, Oklahoma passed away Aug. 13.

Jennifer was born on Feb. 28, 1989, to Lee Wilson and Cynthia Haiakanubbi in Idabel, Oklahoma.

Jennifer is survived by her mother, Cynthia Kaniatobe, father, Lee Wilson, sisters Keri Lynn Wilson and Erica Corrine Wilson, her aunts, Regina Haiakanubbi, Marilyn Wilson, Viola Groves and Debbie Smith and her uncles, Jeremy Haiakanubbi and spouse Valeria, Lewis Reese Haiakanubbi and spouse Lawanna and Willard Wilson and spouse Beverly.

Jennifer was preceded in death by her brother, Robin Haiakanubbi, her grandmothers Doris Kaniatobe and Ada Louise Wilson and her great-grandmother Wilcey Kaniatobe.

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



### Nakina Williams

Nakina Rachelle Williams, 32, of McAlester, Oklahoma passed away Oct. 3.

She was born Dec. 5, 1984, to Romana (Williams) Davis in Ada, Oklahoma.

Nakina is survived by her mother, children, Emmanuel Meashintubby, Nataya Meashintubby, Nevaeh Williams, grandmother Wylene Wadley, sisters, Marquita Meneley and Natasha Williams, Brother Damon Williams, brother-in-law Caleb Brooks, aunts, Roberta Williams, Theda Carnes, Tammy Wadley, nieces, Audasia Williams, Makayla Meneley, Jahiya Harjo and Nariah Williams, nephews, Michael Meneley Jr., Nasilus Ingram, Caleb Brooks Jr., and Nicholas Osborne, cousins, Phillip Wadley, Dylan Weeks, Alma Wadley, April Williams, Kayla Khristina, Ashley Mitchel and Leroy Mitchel Jr.

Nakina was preceded in death by grandfather, Harold Williams, uncles; Emmanuel, Phillip, Harold and Anthony Williams, brother-in-law, Michael Meneley, great-grandmothers Winey Brewer and Georgia Williams, and great-grandfather Isom Williams.

Interment was at Butler Cemetery in Lane, Oklahoma.

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



### Janice Marie Capehart

Janice Marie Capehart, 64, passed away on Oct. 3.

She was born Sept. 9, 1953, to Ben and Era (Brokeshoulder) Wallace in Pettijohn Springs, Oklahoma.

Janice is survived by her husband of 42 years, J.B. Capehart; one daughter, Elisa Hudson and spouse Russell; two grandchildren, Russell Hudson III and Shalynn Hudson; two brothers, James Wallace and spouse Norma, and Marvin Wallace and spouse Ruby.

Janice was preceded in death by her parents, an infant daughter, Datra Marie; four brothers, Tecumseh Wallace, Luke Wallace, Josh Lee Wallace and Vernon Wallace; and four sisters, Geraldine Meely, Marylou Patricia Amos, Annabell Hickman and Evalene Amos.

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





# Iti Fabussa

## Father William Henry Ketcham *Part Two*

In 1900, Father William Henry Ketcham shifted his influence from the mission field to Washington, D.C., where he became a strong advocate at the national level as the director of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions.

In the first five years, Ketcham faced three pivotal challenges.

His first, was fighting the government’s decision on June 30, 1900, to deny funding for contract schools (Abing 1994, Nieberding 1955).

The government reasoned that if Native American families had to pay for their children’s education, it would encourage them to be self-sufficient.

In reality, the government knew families lacked the resources to pay for education and hoped to manipulate future generations through systematic assimilation programming.

Fueled by his passion for the rights of Native American children, Ketcham developed the Society for the Preservation of the Faith among Indian Children which charged membership fees and offered a publication entitled “The Indian Sentinel” for members to learn of mission efforts in Indian Territory (Abing 1994, Nieberding 1955).

Over the next four decades, the Society’s dedication to the education of Native students and generous financial support prevented 42 mission school closures.

His next challenge was overturning the Browning policy enacted in 1896 which denied Native American

parents the right to decide where their children would attend school, instead placing this decision with an Indian agent.

Ketcham opposed the policy and claimed it “violated the Indians” freedom of conscience (Abing 1994:5).

His efforts were successful and the ruling was rescinded on October 30, 1901 (Abing 1994). His final initial challenge was to reinstate rations to Native American children.

Rations were rights guaranteed by treaty, but the government reasoned that only children attending government schools, not attending sectarian schools or staying home, were entitled to rations.

With the harsh reality of economic hardships and failed crops in Indian Territory, many families simply could not afford to feed their children without the

rations and considered sending their children to government schools.

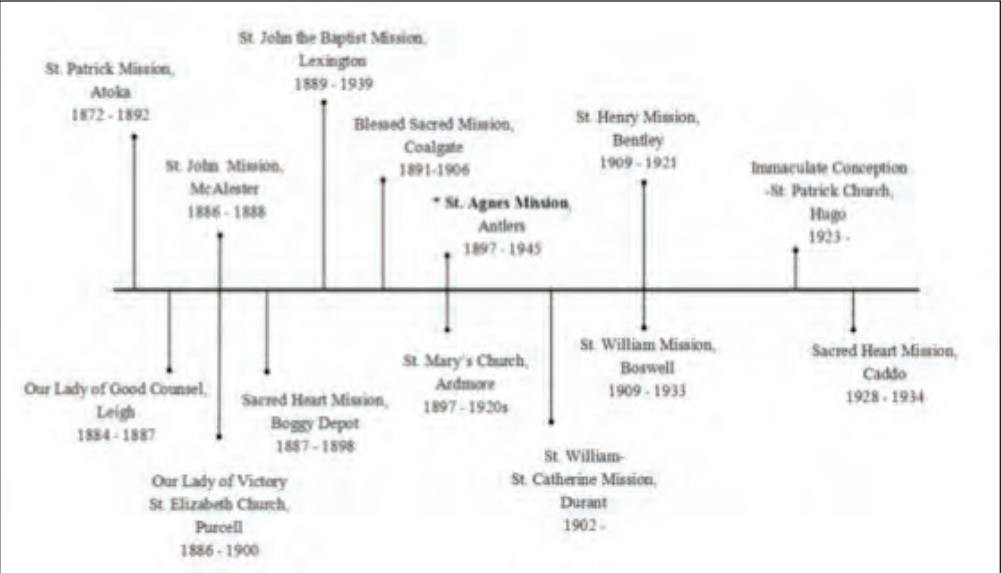
Ketcham strongly opposed limiting Native American families’ choice of education. He joined lobbying efforts in Congress and in 1904 the Indian Appropriations Act reinstated rations to children (Abing 1994, Nieberding 1955).

Having won these initial battles, Ketcham turned his attention to serving as an appointed member of the United States Board of Indian Commissioners and investigated problems involving Native American reservations in the United States.

He continued to advocate for Choctaw students and families until his sudden death in 1921, from a heart attack, while working at the Holy Rosary Choctaw Mission in Mississippi. His advocacy will forever be his legacy.

The author would like to publicly thank Mark Thiel, archivist with Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, for his support in researching Father Ketcham and his mission work among the Choctaw people. To learn more about Catholic Indian Missions visit: <http://www.marquette.edu/library/archives/Mss/BCIM/BCIM-main.shtml>.

Does your family have stories of light to share? Please



The timeline shows the Catholic Missions in the Choctaw Nation. Father William Henry Ketcham sought permission from the highest Catholic authority in the region to conduct missionary work in Indian Territory exclusively. He secured donations and built a residence, a chapel and St. Agnes Mission school in Antlers. During a time when Native Americans would be punished for speaking their language, Father Ketcham mastered Choctaw and worked with first language speakers to develop materials from a Choctaw point of view in the Choctaw language.



Marquette University Special Collections and Archives, Bureau of Catholic Indian Mission Records, Series 09-1-39-06

Two girls are pictured on a tricycle at St. Agnes Mission, Antlers, Indian Territory. During his lifetime Father William Henry Ketcham was an advocate for Native American children to receive an education. He was instrumental in getting the Browning policy rescinded so Native American parents could decide where their children were educated.

contact the Historic Preservation Department at (580) 924-8280 ext. 2353 or email [dburd@choctawnation.com](mailto:dburd@choctawnation.com).

Part One of Father William Henry Ketcham’s story was in the September 2017 issue of the Biskinik.

# Great American Smoke Out Encourages Quitting Cold Turkey this November 16

by APRYL MOCK

November is a great month to quit smoking, and the Choctaw Nation can help, according to Tobacco Control Coordinator, Tammie Gibson.

November is National Lung Cancer Awareness month, and the yearly national event, The Great American Smoke Out will take place on Thursday, Nov. 16.

The Great American Smoke Out is an annual challenge to smokers to quit for 24 hours, organized by the American Cancer Society.

Gibson has planned an event to celebrate The Great American Smoke Out at the Talihina Hospital.

In the weeks leading up to the event, weekly

emails will be sent out to Choctaw Nation employees with information regarding smoking cessation.

On Nov. 16, Gibson plans to hand out “Quit kits.” Quit kits include items to help keep busy while attempting to quit tobacco use. They will include stress balls, toothpicks, mints, suckers, gum and other cessation resources.

Gibson also plans to present information and models demonstrating the damages of tobacco use, as well as holding a raffle for a chance to win a Thanksgiving turkey.

The give away is a playful spin on the phrase “quitting cold turkey,” according to Gibson.

After participants have

pledged to quit smoking for 24 hours, they will be entered in the raffle.

Gibson feels a personal connection to the event. She said, she was a smoker for 17 years. “I can really identify with those trying to quit. I’ve been there and I know it’s hard. I’ve been smoke free for six years now.”

The Choctaw Nation offers smoking cessation programs to both employees and tribal members across the 10½ counties and the United States.

The Talihina event will be organized by Gibson and the Moving Parity Onward with Every Resource program.

M-POWER is a tobacco cessation and nutrition program, according to Gibson.

Gibson works closely with the Oklahoma State Health Department and the Oklahoma Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust.

TSET is a state grant making trust devoted to preventing cancer and cardiovascular disease, the two leading causes of death in Oklahoma.

Tribal members looking to quit smoking may have their physician refer them to one of the three clinics that offer pharmacy cessation programs.

The three clinics that offer these specialized services are the Talihina, Idabel and Hugo clinics.

These clinics provide counseling and nicotine replacement medications, according to Gibson.

According to Gibson, Choctaw Nation Employees may attend “Freedom from Smoking” classes at their local tribal clinic, and receive nicotine replacement therapy.

Freedom from Smoking is an eight session program created by the American Lung Association with the goal of helping people quit tobacco.

This program is available to any employee of Choctaw Nation.

Attendees of this program have the choice to receive free nicotine replacement therapy (patches, lozenges or gum) for up to six weeks.

Those interested may check with their local clinic to see if there is an available Freedom from Smoking facilitator.

If you are interested in organizing your own Great American Smoke Out Event, or would like more information on smoking cessation, Tammie Gibson at 918-567-7000, extension 6301 or via email at [tgibson@cnhsa.com](mailto:tgibson@cnhsa.com), or visit [www.cancer.org/smokeout](http://www.cancer.org/smokeout).

**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](mailto:veteransadvocacy@choctawnation.com)

Contact Roger Hamill  
Deputy Director  
(800)522-8170 ext. 2160

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Or

Online at [www.choctawhousing.com](http://www.choctawhousing.com) under Services Tab

- Independent Elder Housing

Or

By calling (800) 235-3087 or (580) 326-7521 or (580) 317-5003

### 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 CD1B 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 \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code \_\_\_\_\_

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**  
**RV Reservations**  
**2101 West Arkansas Street**  
**Durant, OK 74701**

### Chahta Anumpa

### Aiikhvna

◆◆◆ Lesson of the Month ◆◆◆

### Verb Conjugation

Choctaw verbs can be expanded in meaning by adding prefixes and suffixes. Also by inserting an additional consonant and vowel.

Practice these sentences.

**Verb** – nusi (sleep)

- Ik – let him/her: Ak nusi. - Let him/her sleep.
- H–ma – ‘when’ in the past tense: Vlla yvt nusi ma, impa li tuk. I ate when the child went to sleep.
- Continuous action – adding an ‘h’ to the verb and nazalize the next vowel: Vllōsi yvt nuhoṣi tuk. The child kept sleeping.

**Verb** – pisa (to see)

- Ik – let him/her: Ik pisa. Let him/her see.
- H–ma – ‘when’ in the past tense: Vllōsi yvt ishki pisah ma, na yukpa tuk. The child was happy when he saw his mother.
- Continuous action – adding an ‘h’ to the verb and nazalize the next vowel: Vlla yvt off pihisa tuk. The child kept looking at the dog.

**Verb** – apoksiachi (to repair, to adjust, to prepare)

- Ik – let him/her: Abinili okpulo ik apoksiachi. Let him repair the broken chair.
- H–ma – ‘when’ in the past tense: Aboha ish apoksiachih ma, sv na yukpa tuk. I was happy when you straightened up the room.
- Continuous action – adding an ‘h’ to the verb and nazalize the next vowel: Hina ma, okla apoksiahachi billia. They are always repairing that road.

[www.choctawschool.com](http://www.choctawschool.com)





in Newkirk, Oklahoma from 1954 to 1958. After graduating he eventually settled in Idabel and started a family. While there he served on the City Council for 18 years and subsequently was elected Mayor for five and a half years. Don has been a pillar of strength for his family as well as his community, tirelessly giving of his time and efforts to the improvement of the area and for those that reside within. This honor has been bestowed upon him in recognition of his superior leadership abilities and his many accomplishments throughout his lifetime but most significantly for his service to mankind.

## Williams Inducted into Hall of Fame

Reginald “Reggie” Don Williams, of Idabel, Oklahoma, was recently inducted into the Chilocco National Alumni Association’s Hall of Fame. Don attended the Chilocco Indian Agricultural School

## Mecom Selected for Soaring Valor Veterans Trip

Barney Mecom, WWII and Korean War Veteran was selected by the Gary Sinise (Lieutenant Dan from Forrest Gump) Foundation, Soaring Valor, to travel to New Orleans, Louisiana for an exclusive visit to the National WWII Museum. The trip took place July 26 through the 28. Barney traveled there via a charter flight provided by American Airlines with other WWII Veterans.

Barney, and his guardian, Richard L. Mecom, U.S. Navy Retired, were flown to Los Angeles, California to begin their trip with 26 other WWII Veterans.

On July 27, Barney and the other WWII Veterans enjoyed a special tour of the WWII museum.

While at the museum Barney, his guardian Richard Mecom were joined by Barney’s grandson Rick Mecom, Lieutenant U.S. Navy.

Barney is from Bokoshe/Milton, Oklahoma area. He entered the service in 1943 and served until 1946. Barney was awarded the Bronze Star for his action in Germany, with other Presidential Citations. Barney was with the Fighting 100th and the 398th.



**Top: (Clockwise from back) Rick Mecom, Lieutenant US Navy, right, US Navy Retired Veteran Richard L. Mecom, and WWII/Korean War Veteran Barney Mecom pose of a photo at the National WWII Museum. Bottom : Gary Sinise, know for playing Lieutenant Dan in Forest Gump smiles for a photo with Barney Mecom.**

Barney commented it was a first class trip and would like for everyone to Google, “Soaring Valor”, and view what the Gary Sinise Foundation does for Veterans both then and now.

For more information on Soaring Valor, visit [www.garysinisefoundation.org/programs/soaring-valor](http://www.garysinisefoundation.org/programs/soaring-valor).

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Dixie Cheney-Prater celebrated her 96th birthday on August 6, 2017. She enjoyed the gifts and the presence of the Choctaw Nation for her birthday at Featherstone. She was raised in Durant and taught school in Durant for many years. She still owns her family tribal land.



## TO YOU

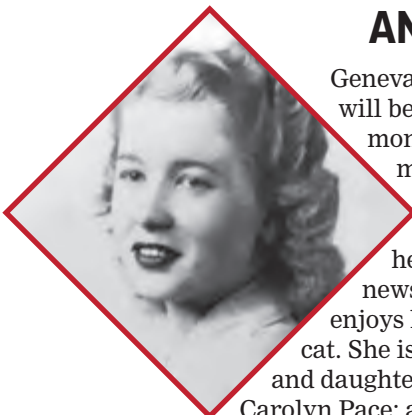
Ethel Plant Anthony of Waurika, celebrated her 95th birthday Sept. 24, 2017. She is the daughter of the late Morby and Mary Davis Plant.

She has two children, son Wayne Anthony and wife Regina, and daughter Doris Pilgreen. She has five grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren, seven great-great-grandchildren and three sets of five generations.



## AND YOU

Geneva (Everett) Vails will be 90 years old this month. She has lived most of her life in Durant. She loves to spend time with her family, watch the news and weather and enjoys her pets, a dog and cat. She is blessed with a son and daughter-in-law, Larry and Carolyn Pace; a daughter and son-in-law, Shelia and Steve Kirven, three granddaughters, two grandsons-in-law, two great-grandsons and one great-granddaughter.



## AND YOU

Dolores Pike turned 90 on June 12, 2017. She is the daughter of Alfred Pike, and was born in Talihina. She celebrated her birthday with her three children, Dede, Skip, Colette, son-in-law John Copeland and a few friends. She received her her “Wisdom Blanket” given to her by the Choctaw Nation.



## AND YOU

Jazmyn Hope Valliere turned 5 on Aug. 6, 2017. Jazmyn is the daughter of Chris and Crystal Valliere of Durant. She is the granddaughter of Olin and Bernice Williams of Durant, and Robert and Cynthia Valliere of Lafayette, Louisiana. Jazmyn is sister of Malachi and Gabryelle.



## AND YOU!

Randa Shaw celebrated her sweet sixteen this month. She is the great-great granddaughter of original enrollee Frank Anukytubbe Williams. Her family is extremely proud of her accomplishments in earning National Science and Engineering titles and founding the non-profit, Think Salt. Randa enjoys free diving and the freedom of being a new driver.



**Jeffery Kopp and Lena Kopp pose for a photo with Dr. Fern Green-Bowling. Lena won the REI 2017 Dr. Fern Green-Bowling Diamond Award on June 9.**

with a cash award of \$1,000 and the opportunity to inspire others. The award was established in 2015 by the REI Oklahoma Board of Directors, to recognise the impact of outstanding women in business and to applaud their efforts at the statewide Diamonds and Dreams event.

## Rogers Wins Citizenship Award

Mahli Rogers, a seventh-grader at Savanna Elementary School, was recently awarded the Good Citizen Award.

Rogers was nominated by her teachers and voted

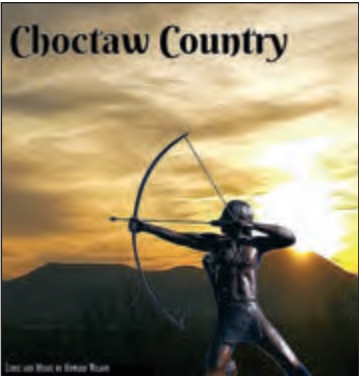
on by faculty, staff and students to receive the Good Citizen Award for the month of September.

Rogers is the daughter of Leslie Withers of McAlester and Simon Rogers of Ada. She is the granddaughter of George and Eoline Halliburton of McAlester, Terry and Lee Rogers of McAlester and Scott and Cathy Withers of Lake Cherokee, Texas.

## Simmons Promoted to Fire Sergeant

Nashoba Simmons pictured with Councilmember Bob Pate, was just promoted to Sergeant by the Seminole Fire Department. He is a graduate of the Eastern Oklahoma County Technology Center in 2012 thanks to the Choctaw Nation Career Development Program. In 2013 he was awarded the Firefighter of the Year (his first year). He has achieved numerous fire and EMT related certifications.

Currently, he has begun the Paramedic Training program thanks again to the Career Development program.



## Tribal Member Releases Album

Tribal member Howard Wilson recently released his new album, Choctaw Country.

Choctaw Country will appeal to a wide variety of musical tastes. The music weaves a pattern of haunting flute, acoustic guitar, edgy electric guitar, synth,

bass and deep drums. Lyrics are inspired by life in Southeastern Oklahoma and the heart of Choctaw heritage and culture.

Physical copies of Choctaw Country are available at [chahta.net](http://chahta.net). You can also download the album on all major music sites.



## Chata Ohoyo Tikba Hikia Program Celebrates 2017 Graduates, Alumnae

*(In no particular order) 2017 graduates; Susan Baker, Katie Baker, Reannon Billy, Christina Fleming, Rebecca Going, Audrey Gonzalez, Renae McDaniel, Chelci Moore, Amanda Moore, Ann Noah and Maria Noahubi. Alumnae: Kimberly Allen, Bessie Allensworth, Marie Battiest, Cassandra Davis, Paula Griffith, Janet Jacob, Vanessa Jefferson, Camille McKinney, Vicki Perez, Eveline Steele, Heather Tahauno, Dena Vielma, Lavona Haury, Nettie Webb, and Rehauna Wesley. Director Melissa Cress.*



## Grandfather Enlists Grandson into Navy

On July 18, Captain Paul Frazier, who is retired from the United States Air Force, gave the United States Navy oath of enlistment to his grandson Zachary Burrows. Seaman Recruit Burrows is now in Naval training at the Great Lakes Naval Station in Illinois.

## The Redenius

Harvey and Philicy (Gene) Redenius celebrated 25 years of marriage on Sept. 5th. They were married in Des Moines, Iowa in 1992. They have lived in Iowa, Missouri, Texas, and over ten years now in Oklahoma. They are an inspiration to their children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and



soon to be great-great-grandchildren.



## Five Generations of Choctaw Women

*Left to right, Nora Johnico, Sharon Polk, Kerry Steve, Morgan Steve and Ellanorra Love Wilson.*



# Outstanding Elders for 2017-2018 Named at October Banquet

by STACY HUTTO

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma honored its 2017 Outstanding Elders in October with a banquet held at the Choctaw Casino Resort-Durant.

Outstanding Elders for this year are Gerald Johnson from District 1 and Sharon Zonder from District 9.

Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. served as Master of Ceremonies with Rev. Olin Williams offering prayers to open and close the banquet.

The Lord's Prayer was performed by Choctaw Nation royalty Little Miss Mya Thomas, Junior Miss Jade Cossey and Miss Choctaw Nation BreAnna Jefferson.

Chief Gary Batton was the keynote speaker at the event honoring our elders.

Johnson was born Feb. 2, 1954, and lives in Idabel.

He was an honor graduate of Haworth High School and Southeastern Oklahoma State University. After 34 years at the Department of Human Services child welfare services, he retired.

In his retirement Johnson has taken a special interest in his Native American culture. He has gone on cultural trips all across the country with his fellow Choctaws.

It was during one of these trips he noticed a number of people seemed to have very limited funds.

After returning from the trip he asked his councilman if he could take the lead fundraiser role at his center to address the issue.

Once he had permission he put a plan in action and the group was able to raise over \$14,400 for the 2016-17 year.

The money was partly used to help the seniors with extra cash for such things as snacks, souvenirs, or to spend however they chose. The rest was applied toward the 2017 trip.

Sharon Zonder was born Sept. 13, 1955 and lives in Durant. She comes from a large family and from an early age was a caretaker.

She continued as a caretaker into her adulthood. She raised her family of five children and is now raising her 12- and 13-year-old grandson and granddaughter. They have been with Zonder since they were two and one year old. They make good grades and both have received Perfect attendance for the last three consecutive years.

She went to Durant High School and Red River Vo-Tech in Duncan. She began working as a nurse's aide, home



Gerald and Sharon are pictured (center) accompanied by (left to right) Chief Gary Batton, District 1 Councilman Thomas Williston, District 9 Councilman James Dry and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.

health, private sitting in home and at the hospital.

She is an asset at the Durant Community Center, where she helped make hundreds of medicine bags to be taken to the Smithsonian Institute honoring Choctaws.

She has been responsible for Indian Taco sales, Senior Trips, keeping track of volunteer hours and any other task requested of her.

She is a member of the District 9 Roadrunner Singers and won Best Traditional Choctaw Dress at the 2015 Senior Appreciation Day in Durant.

Photos by Deidre Elrod

Not Pictured: Henry Ringles, District 12, Coalgate; and Melba Large, District 4.5, Spiro.



(Left to right) Chief Gary Batton, Outstanding Elder Barbara Battiest of Broken Bow, District 2 Councilmember Tony Ward and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



(Left to right) Chief Gary Batton, Outstanding Elder Joyce Baker of Battiest, District 2 Councilmember Tony Ward and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



(Left to right) Chief Gary Batton, Outstanding Elder Edgel Samuel of Broken Bow, District 2 Councilmember Tony Ward and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



(Left to right) District 3 Councilmember Kenny Bryant, Chief Gary Batton, Outstanding Elder Bobby Coley of Talihina and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



(Left to right) Chief Gary Batton, Outstanding Elder Clara Battice of Antlers and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



(Left to right) District 6 Councilmember Jennifer Woods, Outstanding Elder Alan Burris of Wilburton, Chief Gary Batton and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



(Left to right) District 6 Councilmember Jennifer Woods, Chief Gary Batton, Outstanding Elder Geraldine Isabel of Wilburton and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



(Left to right) District 8 Councilmember Perry Thompson, Chief Gary Batton, Outstanding Elder Ernest Oakes of Hugo and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



(Left to right) District 8 Councilmember Perry Thompson, Chief Gary Batton, Outstanding Elder Inell Bailey of Hugo and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



(Left to right) Chief Gary Batton, District 9 Councilmember James Dry, Outstanding Elder James Cotton of Durant and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



(Left to right) District 10 Councilmember Anthony Dillard, Chief Gary Batton, Outstanding Elder Glen Bonham of Atoka and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



(Left to right) Chief Gary Batton, Outstanding Elder Juanita Taylor of Wright City and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



(Left to right) District 10 Councilmember Anthony Dillard, Chief Gary Batton, Outstanding Elder Janice Jones of Atoka and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



(Left to right) Chief Gary Batton, District 11 Secretary Gloria Sirmans standing in for District 11 Councilmember Bob Pate, Outstanding Elder Betty Thomas of McAlester and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



(Left to right) Chief Gary Batton, District 11 Secretary Gloria Sirmans standing in for District 11 Councilmember Bob Pate, Outstanding Elder Walter Amos of McAlester and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.





# 2017 Outstanding Elders



(Left to right) District 3 Councilmember Kenny Bryant, Outstanding Elder Thelma Johnson of Smithville and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



(Left to right) Chief Gary Batton, Outstanding Elder Victor Eyachabbe of Antlers and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



(Left to right) District 3 Councilmember Kenny Bryant, Chief Gary Batton, Outstanding Elder Lee Roy Williams of Smithville and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



(Left to right) District 5 Councilmember Ron Perry, Chief Gary Batton, Outstanding Elder Linda Stephenson of Stigler and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



(Left to right) Chief Gary Batton, Outstanding Elder Kenneth Billy of Broken Bow, District 2 Councilmember Tony Ward and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



(Left to right) District 12 Councilmember James Frazier, Chief Gary Batton, Outstanding Elder Mary Ellen Emery of Crowder and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



(Left to right) District 12 Councilmember James Frazier, Chief Gary Batton, Outstanding Elder Matthew Kemp of Crowder and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



(Left to right) District 12 Councilmember James Fraizer, Chief Gary Batton, Outstanding Elder Louise Ott of Coalgate and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



(Left to right) District 5 Councilmember Ron Perry, Chief Gary Batton, Outstanding Elder Phillip McCann of Stigler and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



(Left to right) District 5 Councilmember Ron Perry, District 4 Councilmember Delton Cox, Chief Gary Batton, Outstanding Elder Rick White of Spiro and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



(Left to right) Chief Gary Batton, Outstanding Elder Nancy Ebahotubbi of Millerton, District 1 Councilmember Thomas Williston and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



(Left to right) Chief Gary Batton, Outstanding Elder Wayne Anna of Wright City and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.




(Left to right) District 4 Councilmember Delton Cox, Chief Gary Batton, Outstanding Elder Steve Walden of Poteau and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



(Left to right) District 4 Councilmember Delton Cox, Chief Gary Batton, Outstanding Elder Teresa Mode of Poteau and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



(Left to right) District 3 Councilmember Kenny Bryant, Chief Garry Batton Outstanding Elder Ruth Cress of Talihina and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.



**NEED MONEY TO BUY SCHOOL OR ACTIVITY CLOTHING?**

- Applications for 2017-2018 School Year available July 1st 2017 and will end May 1st 2018. Each student with a tribal membership can receive this one time per school year.
- \$100 Assistance available Nationwide for Choctaw Tribal Members attending 3 year old daycare to 12th grade High School Students.
- Apply Online at [ssaapplication.choctawnation.com](http://ssaapplication.choctawnation.com)

**2017-2018 SCHOOL YEAR FUNDS**

**JULY 1, 2017 - MAY 1, 2018**



Chief Gary Batton, Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. and the Tribal Council would like to invite you to the

**CHOCTAW NATION'S ANNUAL VETERANS CEREMONY**

November 11, 2017 at 10:00 a.m.  
Choctaw Capitol Grounds at Tvshka Homma

**HONORING OUR VETERANS**

Staff will be set up at 9:00 a.m. to present each Choctaw Veteran with a gift of appreciation. The ceremony will begin at 10:00 a.m. A free lunch will be served to all who attend.

This year, there will be a drawing for  
**3-Day whitetail deer hunt at the Choctaw Hunting Lodge**  
3 days, 2 nights at Choctaw Hunting Lodge  
all meals provided  
(Must be present to win. Subject to verifications of CDB and Veterans eligibility.)

**YAKOKE TO ALL OUR VETERANS!**



# Ancestry.com Findings Bring Long Lost Relatives Together

by KENDRA GERMANY

In 1945, a young American man traveled to Newcastle, England to work with an excavation company. While in England, the young man had a relationship with a war widow named Blanche Barras. When the time came, the young man returned to the U.S., unaware that Barras was pregnant.

In October 1946, Carole Dodds was born. She grew up knowing she was a little different from the rest of her family and friends. While her family had fair ccomplexions and hair, Dodds had a darker complexions and dark hair.

It wasn't until the death of her stepfather in the 1980s that Dodds would ask about her biological father. Her mother gave her a name, "Willard Morris." Dodds wrote over 100 letters to Willard Morris in the U.S., but was unsuccessful in finding him.

Dodds had nearly given up on finding her real father, until last year.

In 2016, Dodds' daughter Ali Morris joined Ancestry.com.

"Last year I started searching on Ancestry.com and Mum took their DNA test. Her results linked her to a cousin. I researched their family tree and found her father," said Morris.

From there the floodgates of information opened up.

"On reading his 1920 U.S. Federal census, I was amazed to see his race as "Indian." Our amazing journey of discovery about our Choctaw heritage then began," said Morris. "Through the Ancestry website, we found Mum's grandmother Belle Freeny on the Dawes Rolls and that we are descendants of Moshulatubbee."

With the information she had found on ancestry.com, Morris found herself on a mission.

"I started trawling the internet and Oklahoma databases for any new names connected to him. From the Ancestry info, I knew that he, his daughter and son had unfortunately passed away," said Morris. "I found Robin Hopkins Ferris on a type of property registry form and found her on Facebook."

Morris sent a message to Hopkins Ferris explaining her findings. Hopkins Ferris was a bit surprised by the

message, but knew in her heart what she was reading was true.

"I knew it had to be true, because I knew my grandfather had worked overseas many times," said Hopkins Ferris.

"I sent Robin photos of Mum and she sent a photo of her grandfather Willard "Stub" Morris. So at the age of 70, Mum saw her father for the first time," said Morris.

Dodds' mother, Blanche Hagemann is still alive and well. The 92-year-old saw the photo of Willard and exclaimed, "That's him!"

Dodds, Morris and Morris' daughter Eleanor made the nearly 5,000-mile journey from their home in Alnwick, England to Oklahoma, to meet their newly found family. Hopkins Ferris and her daughter Tierra picked the group up at the airport for an emotional first meeting.

"As soon as we met Robin and Tierra at the airport, my heart began to fill its empty spaces and continued each day. It was sometimes quite overwhelming, but wonderful," said Dodds.

Morris could see that this trip was going to be special for her mother.

"As soon as we arrived in Oklahoma, Mum felt a sense of belonging and home. Robin and all the family, though strangers, were familiar," said Morris. "It's so hard to explain."

Their Oklahoma family was very excited to meet their English family members.

"The whole family was so loving and welcoming. Robin spent two weeks taking us to the wonderful heritage sites, everyone we met were so friendly," said Morris.

The group even paid a visit to the Choctaw Nation capitol and the Nation's headquarters in Durant, where they shared their story with Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.

"We had such an amazing day at the Choctaw Nation with our cousin Crystal Thompson," said Morris.

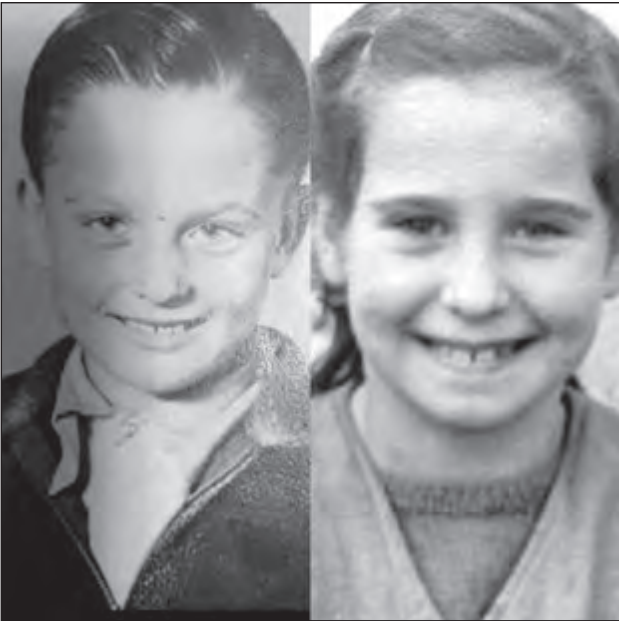
"I never would have dreamed of someone from across the world would figure all this out," said Thompson. "It started with a Facebook message and a lot of work to put the pieces together."

Thompson's father Charles is Dodds' cousin and was excited to meet Dodds.

The trip was filled with time spent with family, making up for all of the lost time, and making new memories together.

Though Dodds didn't get the chance to meet her father, she now has family that can fill a small part of that void.

They are anxiously awaiting the next time that they all get to visit each other. It is amazing to think that thanks to a little curiosity, a DNA test and the internet, they now have a lifetime to catch up on.



(Top Right) Carole Dodds stands with her sister. As a child Dodds knew she was a little different than her siblings and friends. She was dark complected with dark hair, while the rest had fair complexions and hair.

(Bottom Left) Willard "Stub" Morris was an American excavation worker working in Newcastle, England in 1944. His daughter Carole wouldn't see her biological father's face until she was 70 years old.

(Bottom Right) A side-by-side photo of Dodds and her American half brother Bob Morris show the similarities in their features.



(Top Left) Robin Hopkins Ferris, Ali Morris, Carole Dodds, Charles Thompson and Crystal Thompson visit the springs in Bromide, a long forgotten tourist town where their family once lived. Bromide still has residents today, but it isn't the booming place it once was.

(Top Right) Eleanor Morris pays her respects to her four times great-grandmother Sarah Freeny who came to Oklahoma as a young girl on the Trail of Tears.

(Bottom) Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. takes a look a the family tree Ali Morris put together after finding her long lost family. During her research she discovered her family's connection to the once Chief of the Choctaw Nation Moshulatubbee.

Merry Christmas

## Senior Citizens Dinners & Kids Parties

Antlers Kids	12/3	2 p.m.
Antlers Seniors	12/13	Noon
Atoka Kids	12/7	5 p.m.
Atoka Seniors	12/6	Noon
Bethel/Battiest Seniors	12/13	11:30 a.m.
Broken Bow	12/X	X p.m.
Buffalo Valley Kids	12/5	6 p.m.
Coalgate Kids	12/1	6 p.m.
Coalgate Seniors	12/6	Noon
Crowder Kids	12/9	1 p.m.
Crowder Seniors	12/13	11:30 a.m.
Durant Kids	12/1	6 p.m.
Durant Seniors	12/20	11:30 a.m.
Hugo Kids	12/15	6 p.m.
Idabel Kids	12/18	6 p.m.
Idabel Seniors	12/19	6 p.m.
McAlester Kids	12/9	1 p.m.
McAlester Seniors	12/13	11:15 a.m.
Poteau Kids	12/16	4 p.m.
Poteau Seniors	12/19	11 a.m.
Quinton Kids	12/7	6 p.m.
Smithville Community	12/14	Noon
Spiro Kids	12/18	TBD
Spiro Seniors	12/20	11:30 a.m.
Stigler Community	12/13	11:30 a.m.
Stigler Kids	12/14	4 p.m.
Summerfield Kids	12/17	2 p.m.
Talihina	12/18	11:45 a.m.
Tvshka Homma Cafeteria Kids	12/2	2 p.m.
Wilburton Kids	12/9	2 p.m.
Wilburton Seniors	12/13	Noon
Wright City Kids	12/10	2 p.m.
Wright City Seniors	12/14	Noon



(For a list of Thanksgiving Dinners, see Page 5.)

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

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

It's easy for anyone to get involved with Box Tops!

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

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

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

You are making a difference!

**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](mailto:veteransadvocacy@choctawnation.com)

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