



November 2018 Issue



Jernigan One of Many Who Utilize Veterans Airlift Command

by CHRISTIAN TOEWS

The Choctaw Nation provides new hope and opportunities to wounded veterans like Michael Jernigan.

In 2004, while on patrol in Iraq, a roadside bomb exploded near his Humvee. Jernigan, a Marine Corps infantryman, was thrown 20 meters from his Humvee and sustained multiple life-threatening and life-altering injuries.

He lost both of his eyes and the blast crushed 45 percent of his skull. He had 30 major surgeries in the first 12 months and spent 16 months in hospitals and rehab facilities. Initially, Jernigan didn't know how to cope with the injuries.

"I was medically retired in December of 2005 and I really didn't do anything all of 2006. That's when I realized I wanted more for my life. I still had a desire to serve my country."

That's when Jernigan decided to start a charity to provide guide dogs and service animals to veter-

ans. He started speaking at small events for the charity and realized he had a talent for motivating people.

He now travels all over the country to speak at schools, corporate events and other speaking engagements, sharing motivation and hope through his story and the lessons he has learned.

Jernigan said his goal is to continue to serve his country through motivational speaking and writing.

"While serving in the Marine Corps I was taught to improvise, adapt and overcome," Jernigan said. He has turned the most traumatic experience of his life into something that helps others.

"It wasn't until I lost my sight that I gained my vision...I had to have a vision and I had to turn that vision into action," Jernigan continued.

According to Jernigan, his goal is to have an impact on those around him and hopefully help people.

"If we make better

Americans we will have a better America," Jernigan stated.

In addition to public speaking, Jernigan also released a book titled "Vision" that chronicles his story and shares the vision that he turned into a reality to help those around him.

The Choctaw Nation is passionate about honoring and supporting veterans like Michael Jernigan.

One of the ways they do this is through Veterans Airlift Command. The Choctaw Nation owns two planes that frequently fly associates to important events and meetings.

When they are not being used for tribal business, the pilots will schedule flights with Veterans Airlift Command to transport veterans.

Al Cherry is the director of Flight Operations for the Choctaw Nation. He often pilots these VAC missions.

"Flying for the VAC is one of the best feelings I get when flying. I grew up



Michael Jernigan, a Purple Heart recipient, travels aboard one of the Choctaw Nation's planes.

in an era when veterans were despised and rejected. Being able to give back to those that have given so much for our freedoms is the best part of my job," said Cherry.

The Choctaw Nation has three pilots on staff including Cherry. Quentin McLarry and John Wesley complete the aviation team. They do everything they can to make sure the passengers are comfortable when flying.

They prepare a care package of snacks, have ice on board for drinks and even give these veterans a custom Choctaw Nation and Veterans Airlift Command embroidered jacket.

"This is a much more personal and convenient experience compared to commercial airline travel," said Jernigan. "Veterans Airlift Command allows me to travel without the embarrassment of being pulled aside and frisked in line by the TSA."

It also allows them to

travel with less difficulty in terms of logistics.

"What Veterans Airlift Command provides-and therefore those who work with VAC, like the Choctaw Nation, provide such a stress-free way to travel.

"It's hard to travel commercially. It's stressful. I know guys who have had to remove their prosthetic limbs and that's embarrassing. Veterans Airlift Command truly alleviates all that (stress)," said Jernigan.

The Choctaw Nation pilots complete approximately 12 to 16 VAC missions per year, according to Cherry.

"At times we can double up and accomplish more than one 'mission' for a given flight.

"One day we were able to combine three 'missions' into one set of flights. It doesn't happen often, but it's great when it does.

"On these flights, the veteran gets to meet other veterans and compare stories," explained Cherry. Cherry also shared one

of his most memorable flights.

"One of our very earliest flights was taking a Marine back to his base from the San Antonio area.

"The Houston center air traffic controller recognized our call sign that we use on VAC missions, Hero Flight 552, and took time on the radio to thank him for his service and talk to him just a minute.

"When the controller was done, he opened the frequency for any other plane on that frequency to say anything they wanted to our veteran. There were numerous crews that came on and thanked him."

Through the help of the Choctaw Nation, these flights bring hope to the veterans who have sacrificed so much.

If you would like to learn more about VAC, visit www.veteransairlift.org.

To find more about Michael Jernigan, visit www.michaeljerniganmotivates.com.



Pilots Quentin McLarry and John Wesley provide travel for veteran Michael Jernigan.

C F F 2

Veterans’ Advocates Make a Difference



Chief Gary Batton

Our Choctaw veterans are courageous warriors–tvshka—who have defended this land through centuries of battles.

There are approximately 1.3 million men and women on active duty, with 200,000 of them stationed overseas..

Reports also show that 140,000 Native Americans are veterans, with 31,000 active.

Native Americans have the highest percentage of veterans serving post-9/11 than veterans of other ethnicity.

Many of our country’s veterans have sacrificed much on foreign soil and at home as they face disabilities and hardships.

Some of these men and women who were once pillars of strength may occasionally need to borrow from our strengths as issues arise.

The Choctaw Nation Veterans Advocacy program consists of a small group of dedicated associates who focus on assisting veterans.

Senior Director of Community Services Kevin Hamill, Deputy Director of Veterans Advocacy Roger Hamill, Harlan Wright, Michael Robbins and Samantha Johnson administer an array of services for men and women who are currently serving, or have served our country in the military.

The department assists with Veterans Affairs claims, applications and referrals. Roger, Harlan and Michael are accredited through the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs which gives them quick access to much-needed information from the VA.

The team also sends care packages quarterly during the year, mailing to any soldier in an IRS-designated war zone. They assist family members who bring care packages to the Veterans Advocacy department, shipping them at no cost to the family. That soldier is then added to the Veterans Advocacy mailing list.

Another way we can help those who are currently in

combat is to donate our old cell phones to Cell Phones for Soldiers.

The no-longer-needed mobile phones can be dropped off for recycling at the Veterans Advocacy office at the Choctaw Nation headquarters in Durant.

Since 2004, Cell Phones for Soldiers has recycled more than 15 million cell phones, reducing the impact on landfills and providing soldiers more than 300 million minutes of free time for talking to loved ones.

The Choctaw Nation Color Guard, another service of Veterans Advocacy, consists of veterans who take part in ceremonies and events around the United States.

They have participated in 101 events so far this year, including funerals, pow wows, tribal events and commemorative ceremonies.

The Color Guard will post colors, provide a 21-gun salute and play taps during the Choctaw Nation Veterans Ceremony, Saturday, Nov. 10, at Tvshka Homma.

The annual ceremony is one of my favorite events of the year. It gives us all a chance to show our respect as we honor our Choctaw veterans and say, “Yakoke” for their service.

Veterans Advocacy will also be presenting gifts to the Choctaw veterans attending the ceremony. This year, they are giving away a vest and beanie for the cooler weather.

Two of the Veterans Advocacy associates, Harlan and Michael, are also veterans and members of the Color Guard.

Since he was a little kid, Michael wanted to be in the Army because his grandpa, dad and uncle were. He joined in 2008 and was stationed in Kentucky, Colorado and California as an M1A2 Abrams (tank) crewmember. While in Iraq, Michael was on mine-resistant ambush protected (MRAP) vehicles.

One of Michael’s most memorable moments was Christmas 2010. The whole platoon ate together that morning because they were the only people scheduled for missions.

They ate, then returned to the tents to open gifts. They were limited on what they could get, but Michael says it wasn’t really about the gifts.



Michael Robbins holds up a beanie that will be given along with a vest to veterans at the Veterans Day Celebration at Tvshka Homma on Saturday, Nov. 10. The celebration starts at 10 a.m.



Photos by Lisa Reed

Deputy Director of the Choctaw Nation Veterans Advocacy program Roger Hamill, *left*, Harlan Wright, Michael Robbins and Samantha Johnson fill care packages for soldiers in active war zones.

It was more about trying to make the moment as normal as they could in a place so far from home. He received two phone cards and was very excited about it because he had not been able to call home in a while.

Things are put into perspective when you hear from a young veteran that one of the best gifts he has ever received was just a phone card.

Harlan joined the Marine Corps and served eight years, his first term from 2001 to 2005 and his second from 2007-2011. His father was also a Marine.

He was stationed primarily at Camp Pendleton in California, with one deployment to Japan.

Harlan was a heavy equipment operator who helped build runways and helicopter pads while attached to the Marine wing unit, as well as operating forklifts. He also built roads while attached to the 7th Engineer Support Battalion.

We are blessed to have a group who enjoys being able to assist other veterans. They have an opportunity to help them understand the benefits available to them and their spouses, and to try to obtain benefits for them equal to what other veterans are receiving.

Veterans Advocacy has partnered with KI BOIS in south-east Oklahoma to offer services to veterans in need.

Many veterans who once put their lives on the line to ensure our homes were protected are now homeless. The Choctaw Nation and Ki BOIS provide emergency stays in hotels and strive to assist veterans and their families transition from homelessness to permanent housing. The program also assists with fuel and food vouchers for at-risk veterans.

It is rewarding to know they have helped change the person’s life in a positive way and want to do more. They are asking veterans to complete a small survey when they visit the department to continue identifying needed services.

Yakoke to our Veterans Advocacy team for showing the Chahta spirit and helping make a difference. Please log on to ChoctawNation.com for more information on Veterans Advocacy.

CNHSA, VA Team Up to Provide Services for Veterans



Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.

As we honor veterans this month, it is good to know there are several Choctaw Nation departments developing ways to assist veterans year-round.

One example is the partnership between the Choctaw Nation Health Services Authority (CNHSA) and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

The agreement between the two allows reimbursement to CNHSA for direct care services provided to Native American veterans.

This allows CNHSA to continue to expand the services it provides and reduces travel time for veterans because more locations are available to access health care.

Native American veterans can be seen at any of the Choctaw Nation health facilities with no cost for most services.

Veterans are eligible for the same services as other eligible patients. Required documentation includes a photo ID, Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB), tribal membership and additional insurance information if they have not previously been seen in a CNHSA facility.

The Choctaw Nation operates clinics in Atoka, Broken Bow, Durant, Hugo, Idabel, McAlester, Poteau and Stigler.

The Choctaw Nation Health Care Center is in Talihina.

More than 13,000 veterans have been served at Choctaw Nation’s health facilities since the memorandum of agreement was signed in March 2013.

The agreement has resulted in more veteran visibility within the CNHSA health system.

This has resulted in more targeted services, outreach and initiatives specifically targeting veterans.

The agreement has also increased the level of collaboration between CNHSA staff and other Veteran Service officers locally, which increases applications for benefits and services by the veterans and their families.

Presumptive Conditions Campaign events were hosted by the Choctaw Nation and VA in Poteau and McAlester this summer.

They were the first of their kind in this area and another one is in the planning stages.

The events focused on identifying and assisting veterans who may have presumptive disabilities to submit claims to the VA.

Presumptive disabilities are specific conditions diagnosed in a veteran because of the unique circumstances of their military service.

It is presumed that the circumstances of his, or her service caused the condition.

Examples are conditions related to being exposed to Agent Orange or radiation.

They may also be eligible if they were prisoners of war, or because of serving in certain locations.

The Presumptive Conditions Campaign, “Your Service. Our Mission: Bringing Benefits Home,” is boosting VA and tribal efforts to identify the veterans who are eligible for pension. It is having an impact on thousands of lives.

The services offered through CNHSA and programs such as Choctaw Nation’s Veterans Advocacy have raised engagement with veterans and provided opportunities for increased VA services and benefits.

As a veteran, and the son of a veteran, I am proud to see the care and respect afforded to the Marines, sailors, soldiers, airmen and Coast Guard who protected our freedoms.



by Stacy Hutto

Veterans were honored at the 2017 Veterans Day Celebration held in Tvshka Homma. Choctaw Nation has several programs that assist veterans.

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NOVEMBER 2018 HOHCHVFFO CHITO HVSHI big hunger month

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Choctaw Nation pilots Al Cherry and John Wesley stand in front of the Cessna Citation jet owned by the nation. The Cessna is one of two planes that is used to fly missions for Veterans Airlift Command when not in use for Choctaw Nation. VAC allows veterans to travel without the stress of commercial flights.

Front Photos by Christian Toews

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

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

www.facebook.com/ChoctawNationofOklahoma

www.twitter.com/ChoctawNationOK

www.instagram.com/ChoctawNationOK

www.youtube.com/ChoctawNationOK

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

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

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

Breast Cancer Survivors Celebrated in Hugo

by CHRISTIAN TOEWS

The Choctaw Nation celebrated breast cancer survivors Oct. 4 in Hugo, Oklahoma.

The event also raised awareness about breast cancer. Brandy Sigler, a survivor of breast cancer, said she hopes more people get tested if they think something is wrong.

“I think the biggest thing I want people to take away from this event is to

get tested with anything that you think is wrong with you.” Sigler said.

Chief Gary Batton presented the survivors with a crown and sash during the event and spoke about the need for more awareness surrounding breast cancer.

The entire crowd participated in a “survivors’ walk,” where they cheered and walked with those who have battled cancer.

Melissa Cress, an organizer of the event, said she hopes that people who attended the event leave with more awareness about breast cancer, the prevention of cancer, early detection and hope.

“I’m very passionate about this and I believe events like this are a good thing,” she added.

Cress said the Choctaw Nation hopes to continue to put on events like this in the future.



Survivors are joined by friends and family in a walk that celebrated beating cancer.



Angie Hill and Brandy Sigler wear pink in honor of breast cancer awareness. Sigler, a cancer survivor, was celebrated at the event.



Photos by Christian Toews

Tomorrow’s Hope Project Shines Through the Gloom

by WAYNE BURDEN

Fall has always been an interesting time for the Choctaw people.

It was during this time of the year they gathered resources together to prepare for the harsh living conditions of fall and winter.

They would hunt together and harvest crops together. Choctaw people have always been a close group.

It is in that spirit that we talk. With the onset of fall in full swing, we see the days shortening and the darkness closing in.

As we hustle to prepare for the harshness of winter, we need to be on the lookout for those whose dark days are not necessarily physical.

As we are aware, exposure to sunlight can be good for the psyche. However, with less of it now than in previous months, it is important that we are aware of those around us who are having difficulty.



no one person can do all things.

If we model ourselves after the wisdom of our Choctaw ancestors and pool our resources, we can make a difference.

We can bring hope to make our society better.

At the Tomorrow’s Hope Project, we believe that you, the Choctaw people, are Tomorrow’s Hope.

We believe that not only are you the hope of tomorrow, but you are also the hope of every tomorrow.

Together we can make a difference, together we can make tomorrow brighter for everyone.

Suicide can be preventable. If you or someone you know is at risk, call the national lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255). With help comes hope.

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

Building Healthy Families Through Good Nutrition

| 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 2018 |
|--|
| ANTLERS Market open weekdays December 1-31, except for: Closed: December 14, 24, 25, 27, 28 & 31. Cooking With Carmen: December 4 & 10, 11 a.m.- 1 p.m. |
| BROKEN BOW Market open weekdays December 1-31, except for: Closed: December 14, 24, 25, 27, 28 & 31. Cooking With Carmen: December 3 & 12, 11 a.m.- 1 p.m. |
| DURANT Market open weekdays December 1-31, except for: Closed: December 14, 24, 25, 27, 28 & 31. Cooking With Carmen: December 7 & 11, 11 a.m.- 1 p.m. |
| MCALESTER Market open weekdays December 1-31, except for: Closed: December 14, 24, 25, 27, 28 & 31. Cooking With Carmen: December 5 & 17, 11 a.m.- 1 p.m. |
| POTEAU Market open weekdays December 1-31, except for: Closed: December 14, 24, 25, 27, 28 & 31. Cooking With Carmen: December 6 & 13, 11 a.m.- 1 p.m. |

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This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Recipe of the Month



Recipe by Carmen Robertson

Cranberry Gelatin

- 1 cup fresh cranberries, chopped
- 1 cup grapes, halved and seeded
- 1 cup apple, diced
- ½ cup chopped nuts
- One 8-ounce can crushed pineapple, (reserve juice)
- ¾ cup sugar
- 3-ounce packet lemon gelatin

Preparation

1. Combine all ingredients except gelatin and set aside.
2. Prepare lemon gelatin as directed using reserved pineapple juice and 1 cup water.
3. Allow gelatin to soft set, then add fruit and nut mix.

Nutrition Facts:

Servings 6 Serving size 118 grams (per serving), Calories 207, Total Fat 7 grams, Trans Fat 0 grams, Cholesterol 0 grams, Total Carbohydrates 39 grams, Dietary Fiber 3 grams, Sugars 35 grams, Protein 1 gram, Vitamin A 1 percent, Vitamin C 12 percent, Calcium 2 percent and Iron 2 percent.

For more information, contact Choctaw Nation Nutritionist Carmen Robertson via phone at (800) 522-6170 ext. 2733, by email at crobertson@choctawnation.com or at Cooking with Carmen demonstration.

NURSERY NEWS

Blakely LouAnn Turner



Blakely LouAnn Turner was born at 8:12 p.m. on Aug. 28, at the Durant Women’s Center. She weighed 8 pounds, 10½ ounces and was 19½ inches long.

Blakely is the daughter of Krislan and Dustan Turner. She is the granddaughter of Trista and Anthony Winnett, and Tonya Turner.

She is the great-granddaughter of Jesse Winnett, Joan Turner and the late Virginia Hampton.

Blake Winter Wright



Blake Winter Wright was born at 1:01 p.m. on Aug. 3, at the Alaska Native Medical Center in Anchorage, Alaska. He weighed 7 pounds, 11 ounces and was 20¼ inches long.

Blake is the son of Brandon and Melanie Wright and the grandson of Larry and Deanna Henry and Pamela Divis.

Colleges Award Credit for Camp Chahta Program

Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Carl Albert State College and Eastern Oklahoma State College now ensure students receive orientation credit for attending Camp Chahta.

Camp Chahta is designed for college freshmen who are tribal members.

Success coaches work with the students to resolve any enrollment or financial aid issues and to discuss any concerns.

Students learn how to read a degree plan and

have the opportunity to meet one-on-one with advisors to confirm they are in the right classes.

Camp Chahta also offers exposure to skills each college freshman needs.

Assistance with campus communications, navigating new curriculum and financial literacy are offered.

Students experience Choctaw culture with activities such as stickball, language, beading and basket weaving. They meet successful Choctaw leaders and are connected

to other Choctaw Nation resources. Choctaw Nation College Freshman Year Initiative continues to work with students throughout the freshman year experience.

Once students complete Camp Chahta, success coaches hold them accountable on a weekly basis.

If a student is struggling, the coach is alerted and reaches out to the student, ensuring students begin successfully and stay successful throughout their college career.



Photo provided
Eastern Oklahoma State College students attend Camp Chahta.

Bethany Hughes Graduates with Ph.D. from Northwestern University



(From left) Larry Hocking, Bethany Hughes and Jacque Hocking celebrate Bethany’s graduation from Northwestern University.

Bethany (Hocking) Hughes recently graduated with her Ph.D. from Northwestern University.

She began work as an assistant professor of Native American Studies at the University of Michigan this fall.

Bethany feels the support of the Choctaw Nation has been vital to her educational success.

She received Choctaw assistance as an undergraduate and a graduate student in the form of clothing and computer grants, scholarships and the AIGC/Choctaw SAP Doctoral Fellowship.

She said earning a bachelor’s, two masters and a doctoral degree would have been impossible without the financial support from the Choctaw Nation and specifically it’s support of mothers in school.

Bethany is thankful to the Choctaw Nation for its investment in her and is proud to carry the responsibility of giving back as she teaches her three children what it means to be Choctaw.

Bethany is the daughter of Larry and Jacque Hocking and the granddaughter of Frances Smith Hocking.

Maxwell Graduates Summa Cum Laude, Starts Rigorous Ph.D. Program



Matt Maxwell takes a photo with Southeastern Oklahoma State University President Sean Burrage. Maxwell graduated Summa Cum Laude in May and plans to further his education at UCLA and the Salk Institute for Biological Studies.

Matt Maxwell graduated Summa Cum Laude from Southeastern Oklahoma State University with a degree in chemistry in May. But that was only the beginning of his academic career. Maxwell recently accepted an offer of admission from a joint Ph.D. program between the University of California, San Diego) and the Salk Institute for Biological Studies to study cancer biology.

The Durant High School graduate expects to spend most of his time in graduate school in a biomedical research laboratory uncovering basic truths about biology that can hopefully be utilized to develop more effective therapeutics for diseases such as cancer and diabetes.

Beyond graduate school, Maxwell says his career goals are to “conduct research that will lead to the development of

novel cancer therapeutics and to act as a mentor to young underrepresented students — such as Native Americans — in STEM fields.”

Matt is the son of Kimberly Maxwell and brother to Michael Maxwell. Maxwell and his family are thankful for the support of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and many friends that have become like family during his educational journey.

Davis Graduates Texas High School



Jera JuliAnn Davis of Texarkana, Texas turned 18 on June 27, and recently graduated from Texas High School. Davis will soon be headed to college. She is the daughter of Keith and Sharon Davis and the granddaughter of Earl and Ann Davis and Donald and Bobbie Scott of Idabel, Oklahoma.

Gehman Graduates Nursing School



Brittney Gehman has graduated with a bachelor’s in the Science of Nursing from Texas Tech University.

“Each semester I received a very generous scholarship from the Choctaw Nation that allowed me to stop stressing about paying rent, putting gas in my car, and having enough money to buy groceries,” Gehman said.

According to Gehman, This took a huge strain off her shoulders and allowed her to focus on school.

“I am now a pediatric surgical trauma nurse in Austin, Texas, and will forever thank Choctaw Nation for their love and support,” stated Gehman.

“I want to thank my Pa-Pa Neil Blakley for encouraging me to use these resources and excel at everything I put my mind to,” she added.

Sullivan Insurance Sponsors Annual Choctaw U State Capitol Field Trip

Sullivan Insurance Agency of Ardmore, Oklahoma sponsored Choctaw U’s annual trip to the Oklahoma State Capitol in March.

During the trip, students were able to speak with Sen. Josh Brecheen and State Rep. JJ Humphrey.

Sen. Brecheen and Rep. Humphrey discussed their views on state funding and taxes.

They also shared some insight into their own leadership skills.

The purpose of Choctaw U is to grow the knowledge and skills of supervisors, managers and directors, enriching the Choctaw workforce by instilling a deeper understanding of their purpose within the organization.

Participants receive professional development training, build knowledge and improve skills to be more productive leaders.

Choctaw U helps guide the future direction of our people.



(Front row from left) Teresa Gardner, Denise Stewart, Melissa Dancer, Liz Kellam, Susan Clement, Trish Bacon and Anglia Smith.

(Middle row from left) Sara Billings, Kim Clark, Brenda Christen, Becky McKee, Vanessa Eberhardy.

(Third row from left) Shawn Young, Becky Hicks, Brandolyn Dunn, Melissa Zamora, Sonny Essert and Shelia Shoopman.

(Back row from left) Jamie Parker, Toni Rosenthal, Jason Hicks and Sherra Taber.

EVENTS

District 6 November Events

- Nov. 1 - Commodities Pickup, McAlester.
- Nov. 2 - Prayer Meeting, 7:00 a.m.
- Nov. 3 - Shopping Day, Veteran’s Dinner at Noon.
- Nov. 8 - Casino Trip (Bus leaves at 8:30 a.m.)
- Nov. 9 - Yard Sale 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Salt Pork Supper, 5 p.m.
- Nov. 10 - Veteran’s Day Celebration at Tvs- kahoma, 10 a.m.
- Nov. 14 - Thanksgiving lunch, 11 a.m.
- Nov. 22-23 - Center closed for Thanksgiv- ing
- Nov. 27 - Bingo and Potluck, 6 p.m.

Weekly Events

Monday - Chair Volleyball 9 a.m., Language Class 6 p.m.
Tuesday - GED class 9 a.m.
Wednesday - Chair Volleyball 9 a.m., Lunch and Guest speaker 11 a.m.
Thursday- GED class 9 a.m.

District 9 November Events

- Nov. 2 - Thanksgiving turkey distribu- tion at event center west entrance, 10 a.m.–6 p.m.
- Nov. 6 - Community Thanksgiving Din- ner at Event Center, 6 p.m.
- Nov. 7 - White Buffalo Sale (before & after lunch), Corn Husk Doll making.
- Nov. 9 - Taco Sale at ADR in Casino 9:30 a.m., White Buffalo Sale 8:30 a.m.- 1 p.m.
- Nov. 10 - Veterans Day at Tvshka Hom- ma, 10 a.m.
- Nov. 14 - “Holiday Fruit” Carving Pre- sentation, 10:30 a.m.
- Nov. 16 - Councilperson Dry monthly breakfast, 7-9 a.m.
- Nov. 21 - Choctaw Community Center Senior Thanksgiving Lunch

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. Faxed photos will not be accepted.

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

We were so very humbled by the love and support shown to our family Saturday night. You could have chosen to spend your evening doing anything you wanted to, but you chose to be with us at the Gospel music benefit and silent auction and eating from the conces- sion stand. Not only did you show up, but you were patient with the food line. There were so many busi- nesses and individuals that donated the awesome items for the auction. Thank you to the Williams brothers for cooking. Even though the OU vs. Baylor game was on, they showed up, set up and grilled it up. Yakoke! Sha- ron Aaron selling chances tirelessly, Carla Noah and Claudia Hodge, Floyd Davis, Terri Ramirez and Alex Sumpter for working so hard to make everything run smoothly, and giving up your day off. Jimmy Smith and Krissy Martin, Jeremy Scott, Bubba Johnson and group and all the gospel singers! To know that so much work went into putting this benefit on for our family is just priceless. It’s the best feeling knowing so many people have been praying for us and donating so much to help us rebuild our home. Yakoke to District 6 Wilburton seniors, District 11 McAlester seniors, District 12 Crowder seniors and District 9 Durant seniors that came out to show their support and donated. We cannot tell you how much this means to us.

Editor’s Note: On Sept. 3, while Councilperson Woods attended the State of the Nation Address, her home caught on fire. While she is grateful the lives of her husband and grandson were spared, between the fire and water damage, the home was a total loss. A Benefit Singing and Silent Auction was held for her fam- ily on Sept. 29.

Jennifer Woods
District 6 Councilperson

**November 8 and 9
9 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.**

**Choctaw Community Center
100 Railroad Street
Talihina, OK, 74546**

Come learn about 2019 Medicare plans and how they may be of benefit to you. Attend our open meeting to ask questions about Medicare Advantage or Prescription Drug Part D plans.

Call (816) 265-0859 or (866) 991-7189 to reserve your space at one of our meetings.

A sales person will be present with information and applications. For accommodation of persons with special needs at sales meetings, please call (816) 265-0859, TTY711. Enrollment in a plan depends on the plan’s contract renewal with Medicare.

Would you like to participate in a FAMILY health education study?

The purpose of the research study is to compare two different health education programs for American Indian families.

You may qualify if you:

- Are 18 years or older and identify as American Indian
- Have a family member, 12-17 years old, willing to participate with you
- Have type 2 diabetes
- Have a smart phone

You may receive at no cost:

- Opportunity to participate in a monthly family education program
- Monthly gas card
- Monthly drawings and dinner
- A1c test and cholesterol test
- Pedometer (to count your steps)

To learn more about the study, please contact:

Annette Choate- Idabel
(580) 286-2600, Ext. 41072

Cayla Mitchell- Hugo
(580) 326-9703, Ext. 35003

The study will be conducted at Choctaw Nation Health Clinics.

Biskinik Announcement Policy

We accept milestone birthday greetings for ages 1, 5, 13, 15, 16, 18, 21, 30, 40, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80 and above. Couples may send in announcements of their silver wedding anniversary at 25 years of marriage, golden anniversary at 50 years, or 60+ anniversaries. We do not post wedding announcements.

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

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

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

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

Mail to: Choctaw Nation
Attn: Biskinik
P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702
or email to: biskinik@ChoctawNation.com

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 10½ 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 16
10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Tribal Council Holds Regular Session

The Choctaw Nation Tribal Council met in regular session Saturday, Oct. 13, in their chambers at Tvshka Homma.

During the regular ses- sion committee reports were presented.

The minutes of the regular session held on Saturday, Sept. 8 were ap- proved.

New business included approval of the following items:

- Letter of Appointment for Sylvester Moore to the Choctaw Nation Ethics Committee.
- Letter of Appointment for Glenda Taylor to the Choctaw Nation Ethics Committee.
- Letters of Appointment for Kay Green, Jane Parent, Kitty Halcomb and Judy Ogle to Choc- taw Nation Election Board.
- Council bill adopting the Choctaw Nation Crimi- nal Codes.
- Dispose of surplus capital assets.
- Filing of applications with the Federal Transit Administration.
- Funds and budget for Year Three Continuation of the Tribal Management Grant Program.
- Funds and budget for the Victims of Crime Act.
- Funds and budget for the Tribal Homeland Security Grant Program.
- Funds and budget for the 2015 Methamphet- amine and Suicide-Prevention Initiative Pur- pose Area 2.
- Funds and budget for the Yapalli Choctaw Road to Health.
- Funds and budget for the Oklahoma Tobacco Research Center.
- Funds and budget for Year Three Continuation of the Hospital Preparedness Program.
- A limited waiver of Sovereign Immunity for Tobacco Related Agreements.
- Funding for housing development under Afford- able Rental Housing Program.
- Funding for housing development under Inde- pendent Elderly Housing Program.
- Funding for housing development under LEAP program.
- A gas pipeline right of way easement in favor of Blue Water TPX Operating Company, LLC, on Choctaw Tribal Fee Land in Pittsburg County, Oklahoma.
- A service line agreement in favor of Center- point Energy Oklahoma Gas, on land held by the USA in Trust for the Choctaw and Chicka- saw Nations in Latimer County, Oklahoma.
- A service line agreement in favor of Public Service Company, on Choctaw Tribal Fee Land in trust for the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations in Latimer County, Oklahoma.
- An electric line easement in favor of Oklahoma Gas and Electric Company, on Choctaw Tribal Fee land in LeFlore County, Oklahoma.
- A right of way agreement in favor of Cherokee Telephone Company, on Choctaw Tribal Fee Land in Bryan County, Oklahoma.
- Authorize the Chief to place property in Coal County, in Trust Status with the U.S.A.
- Funding for construction of new Choctaw Country Market in Coalgate, Oklahoma.

For detailed meeting information on these resolu- tions and Council bills, go to www.choctawnation.com/government/tribal-council/council-meetings-and-bills.

The next Tribal Council meeting will be held on Saturday, Oct. 13, at 10 a.m. in Tvshka Homma.

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
- Guardianship 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 | December Community Center Schedule |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 11-1 Stigler: 10-1 & 1:30-3 | 12-6 Smithville: 10-1 & 1:30-3 |
| 11-8 Wilburton: 10-1 & 1:30-3 | 12-13 Atoka: 10-1 & 1:30-3 |
| 11-15 McAlester: 10-1 & 1:30-3 | |
| 11-29 Durant: 10-1 & 1:30-3 | |

Choctaw Nation Vocational Rehabilitation

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

December 2018 Schedule

Durant and Broken Bow: Monday, Wednesday and Friday
Idabel by appointment

Dec. 4- Talihina (10 a.m. - 2 p.m.)
Dec. 18- Poteau (11 a.m. - 1 p.m.)
Dec. 19- McAlester (10 a.m. - 2 p.m.)

By Appointment

| | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| Wright City (Dec. 3) | Coalgate (Dec. 7) |
| Antlers (Dec. 5) | Broken Bow (Dec. 17) |
| Crowder (Dec. 7) | Idabel (Dec. 17) |
| Atoka (Dec. 7) | Stigler (Dec. 19) |

Phone: (580) 326-8304
Fax: (580) 326-0115
Email ddavenport@choctawnation.com

NOTES



6

by LISA REED

The Choctaw people have long been known for their stewardship and compassion for others. In the aftermath of Hurricane Florence, a team from Choctaw Nation Emergency Management demonstrated such compassion when they volunteered to deploy to North Carolina. “We were asked if we were available to send a team and if I was willing to lead the Oklahoma Emergency Operations Center Overhead Team 1,” said Rachel Nutter, the deputy director of planning for the Choctaw Nation Office of Emergency Management. Nutter, along with Dempsey Kraft, volunteer and marketing coordinator for Emergency Management and Steve McGee, facility management director for Choctaw Nation Health Services Authority, Idabel Health Clinic, left



Bladen County GIS Director Alisha Evans gives a River levels briefing.

Emergency Management Team Shows Chahta Spirit During Aftermath of Hurricane Florence

for Bladen County, North Carolina, on Wednesday, Sept. 12. Two other volunteers—Ryan Gillham, assistant fire chief for Idabel Fire Department and Nick Sampson, deputy director of Emergency Management for Lincoln County, joined them. Their two-week deployment was spent at the Bladen County Emergency Operation Center in the Bladen County Courthouse, Elizabethtown, North Carolina, where they reported to the emergency manager. The team’s primary function was to fill any gaps in assisting the local jurisdiction prepare for the impact of Hurricane Florence and for response in the aftermath. “No one can truly describe the gratitude the jurisdiction shows when you arrive to assist them in one of the largest disasters they have faced as a community,” said Nutter, whose assigned position was to assist the planning section chief. “Upon arrival in Bladen County, we were met in the parking lot by one of the county emergency services staff members. She had tears in her eyes, thanking us for coming all the way to help them. “During our deployment, we became family. We laughed and cried together and we worked around the clock to ensure the safety of every community member and

responder. “What we learn in the middle of response cannot be taught in a classroom,” continued Nutter. “This opportunity assisted our team in improving skills to serve the Choctaw Nation. We want to ensure that the Choctaw Nation Emergency Management team has the highest level of training and experience, so we are ready when our Nation and tribal members are faced with a disaster,” Nutter said. The slow-moving Category 1 storm made landfall Friday, Sept. 14, with wind gusts over 105 mph and up to 10-foot storm surges. It dumped up to 1 foot of rain in one day. In North Carolina alone, there were 5,214 people and 1,067 animals rescued and evacuated; 40 people died. “Two things really struck me: the power of wind and water, and the power of good people,” Kraft said. “The damage in Bladen County caused by the wind and water associated with Hurricane Florence was shocking. Even more amazing than the damage were the people. The responders out in the field and inside the EOC never complained one bit,” he said. Kraft served as situation unit leader. He was responsible for maintaining situational awareness during the Hurricane Florence response. “I created a SitRep (situation report) and gave a briefing to the EOC command staff twice a day,” he said. “Once the SitRep was signed off on by the incident commander, I would send it to the North Carolina State EOC via WebEOC.” Kraft also created special SitReps on the incident commander’s request. Each SitRep contained a complete overview of the current incident situation in Bladen County, including weather reports, river gauge levels, road conditions and emergency sheltering information. “The group of responders and emergency management personnel that we had the opportunity to work within Bladen County are salt-of-the-earth type of people,” Kraft said. “They are some of the most caring, loving and hard-working people you will ever meet. “It is my belief that the only reason Bladen County had zero storm-related fatalities was because of these amazing people and their servant hearts toward the residents of their county. “It was a blessing and an honor to work with them,” Kraft said. McGee’s role during the deployment was as a safety officer. “We worked long, hard hours but with a wide assortment of resources,” he said. The three are not new



Both of Oklahoma’s 5 person EMAC teams ride the airport shuttle in Raleigh, North Carolina. They were headed toward the North Carolina Staging Area for Hurricane Florence.

to responding to disasters and providing aid. Kraft deployed to Atlanta, Georgia, last year to help in the Home Depot Emergency Operation Center for Hurricane Irma. Nutter and McGee deployed to Key West, Florida, as part of the Choctaw Nation Office of Emergency Management team’s response to Hurricane Irma. “I feel blessed—physically, mentally and spiritually—to be able to help during disasters,” said McGee. The North Carolina community was in awe that the Choctaw Nation cared about complete strangers. Nutter shared the Choctaw Nation’s vision of living out the Chahta spirit, wherever they go it is in the posture of a servant. The Choctaw Nation Office of Emergency Management consists of Director Jeff Hansen, Nutter, Kraft, Debbie Dalpoas, Raymond Kennedy, Amber Gammon, Carmina Magby and Paige Nutter. “The staff in the Office of Emergency Management are an incredible group of people,” Hansen said. “They truly have a passion to help others and it shows every day in their work. “Additionally, the Choctaw Nation leadership—Chief, Assistant Chief, Tribal Council and executive leaders—continually provide support for the emergency management program to allow for deployments like North Carolina to spread the Chahta spirit. I believe this group truly exemplified what it means to be Choctaw during this deployment.” The department, often with additional help from Choctaw Nation employees such as McGee, has responded to numerous emergencies and disasters within the Choctaw Nation. These range from missing person searches, wildfire support, and structure fire support to large events like tornadoes, ice storms and widespread flooding. They have also assisted tribal members in other areas of the country during events like Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria, as well as earthquakes and severe weather events. The department continues to be proactive in training and educating staff, so they can help others understand the benefits of preparing for emergencies. Actions such as communicating with family members on what to do following an event or making sure insurance policies are adequate to cover losses can go a long way to speed up the recovery process following a disaster. “I believe God has called us to be a light in a dark world,” Kraft said. “That’s exactly what I felt like I was able to do during my deployment to North Carolina.”

Chahta Veteran Shares Stories About Joining the Military, Service and his Bride of 72 Years

by JUDY ALLEN

Cecil and Mary Bell of Hugo, Oklahoma, celebrated 72 years of marriage in April 2018. They are cheerful toward each other and both like to travel. Family and friends are important to the couple. Their long life together has created memories, and their home displays pictures of many of the memories. They were blessed with three children, Lynda Kaye Bell Cazezaro, Dianna Sue Bell Guidry, and Kenneth Harlon Bell. Lynda is the only one still living. Cecil said a message he would like to leave future generations of his grandchildren, great-grandchildren and beyond is, “To be a good American. Know you are lucky you live in a place where there is freedom.” He said his wife, Mary, has a wreath on the front porch that says a great thing, “Home of the Free, BECAUSE of the BRAVE!” Cecil is very patriotic. He and his family have a history of military service. He served in World War I. His dad served in World War II. The story of how he signed up for service is a

little complicated. Cecil ran away from home when he was 15 or 16. He “ho-boed” to California, then to Houston, Texas, getting odd jobs along the way. He liked working on dairy farms. He stayed at one in Houston for about a year. “I milked a lot of cows! “At first, the cows all looked alike, but after a while, I could tell each of them apart. They all have different personalities and different looks.” When Cecil returned home to Hugo, his dad talked him into joining the National Guard. It wasn’t long before they were mobilized and Cecil was headed overseas. He was in the 45th Division and was decorated for his participation in several campaigns. Medals and citations at his home include the Bronze Star. Loading up with his war buddies to come back to the United States on a ship, he tucked a little Feist dog into his bag and brought it home. The little dog, Utica, had been through several invasions, including the Siegfried line. In fact, she had puppies in one of the gun trailers while traveling to the battlefield. “When they got off the ship, the Red Cross had

ladies serving doughnuts and coffee. Cecil said they gave the dog doughnuts and milk,” said Mary. Cecil began going to night school and got a job as a lineman with the public service company. He and Mary were married in 1946. “We met at a dance in October and were married the next June,” said Mary. “I met her when she was a little girl,” said Cecil. “She says she doesn’t remember.” Mary laughed, “That doesn’t count—that was at a ballgame at Goodland when I was about 6 years old. I had gone with my dad. The Goodland boys had a good ball team. That day the boys were playing the Goodland girls. I got hit in the chest with a ball and it knocked the wind out of me. When I came awake, my dad was holding me and someone said ‘that Bell boy hit that ball.’” In their younger years, Mary said she was raised west of Hugo on 280 acres. Cecil was raised near Hugo on farmland where they grew corn and peanuts. They had two ponds, one with fish in it. They had cows and milked three of them. “We raised a big garden and always had a big watermelon patch.” Cecil said, “Our family



Mary said she met Cecil at a dance in October and they were married the next June. Cecil said they met much earlier at a ball game, when Mary was a little girl. Mary and Cecil have been married 72 years. The couple share a love of travel and family and friends are important to both of them. Many of the memories they have made together are displayed throughout their home.

had a heritage of protecting the country. Daddy was in World War I, I was in World War II. My brother Walter was in Korea, my brother Bobby was in the Air Lift in Berlin and our son, Kenneth Harlon, served in the Army four years during Vietnam and was stationed in Thailand. All of us were veterans.” He said, “I hope to be remembered as a man who loved his country.” The Bells have friends all over the country. During one trip the couple took to Houston, they ran across Captain Fain, one of Cecil’s World War II buddies and he insisted on taking them home to meet his wife, and toured them around the city. In fact, the captain let Cecil drive his brand-new car. The Bells are never short on company. “We have had friends from all over look us up and come see us,” said Cecil. “And we have looked up some of them, too,” said Mary. “We looked up another captain in Minnesota,” said Cecil. It is obvious Cecil had a lot of friends he could count on during and after his service in the military.

HOMEOWNERS ENERGY MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR VETERANS

Services Available

- Up to \$2,500 per veteran
- Necessary repairs for maintenance/repairs for energy savings:
 - Caulk and weather strip exterior doors and windows
 - Insulation in attic
 - Seal HVAC duct work
 - Install steel insulated entry doors
 - Clean and service HVAC units
 - Seal all interior wall penetrations
 - Install LED bulbs throughout
 - Install programmable thermostats

Eligibility Requirements

- Choctaw CDIB & Tribal Membership
- Proof of Veteran Status
- Completed Application



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CHOCTAW NATION
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LICENSE

2019 LICENSES NOW AVAILABLE!

Eligibility Requirements

- Choctaw Tribal Members
- Oklahoma Residents

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Please allow 6 to 8 weeks processing time for receipt of license. Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation applicable laws apply to Choctaw License holders.

Annual application process for new or renewal of licenses from October 1 to September 30. Any applications accepted after September 15 will be for the following season.

If you have questions, contact the State of Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation at 408-521-3852 or visit their website at: <https://wildlifedepartment.com/>



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THE SPIRIT OF EDUCATION



JOIN NOW!

The Choctaw Nation High School Student Services Program serves Choctaw tribal members in grades 9-12. The goal of the program is to assist our students with academic information to promote education and/or career path beyond high school.
(580) 924-8280, ext. 4105


Choctaw Nation High School Student Services

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 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!

For further information, contact Jerry Tomlinson at 800-522-6170

Living out the Chahta Spirit



Thanksgiving Dinners

All dinners will be held at Choctaw Community Centers unless otherwise posted.

| Location | Date | Time |
|------------------------|-------|------------|
| Antlers (Seniors) | 11/15 | Noon |
| Atoka | 11/14 | 11:30 a.m. |
| Bethel | 11/15 | 6 p.m. |
| Bethel (Seniors) | 11/7 | Noon |
| Broken Bow. | 11/8 | 6 p.m. |
| Broken Bow (Seniors) | 11/14 | Noon |
| Colagate (Seniors) | 11/7 | Noon |
| Crowder (Seniors) | 11/14 | 11:30 a.m. |
| Durant Event Center | 11/6 | 6 p.m. |
| Hugo | 11/14 | 11:30 a.m. |
| Idabel | 11/14 | 6 p.m. |
| McAlester | 11/14 | 11:30 a.m. |
| McAlester (Seniors) | 11/18 | 1 p.m. |
| Poteau | 11/15 | 6 p.m. |
| Smithville | 11/14 | 11:30 p.m. |
| Spiro | 11/7 | 11:30 p.m. |
| Stigler | 11/14 | 11:30 p.m. |
| Talihina | 11/15 | 11:30 p.m. |
| Tvshka Homma Cafeteria | 11/8 | 6 p.m. |
| Wilburton | 11/14 | Noon |
| Wright City | 11/14 | Noon |

Bethel Choctaw Community Center
Heritage Monday

November 5
9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Registration starts at 9:30 a.m.

- LOCAL VENDORS ON SITE.
- FLU SHOTS AVAILABLE.
- INDIAN TACO SALE PRESENTED BY THE BETHEL CHAIR VOLLEYBALL TEAM.
- DOOR PRIZES.

You may participate by wearing native clothing or jewelry.

7

DON'T MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY!

CHOCTAW
CAREER
EXPO 2018

WEDNESDAY,
NOVEMBER 7, 2018
9:00AM - 3:30PM

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

Presented by: Career Development
www.choctawcareers.com/expo
866.933.2260

Chahta Anumpa
Aiikhvna

◆◆◆ Lesson of the Month ◆◆◆
Adverbs

ahusi - almost, just about.
naha - nearly; almost.
kisha - not yet.
polaka - finally.

Ahusi usually comes after a time marker or a verb.
1. Il impahusi. *We are just about to eat.*
2. Tabokolahusi. *It's almost noon.*
3. Ish onahusi. *You are almost (there), (about to arrive).*
4. Ofi mvt nusahusi. *That dog is almost asleep.*

Kisha—This word commonly follows the ik-o verb form.
1. Ak impo kisha. *I haven't eaten yet.*
2. Toksvlit chik iyo kisha ho? *Have you not gone to work yet?*
3. Ik svm alhtobo kisha. *I have not gotten paid yet.*
4. Chik iyo kisha ho? *Have you not gone yet?*

Naha—Naha will follow a verb.
1. Sv ittola naha. *I nearly fell.*
2. Ofi yvt katos ma hokli naha tuk. *The dog almost caught the cat.*
3. Ak tano naha tuk. *I almost didn't get up. (tani-to arise from sleeping)*
4. Sv nusi naha tuk. *I almost went to sleep.*

Polaka—This adverb will come at the beginning of a sentence and is sometimes accompanied by the word 'na' for added emphasis
1. Polaka na tvmaha ia li tuk. *I finally went to town.*
2. Polaka okla chim anoli ha? *Did they finally tell you?*
3. Polaka vla li. *I am finally here.*
4. Polaka na vm vlhtayaha. *I am finally finished.*

www.choctawschool.com

STORIES

Lloyd Crowder

Lloyd Dean Crowder, 62, passed away Sept. 6, 2018. He was born Sept. 19, 1955, in Atoka, Oklahoma, to Walter Lee and Kitty (Goss) Crowder.

Crowder was preceded in death by his parents; grandmother Mattie Wilson; brothers Roy, Buck and Dean Bicknell and Cowboy Miller; sisters Almeda, Lois, and Doris Bicknell, Bernice Miller and Ann Tomlinson.

Crowder is survived by sister Shirley Sexton and spouse Tim; nieces Kimberly, Monica and spouse Rick, Candy and spouse James, Patricia and Lisa; nephews Timothy Jr. and spouse Kathy, Isaac and spouse Kathy and Mathew; and special friends Shawn and Kathy Malone.

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

Garrick Frazier

Garrick "Bulls" Frazier, 35, passed away July 22, 2018.

Frazier was born Sept. 12, 1982, in Talihina, Oklahoma, to Douglas Lee and Terry Ann Frazier Hood.

Garrick was preceded in death by his grandparents; father Douglas Hood; and sister Amy Frazier.

He is survived by children Scarlett Frazier and Isaiah Martinez; mother Terry Hood; girlfriend Lisa Zermenio; brothers Dustin Hood and spouse Tammy and Bradley Hood; and sister Jodi Walpool. For the full obituary, please visit [Roden Pryor Funeral Directors](#).



Jesse Beams

Jesse Floyd Beams, 80, passed away Aug. 31, 2018. He was born Feb. 7, 1938, to Levi Lee and Dollye Tigner Beams.

He was preceded in death by his parents; spouse Marilyn Jo Beams; sisters Mary Seims and Janice Crouch; and brother Leslie Lynn Beams.

Jesse is survived by daughters Brenda Beams, Becky Kubicek and spouse Stan and Jo Beth Jones; grandchildren Skylar Jones and Eli Kubicek; and brother Joe Beams and spouse Betty.

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



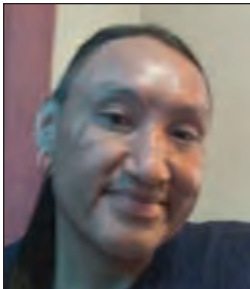
Kristen Monroe Arkeketa-Scott

Kristen Monroe Arkeketa-Scott, 40, passed away May 9, 2018. Kristen was born in Talihina, Oklahoma, to Roger and Rhoda (Eyachabbe) Scott on Dec. 14, 1977.

Kristen was preceded in death by grandparents Mary and Rufus Eyachabbe and Jasper and Savannah Scott; and biological father Freeman Arkeketa Jr.

Kristen is survived by his parents; brother Greg Scott and spouse Lauren; and nieces and nephews Chinah, Destiny, Taloa, Bubba, and Jaiden.

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



Patricia Mayer

Patricia Anne (Cole) Mayer, 65, passed away Aug. 19, 2108. She was born Feb. 27, 1953, to Irvin and Ida (Jones) Cole, in Talihina, Oklahoma.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband Edward Mayer; son Eddie Mayer; brothers Ernie Cole, Anthony Cole and Sherman Cole; sister Donna Mayo; brother-in-law Ronnie Mayer; and great-niece Isabinda Anderson.

She is survived by her grandchildren, Eli Mayer, Axton Gaffney, Rymee Mayer and Britton Barone; goddaughter Janah Barone; sons Jeremy McNutt, Lee Ray Weeden and Jeffrey Hogue; nieces Dee Dee Mayer, Penny Adkisson, Anita Anderson, Stephanie Valadez, Melanie Martinez, Vonda Cole and Brenda Payne; nephews R.P. Mayer and Brandon Cole; brothers Terry Cole and spouse Pam and Irvin Cole Jr.; sisters V. Regina Anderson, Lorene Scott, Ellen Cole and Janice Twist and spouse Kevin; and special caregiver Anita Anderson. For the full obituary, please visit [Browns Funeral Service](#).



Patsy Morrison

Patsy Morrison, 67, passed away Sept. 1, 2018. Patsy was born Feb. 6, 1951, in Clarksville, Texas, to James H. Morrison Jr. and Inez Vernell Thompson Morrison.

She was preceded in death by her father.

She is survived by her mother; sister Janell Whiteman and spouse Bill; brothers James M. Morrison and spouse Daphene, Jim Heath and spouse Carol; nieces Molly Wade and spouse Jerry Moore and Laura Todd and spouse Matthew; and great-nieces and nephews Cody, Kelly, Wade, Mattilynn and Makayla.

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



Betty Baker

Betty Mae Baker passed away July 13, 2018. She was born Dec. 16, 1929, in Valiant, Oklahoma, to Abraham Charles and Melissa (James) Charles and had lived most of her life in Hugo, Oklahoma.

Betty was preceded in death by her husband, George Dukes Baker; parents; daughter Quanah Baker Williston; grandson Jimmy Williston; and two brothers Charley Davis and Jacob James.

She is survived by her son, Michael Keith Baker of Hugo; daughters Patricia Ann Baker, Vivian Baker and Tammye Baker; brother William Charles; sisters Evelyn Lucille Olive and Norma Aunko; grandchildren Jason Baker and spouse, Stephanie, Dustin Williston, and Courtney Wesley and spouse Derek; great-grandchildren Hayden Baker, Alison, Devin, Jim, and Riley Williston, and Peyton and Lucas Wesley; along with many other relatives and friends.

Betty worked for 40 years with the Choctaw Nation WIC program in Hugo, Oklahoma.

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



Adam WhiteEagle

Adam WhiteEagle, 67, passed away Sept. 7, 2018.

He was born July 15, 1951, to Floyd Blackbear WhiteEagle and Matilda (Hoof) WhiteEagle in Clinton, Oklahoma.

Adam was preceded in death by his parents; daughter Sara Rane WhiteEagle; brother Henry WhiteEagle; and sisters Francine WhiteEagle, Florine WhiteEagle and Rose Marie WhiteEagle.

WhiteEagle is survived by his wife, Marie; sons Adam WhiteEagle and spouse Toni, Floyd and spouse Cara, Jason WhiteEagle and Matthew WhiteEagle; grandchildren Kyla, Emma, Kristopher and Brook; brothers Robert WhiteEagle and Alton WhiteEagle; and sister Rosa May Thunderball.

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



Phillip Joseph Humphreys

Phillip Joseph Humphreys, 61, passed away Sept. 8, 2018. He was born Oct. 24, 1957, to Snooks and Audrey Humphreys.

He was preceded in death by his parents; brothers Ed and James (Jimmy Charles); sisters Johnnie Deweese and Eileen Beasley; and son Jonathan Humphreys.

Phillip is survived by his daughter Jennifer Humphreys; son Steven Humphreys and spouse Shauna; grandchildren Caitlin, Emma, Takota, Tallyn, Traver, Tekiah and Timbree; sisters June and spouse Jim Young and Susan and spouse Larry Fields; and brother-in-law Charles Deweese. For the full obituary, please visit [Burkhart Funeral Services](#).



Guy Neal

Guy Neal, 96, passed away Sept. 3, 2018. He was born June 3, 1922, in Quinton, Oklahoma, to Louis and Sophie Neal.

Guy was preceded in death by his parents; wife Nora Lois Neal; brothers Jim Neal, Dess Neal and Melvin Neal; sister Viola Gray; grandchildren Jerome Neal, Michael Hunter and Bradley VanSteenburgh; nieces Lucy and Melvinna Neal; and nephew Richard Neal.

He is survived by Andra D. Neal, Dayna Hunter; Patricia Lancaster; Janice Toth, James Neal, 12 grandchildren, 23 great-grandchildren, seven nieces and eight nephews.

For the full obituary, please visit [Warren McElwain Mortuary](#).



Marilyn Drake

Marilyn Kay Drake, 62, passed away Aug. 27, 2018.

Marilyn was born April 18, 1956, in Prineville, Oregon, to James Ray and Jessie Marie (Durant) Porter.

She was preceded in death by her father.

She is survived by her mother; husband Bobby Ray Drake; daughters Kimberly Smith and Stacey Sanders and spouse Patrick; sons Michael Thompson and spouse Maria, Adam Drake and spouse Brittany, and Cody Thompson; brother James Porter and spouse Brenda; seven grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

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



Obituary Policy

Obituary submissions are for Choctaw Nation tribal members only and are free of charge. The Biskinik will only accept obituary notices from funeral homes. Family members/individuals may submit funeral notices as long as the notice is from the funeral home or printed in their local newspaper 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. The online issue of the Biskinik will contain links to the full obituaries.

Send official obituary notices to:

Biskinik
PO Box 1210
Durant OK 74702

or email: biskinik@choctawnation.com

George Good

George Thomas Good, 98, El Paso, Texas, passed away Dec. 22, 2018. He was born in Ardmore, Oklahoma, on April 18, 1918.

He was preceded in death by his parents Lillie Mae and Francis Marion Good; his spouse of 62 years, Geneva; his spouse of 2 years, Ferne; his caregiver Dorothy Roberts; daughter-in-law Debbie Good; brother Francis Good; and sisters Sarah Pennington, Fannie Elder and Ester Payne.

George is survived by son Steve Good and spouse Joan; daughter Dianna Jones and spouse Jack; grandchildren Dennis Jones and spouse Amy, David Jones and spouse Holly, Beth Voigt and spouse George, Julie Good-Parks and spouse Troy and Kyle Good and spouse Alison; and great-grandchildren Grayson, Kathryn, Victoria, Jacob, Kristopher, Tyler and Jordan.

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



Floyd L. Hamill

Floyd L. "Hashi" Hamill, Jr., 40, passed away Sept. 13, 2018.

He was born Sept. 18, 1977, to Floyd L. "Sonny" Hamill and Debbie (Hooper) Hamill in Talihina, Oklahoma.

Hashi was preceded in death by his grandparents, Marion and Ethel Hamill and Walter and Rosie Hooper; uncle Clifford Hamill; and aunts Naoma Wilson, Juanita Hicks and Lillie Vansickle.

He is survived by his parents; sister Shawnita Sterett and spouse Shane; nephews Zhane, Levi and Drake Sterett; uncles Bobby Hamill, Marion Hamill, Jr., Kyle Hooper, Walter Hooper Jr. and Mike Hooper; aunts Carolyn Sims, Anita Lee, Mildred Hooten and Glenda Pyle; and great-uncle J.B. Hamill.

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



Janet Buchanan

Janet Buchanan, 54, passed away June 16, 2018.

Janet Elaine Mowdy was born May 14, 1964, in Ada, Oklahoma, to Glenn and Ulene Mowdy.

She was preceded in death by grandparents Ulysess Tomlinson and Jim and Ella Mowdy.

Janet is survived by her parents; husband Mack Buchanan; sons Brandon Hayles, Christopher Buchanan and spouse Stephanie and Mack Buchanan and spouse Christian; grandmother Alynne "Mamma" Tomlinson; sister Annette Hamm and spouse Jerry; brother Tony Mowdy and spouse Buffy; and grandchildren Ashley, Lane, Brandon "Bebo", Shyann, Tristan, Charlie, Kailyn, Cayson, Mack Christopher and Kash.

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



Michael Stevens

Michael Ray Stevens, 42, passed away Sept.17, 2018. He was born May 29, 1976, in Talihina, Oklahoma, to Peggy Stevens.

Michael was preceded in death by his grandmother Etta Mae Stevens; uncle Harry Stevens Phillips; and stepfather Don Sanders.

Michael is survived by his mother; brother Clifford Sanders; sister Pamela Hayes and spouse Brad; long-time companion Zenetta Watkins; stepdaughter Courtney Watkins; grandfather Edgar Ray Stevens; grandchildren Adreanna and Preston Watkins; and nieces and nephews Catelyn, Shae, Aiden, Josie, Karlie, Aubree and Zoelle. For the full obituary, please visit [Browns Funeral Service](#).



Bennie Winter

Bennie Nyles Winter, 91, passed away Sept. 5, 2018. He was born Nov. 18, 1927, in Duncan, Oklahoma, to Charles "John" Thomas and Hazel Lurinda (Whitley) Winter

He was preceded in death by his parents; sister Maxine Hawkins; and brother Chad Winter.

Winter is survived by his wife, Joyce Lynn (Sadler) Winter; children Schahara and spouse Rusty Hudelson, Scheryl and spouse Doug Williams, Scharmagne and spouse Saad Hineidi, Christopher Winter and spouse Christine; and Schaunon and spouse Mark Gilman; grandchildren Tania Hudelson-Moody and spouse Stuart, Matt Williams, Darcy Hudelson-Lewis and spouse Bobby, Zack Williams and spouse Autumn; Elizabeth Findlay and spouse Regina, Chris Gilman, Carson Winter, Schyler Gilman, Bridger Winter, Sierra Gilman and Hannah Winter; great-grandchildren Samuel, Madison, Zan, Remi and Van; brother Wally Winter and spouse Nico; and nieces Maxie and Marsha.

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



Raymond Fails

Raymond Lloyd Fails, 79, passed away Sept. 10, 2018. He was born Dec. 19, 1938 in Soper, Oklahoma, the son of Otis Lee “Jim” Fails and Geneva “Dina” (Davis) Fails.

He was preceded in death by his parents and three brothers, James Fails, Bill Fails and Don Fails.

He is survived by his spouse, Wanda Fails; son Randy Fails and spouse Melissa Yarborough; daughters Donna Wallace and spouse Gregg, Linda Langley and spouse Roger; sister Sue Mann; grandchildren Josh Fails, Jordan Fails, Andrew Fails, Savannah Emery, Lane Wallace, Jake Self, Jarrod Self, and Cody Self; great-grandchildren Hadley, Emersyn, Samantha, Alexis, Kambree, Xadin and Baby Boy Self; along with many other relatives and friends. For the full obituary, please visit [Miller and Miller Funeral Home](#).

Sam Battiest

Sam Battiest, 62, of McAlester, Oklahoma, passed away Aug. 28, 2018. He was born Nov. 15, 1955, in Wright City, Oklahoma, to George and Hester (Hardy) Battiest.

He was preceded in death by his parents, George and Hester Battiest; two sisters Bernice Marlow and Suzanna Battiest; brother Vernie Battiest; and two nieces, Audra Sampson and Jackie Sanchez.

Sam is survived by his brothers, Wayne Battiest and Ricky Battiest; sisters Mattie Battiest and Nettie Webb; several nieces and nephews; great-nieces and nephews; other relatives and many friends. For the full obituary, please visit [Brumley Funeral Home](#).

William Crumpton

Honorable Airman 2nd Class William “Richard” Crumpton passed away on Aug. 24, 2018. He was born on June 23, 1943 to Ernest Crumpton and Margaret (Crow) Crumpton in Hobart, Oklahoma.

He was preceded in death by his father, Ernest Crumpton; mother Margaret Crumpton; spouse Yvonne Crumpton; daughter Rose Crumpton; brothers Jim and Jerry Crumpton; and sister Jackie Davis.

Richard is survived by sons Ricky Crumpton and spouse Barbara, Billy Crumpton, Jerry Crumpton and Timothy Crumpton; six grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; and a host of other relatives and friends. For the full obituary, please visit [People’s Cooperative Funeral Home](#).

Sunny Muncrief

Sunny Rae Muncrief, 82, passed away Sept. 27, 2018. She was born on July 12, 1936, in Pampa, Texas, to the late Douglas Pierce and Esther (Wiginton) Pierce.

Sunny was preceded in death by her parents, spouse and son Kim Ivan.

She is survived by her daughter, Richeta Tyner; grandchildren Dustin Watkins and spouse Lindsi, Brandi Wheeler, Matthew Tyner and spouse Staci; great-grandchildren: Draydin Watkins, Anna Watkins, Devon Hatfield, Weston Tyner, Mattie Wheeler and Scottie Wheeler; sister Jeanne Taylor. For the full obituary, please visit [Watts Funeral Home](#).

Terry Effinger

Terry Allen Effinger, 55, passed away Sept. 21, 2018. He was born Dec. 14, 1962, in Talihina, Oklahoma, to George and Irene (Silmon) Effinger.

He was preceded in death by his parents, George and Irene Effinger; brother Kenneth Dale Effinger.

Terry is survived by his son, Terry Effinger, Jr.; daughters Janell (Effinger) Cross and spouse Loyal, and Shenna Effinger; brother George Effinger; sisters Norma Gafford and spouse Terry, and Janet Effinger; and nine grandchildren.

For the full obituary, please visit [John M. Ireland Funeral Home](#).

Shawn Polston

Shawn Conrad Polston, 48, of Bartonville, passed away May 21, 2018. He was born July 26, 1969, to Connie Dee and Carol Ann (Moore) Polston.

He was preceded in death by his father, Connie Polston; son Jacob Polston and infant sister, Mary Lynn Polston.

He is survived by his spouse Trisha Polston; mother Carol Polston; brothers Travis Polston and Aaron Polston and sister Dawn Parks. For the full obituary, please visit [Preston Hanley Funeral Homes](#).

Kizzie Roberts

Kizzie June Roberts passed away Tuesday, Sept. 25, 2018. She was born Sept. 25, 1952 in Okemah, Oklahoma to Jimmy Deere and Winnie (Simmers) Wesley.

She was preceded in death by her parents; brothers Jimmy Andrew Deere and Charles Kenneth Deere; granddaughter Faith Roberts and grandson Chance Roberts.

She is survived by her spouse James Roberts; son Paul Roberts and spouse Jessie; daughters Richenda Hicks and spouse Oscar and Teresa Cooper and spouse Michael; grandchildren Max Jameson Roberts and Jacob Hicks. For the full obituary, please visit [Parks Brothers Funeral Home](#).



Richard Edmonds

Richard Chunn Edmonds, 84, passed away June 30, 2018. He was born Nov. 17, 1933 in Wilburton, Oklahoma to Edmond C. and Charlotte (Hampton) Edmonds.

Richard was preceded in death by his parents; an infant daughter Penny Joyce; brothers Ross, Bill; sisters Bernice, Pic and Lindell Belle.

He is survived by his spouse Bennie “Jo;” son Richard Kevin Edmonds and fiancé Gerri Pratt; daughters Pamela Dawn Sanders and spouse Rick, and Kim McCathern and spouse Lonnie; eight grandchildren Rory Sanders and spouse MacKinzey, Riley and Rayce Sanders, Cole, Haleigh and Trey McCathern, Chance and Dawson Edmonds; great-grandson Cason Reed Sanders. For the full obituary, please visit [McNeil’s Funeral Service](#).



Robert Marquez,

Robert Anthony Marquez, 63, passed away Aug. 26, 2018. He was born Sept. 10, 1955, in Upland, California, to Manuel and Doris Marquez.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Doris; sister Pamela; and infant son, Benny.

He is survived by his spouse Betsy; son Robert Marquez; daughter Jenny Sweet; step-son Lindsey Perry; nine grandchildren; father Manuel Marquez; brothers Jackson Huddleston, Manuel Marquez and Victor Marquez. For the full obituary, please visit [Green Hill Funeral Home](#).



Paul Notah

Paul Wayne Notah, 66, passed away April 25, 2018. Paul was born July 26, 1951, in Talihina, Oklahoma.

Paul was preceded in death by his parents Francis and Rhoda Notah; and brothers Louis Notah, Gerald Notah and Larry Notah.

Paul is survived by his spouse, Mary Alice Notah; sons Randall Notah and Royce La Mesa; and daughter Rhonda Holtsoi.

For the full obituary please visit [Navajo Times](#).

Clara Flatt

Clara Mae Flatt, 75, passed away Sept. 27, 2018. She was born June 15, 1943 in Talihina, Oklahoma to Horace and Clara Belle (Andrews) Potts.

Clara was preceded in death by her parents; spouse Homer Flatt; sisters Pauline Adams, Charlene Chapman, and Edith Potts; brothers Haskell Sweargen, Gene Sweargen, Jack Sweargen, J.D. Sweargen, and Jewett Potts.

She is survived by her daughter, Loretha Sweetin and spouse Jeff; son Donnie Flatt and spouse Gloria; brother Mark Potts and spouse Connie; grandchildren Brent Shores and spouse Lezlie, Michael Shores and spouse Tanya, Dustin Hall, Richard Flatt, J.R. Flatt, Frankie Flatt, and Clara Jean Flatt; great-grandchildren Cole Shores, Stormie Shores, and Sammie Shores; along with numerous other relatives and friends. She is also survived by Lisa Williams, a special friend and caregiver for 14 years. For the full obituary, please visit [Serenity Funeral Service](#).



Mary Blan

Mary Ruth Blan passed away Monday, Oct. 8, 2018. She was born on Nov. 16, 1934 to Stan Watie McKee and Ida Roden McKee.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her son, Jimmy Don Blan; her brother Stan McKee; sisters Charlene Ishmael and Faye Pillars.

She is survived by her spouse Virgil; her sons, Dan Blan and spouse Susan, Mitch Blan and spouse Karla; her grandsons Brad Blan and Cody Blan; granddaughter Kandace Jurgensmeier and spouse Michael; great-granddaughter Lily Grace Jurgensmeier; sister Juanita Smith; brother-in-law Lanning Ishmael; many loving nieces, nephews, and cousins. For the full obituary, please visit [Serenity Funeral Service](#).



John Choate

John Henry Choate, 71, passed away Sept. 29, 2018. He was born in Bennington, Oklahoma to Rufus Choate Sr. and Itsie (Battiest) Choate on Oct. 20, 1946.

He was preceded in death by his parents; brother Rufus Choate Jr.; and sisters Frances Muskrat and May Varner.

Mr. Choate is survived by his sons John Choate and Jeremy James Choate; grandchildren Elijah Cole Choate, Bella Rose Pagano, and Nashoba Nash Choate; brothers Andrew Choate and spouse Norma, Franklin Choate and Melvin Choate; sister Ruth Morgan and spouse John. For the full obituary, please visit [Holmes Coffey Murray](#).



Quanah James

Quanah F. James passed away Sept. 16, 2018. He was born Oct. 25, 1934 at Cade, Oklahoma to Richard and Mattie James.

Mr. James was preceded in death by his parents; three infant brothers; brother Hiawatha James; sister-in-law Mary James; and niece Lisa Weekly.

He is survived by brothers Quilby (Elaine), Tom (Charlotte), Benny; sisters Loboma Beth, Nocona, and Micky (Kenneth); many nephews, nieces and cousins. For the full obituary, please visit [Holmes Coffee Murray](#).



Farchione Stout

Farchione Allen “Buster” Stout passed away on July 20, 2018, in Stigler, Oklahoma, at the age of 70. He was born June 13, 1948, in Talihina, Oklahoma, to Francis and Maude (Rose) Stout.

Buster was preceded in death by two brothers; one sister; one grandchild; one great-grandchild; and his parents.

He is survived by his spouse, Barbara Stout; daughter Jyme Simmons and spouse Jeremy; son John Stout and spouse Kathryn; sisters June Crawford, Sandra Graham, Vickie Dix, Debbie Short and spouse Jerry; brother Robert Stout; grandchildren Maggie Stout, Morgan Stout, Aidan Stout, Jacinda Stout, Bridget Simmons, Garrett Simmons, Gabriel Stout. For the full obituary, please visit [Mallory Martin Funeral Home](#).



Virginia Lorene Sorrells-Collins

Virginia Lorene Sorrells-Collins passed away Sept. 22, 2018. She was born March 23, 1947, in Capitan, New Mexico, to Charles Leroy Sorrells and Olive Marion Adkisson.

Virginia was preceded in death by her parents, Charles Leroy and Olive Sorrells; brothers Charles Mainard Sorrells, Amos Lionel Sorrells, Darrell Douglas Sorrells, Marshall Lewis Sorrells, and Roy Paul Sorrells; sister Barbara Sue Mitchell; brother-in-law James II-lapottubbee and great-grandchild Byron Glenn III.

She is survived by her spouse, Lloyd Collins; brothers Donald Ray Sorrells and spouse Elizabeth, Leon Carl Sorrells and spouse Donna, and Hoy Wayne Sorrells and spouse Carol; sisters Debra Juanita Vincent and spouse Daniel, Linda Mack and spouse Ricky, and Mona Ilapotubbee; numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren. For full obituary, please visit [Serenity Funeral Service](#).



Carlos Sam

Carlos Ray Sam, 63, passed away Sept. 18, 2018. Carlos was born May 21, 1955, in Talihina to Cornelius Sam and Norma (Carney) Sam.

Carlos was preceded in death by his father, Cornelius Sam; father-in-law Lonnie Williams; mother-in-law Shirley Williams; brother-in-law Rolando Querubin; sister-in-law Judith Streeter.

He is survived by his spouse, Elaine Sam; mother Norma Sam; son Jerry Anderson and spouse, Carla; daughters Sarah Sam Walton and spouse Rodgers, Christine Ramirez and spouse Manuel, and Catherine Sam; grandchildren Cheyenne, Joshua, Robert, Matthew, Jacob, Savannah, Elias, Hazel, Bryar and Lena; brothers John Gaines and spouse Jeanette, Merle Sam, Morris Sam and spouse Roberta, Matthew Sam and spouse Janet and Mark Sam; sisters Debra Sam, Della Querubin, Carla Enriquez and spouse Daniel, Theresa Sam and Rebecca Pruter and spouse Chad; and many nieces, nephews and other family and friends. For the full obituary, please visit [Jones Harkins Funeral Home](#).



Todd McDaniel

Todd McDaniel, 54, of Durant passed away on Sept. 6, 2018. He was born on April 16, 1964, to Marvin Jr. and Dorothy (Boaen) McDaniel. Todd was preceded in death by his father, Marvin McDaniel Jr.; and his grandparents.

Todd is survived by his spouse, Carol McDaniel; daughters Megan Dickson and spouse Ryan; Erin McDaniel and Lesley McDaniel; grandson Myles Dickson; mother Dorothy McDaniel; brother Alan McDaniel and spouse Cindy; father and mother-in-law Ziggy and Carolyn Shippman; brother-in-law John Shippman and spouse Susan; nephews Zakary McDaniel and Jeffrey Shippman; nieces Breanna (Shippman) Roach and Madsen (Shippman) McBride; along with numerous extended family and friends. For the full obituary, please visit [Brown’s Funeral Service](#).



Henry Cathey

Henry Eldon Cathey, 44, passed away Oct. 13, 2018 in Dallas, Texas. He was born Oct. 25, 1973, in Talihina, Oklahoma, to Johnny Beasley and Wanda (Greenwood) Cathey.

Henry was preceded in death by his great-grandmother, Ida Graham Greenwood; grandparents, Burl and Marie Ruth Baggs, Sloney and Myrtle Beasley, Ralph and Miami Jones; uncles Harold Dean Baggs and Wayne Cathey; cousin Nanih Waiya Wayne Fry.

He is survived by spouse Neysa Diane Cathey of Nacogdoches, Texas; mother Wanda Greenwood Cathey of Antlers; father Kelly Cathey of Antlers; father Johnny Beasley of Buffalo Valley, Oklahoma; daughters Taylor Lainge Cathey Ramirez and spouse Zachary of Nacogdoches, Raygin Creek Cathey of Nacogdoches; sons Yancy DeRay Cathey and Samuel Wayne Cathey of Nacogdoches; mother-in-law Debra Carter of Nacogdoches; brother Michael Dean Cathey and spouse Heather of Pleasonton, Texas; sister Natasha Leann Cathey of Muskogee, Oklahoma; nephews Corbin Michael Cathey and Ryker Dean Cathey of Pleasonton, and Brice Harper of Antlers; nieces Reanna Marie Cathey of Antlers, and Anna Grace Cathey of Pleasonton; along with many other relatives, and a host of friends.

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



Iti Fabussa Big Hunger Month

This article is part of a series titled “A Year in the Life.” Focusing on the time period of around 1700, the series follows the traditional Choctaw calendar through a year, with each article providing a glimpse of the activities that our ancestors were up to during each month. The information in these articles is taken from a book titled, “Choctaw Food: Remembering the Land, Re-

kindling Ancient Knowledge,” which will be published by Choctaw Nation later this year. The November edition of Iti Fabvssa presents Big Hunger Month.

Following Little Hunger Month, came **Hohchvffo Chito Hvshi**, Big Hunger Month (roughly November). It was usually during this month that the first frost arrived in Choctaw country.

This is the season when Choctaw communities held the Feast of the Dead. In cooperation, the two **iksa** visited their respective charnel houses called **tvshka chuka**, warriors’ houses.

These were the temporary resting places of the bones of their recently deceased family members. Here, on alternating days, the two **iksa** conducted the appropriate rites to honor the memory of their deceased loved ones. Then, they returned to hold a feast at the villages of the living.

When cold weather came, Choctaw women pulled out the large, river cane trunk baskets in their homes that contained their family’s winter clothing.

Year-round, a man’s basic article of clothing was a buckskin breechcloth, known as **apokshiamama**. As it became cooler, he added a robe made from a buffalo hide or a deer hide, which was called **anchi**, or a warm cape known as **kasmo**, made from the feathers from a turkey breast.

On cold days, a man also wore short-top moccasins, **shulush**, and buckskin leggings **iyabiha**. The basic article of clothing for a woman was **vlhkuna**, a cloth skirt.

On cold days, or when traveling through rough terrain, she wore tall moccasins, that went halfway up her calf, nearly meeting the bottom of her skirt. A robe or turkey feather cape kept her warm.

Frost ended the growing season in the exposed uplands as well as the opportunity to harvest most of the remaining produce in the agricultural fields.

With fieldwork done for another year, it was time to focus on other food resources. Choctaw men made their most significant food contribution to their families through the **Owachito**, Big Hunt.

The **Owachito** began during Big Hunger Month. Seasoned, able-bodied Choctaw men made up the core of the hunting parties, but the most excitement came from the younger males who had not yet faced an enemy on the battlefield.

On at least some hunting parties, the men were ac-

companied into the field by their able-bodied sisters, wives and children. These hunting parties traveled to **aiowvta**, the equivalent of today’s game preserves. Each of the three Choctaw Districts had its own. In 1700, horses had been in Choctaw Nation for only about 10 years so most parties still traveled on foot, or by canoe to the **aiowvta**. They crossed small streams with the use of rafts made from river cane. The main Choctaw hunting parties left their well-provisioned villages around late October. This was a time of growling stomachs, during which the men were fasting and all of the travelers ate lightweight rations of parched cornmeal and/or persimmon bread. Once the hunting party arrived at their destination and found signs of deer activity, they set up base camp made up of temporary “A” frame houses covered with sheets of stripped bark. The ends of the house, left open, had camp fires burning near them to keep the occupants warm. While the hunters went into the surrounding landscape in search of the quarry, the women and youth maintained the camp and the women made basketry from locally harvested river cane. For a Choctaw man, hunting was a spiritual activity and a highly cultivated skill. The most important food animal was **isi**, the white-tailed deer. The main weapon in deer hunting was a hickory long-bow with a string made of deer tendon, gut or rawhide. With these bows, Choctaw archers fired arrows made of river cane or hardwood shoots, tipped with points suited to the appropriate game. The serrated-edged stone points could be crafted to penetrate the flesh of a deer better than a steel-tipped arrow. Together, bow, bowstring, arrow and point were a finely tuned and powerful hunting weapon. One of the most common deer-hunting techniques was stalking. Choctaw hunters also increased their odds of success by using decoys made from the prepared head of a buck. In stalking situations where a deer began to get spooked, the hunter used the decoy to simulate another animal to reassure the prey in order to draw it in closer. Deer were reportedly also stalked at night with a torch, **pvla**, held behind a hunter’s head. The torches were made from resin-rich pine knots, or dry wood split fine. Hunting by stalking was a strenuous activity. Hunters often walked 30 miles in a day over difficult terrain, sometimes going great distances with no water. It was also dangerous. The possibility of running into an enemy war party was ever-present and if captured a Choctaw hunter would be assured of an agonizing death. Before the horse and gun became common, Choctaw hunters often used cooperative group hunting techniques as an alternative to lone stalking. A group of hunters would encircle a large area, where



Image used by permission of the Williamson Musuem, Northwestern State University of Louisiana

A Choctaw canoe made from the trunk of a bald cypress log, approximately 5 meters in length. The blunted bow and stern are typical of Choctaw canoe construction.

deer were known to be located. Slowly, the hunters would move in, towards the center, closing their ranks. They would scare the game towards the center of their closing ring, trapping the deer in a circle where they could easily be shot.

Choctaw people acknowledged a great debt in the fact that, in order for their communities to get the meat, hides and many other products that they needed, an animal had to lose its life.

The respect that Choctaw had for these animals and their sacrifice is demonstrated in the position that the animals have in Choctaw oral stories, dances and personal names.

Respect also meant careful management and conservation. This involved careful game selection, maintaining designated hunting areas, scheduling the hunting season to minimize impact on the deer population and using the fallen animal’s carcass well. When Choctaw men returned to camp from a day spent hunting in the field, they rested, ate and gambled with each other.

A successful hunter was obligated to share his hunt with everyone else in camp, including visitors. The liver was cut into pieces and distributed to the different fires in camp to burn as a sacrifice. The meat and other edible organs were a welcome meal, especially after all of the energy spent in walking, and being days away from the food stored in the village. Winter hunting camps were the one setting when red meat was a standard main course in the Choctaw diet. What was not eaten fresh was cut into strips and smoked into jerky over a smoldering fire. The duration of the **Owachito** depended on the success of the hunt and on how productive the previous agricultural harvest had been. Whenever it was time to head back home, hunting parties would pack up the dried meat and other products. By using canoes, the items that could be taken back to the village significantly increased. After horses were incorporated into the **Owachito**, they would be loaded up by suspending two 50 pound packs on both of the animal’s sides and tying a third one on top. Extra hides would be dried and tied into packs called **isht asheha ya shoeli** for easy transportation. A successful hunting party’s return to their village was an occasion for joy and celebration. Not only had loved ones made it home safely, they brought essential food and materials with them. Meat was distributed to the people who had stayed behind in the villages. After returning to the village, the exhausted hunters took steam baths to help their bodies recover and enjoyed some well-earned rest.

Editor’s Note: For Iti Fabussa stories you might have missed please visit ChoctawNation.com and click on History & Culture.

See You at the Pole Joins Chahtas in Prayer

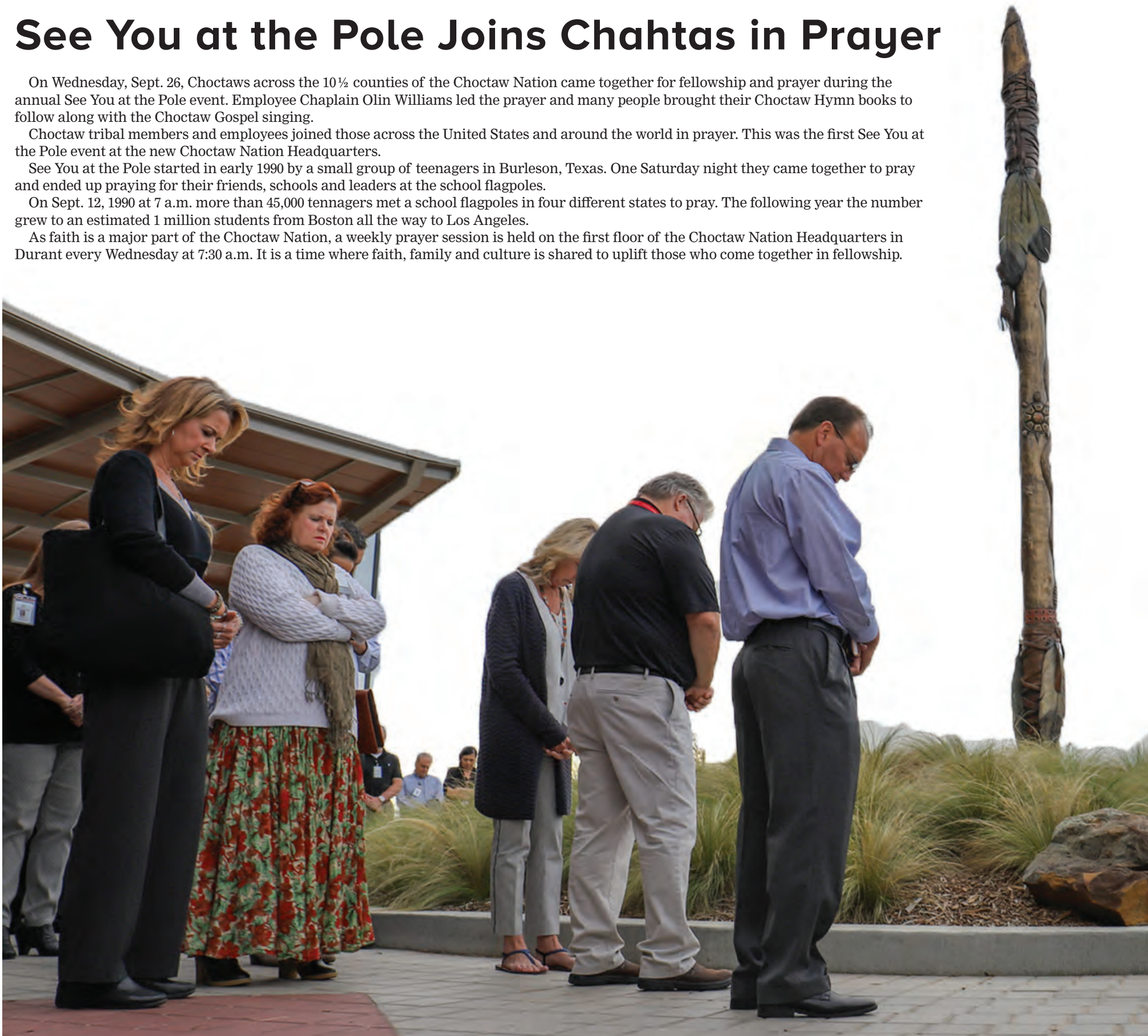
On Wednesday, Sept. 26, Choctaws across the 10½ counties of the Choctaw Nation came together for fellowship and prayer during the annual See You at the Pole event. Employee Chaplain Olin Williams led the prayer and many people brought their Choctaw Hymn books to follow along with the Choctaw Gospel singing.

Choctaw tribal members and employees joined those across the United States and around the world in prayer. This was the first See You at the Pole event at the new Choctaw Nation Headquarters.

See You at the Pole started in early 1990 by a small group of teenagers in Burleson, Texas. One Saturday night they came together to pray and ended up praying for their friends, schools and leaders at the school flagpoles.

On Sept. 12, 1990 at 7 a.m. more than 45,000 tennagers met a school flagpoles in four different states to pray. The following year the number grew to an estimated 1 million students from Boston all the way to Los Angeles.

As faith is a major part of the Choctaw Nation, a weekly prayer session is held on the first floor of the Choctaw Nation Headquarters in Durant every Wednesday at 7:30 a.m. It is a time where faith, family and culture is shared to uplift those who come together in fellowship.



Southwestern College Representing Native Americans



(From left) Kacie Lancaster (Muscogee-Creek Nation), Morgan Graves (Chickasaw Nation), Jax Pelkey (Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes), Sydney Staples (Choctaw Nation) and Morgan Benton (Navajo Nation).

A small college in Kansas is representing Native American runners and chasing a national title along the way.

Southwestern College has 42 enrolled tribal members in its student body of about 600 student and five of the Native Americans are on the track and cross-country teams: Morgan Benton (Navajo Nation), Sydney Staples (Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma), Morgan Graves (Chickasaw Nation), Kacie Lancaster (Muscogee-Creek) Nation) and Jax Pelkey (Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes).

Cedric Sunray, a member of the MOWA Band of Choctaw Indians, is part of the college’s admission staff and works extensively with Native American prospects.

With 15 runners, the women’s cross-country team is the largest in the conference and five Native Americans are part of the push toward conference and national ranking.

“Sydney Staples was the first conference Runner of the Week for 2018, and we expect to have several more of our students earn that honor before the season ends,” Sunray says.

For more information, contact Cedric Sunray at cedric.sunray@sckans.edu.

Briggs Makes All-State Team

Trey Briggs, an Offensive Lineman at McAlester High School recently made the Oklahoma All-state Team football team.

Briggs is one of five offensive linemen across Oklahoma who were selected for the All-State team.

Briggs is a 6’7” Junior at McAlester High School.



Cody Sells Wins at State Fair



Cody Sells placed second in Class 8 with his goat at the State Fair of Texas. Cody is a sophomore at Thrall High School.

SUMMER WORK PROGRAM APPLICATIONS

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

Deadline to apply is Sunday, April 1, 2019

| | | | | | |
|---------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|-------------|
| 1/3/19 | BUFFALO VALLEY | 12:30 | 1/16/19 | QUINTON | 10:00 |
| 1/4/19 | PITTSBURG | 9:00 | 1/16/19 | STIGLER | 12:30 |
| 1/4/19 | SAVANNA | 11:20 | 1/16/19 | WRIGHT CITY | 10:30 |
| 1/4/19 | KIOWA | TBD | 1/17/19 | FORT TOWSON | 11:00 |
| 1/7/19 | MCALESTER | 9:00-2:30 | 1/17/19 | SOPER | 1:00 |
| 1/8/19 | CANEY | 1:00 | 1/17/19 | TUSHKA | 11:15 |
| 1/8/19 | KEOTA | 11:00 | 1/17/19 | STRINGTOWN | 12:30 |
| 1/8/19 | SILLO | 11:00 | 1/18/19 | HAILEYVILLE | 10:00 |
| 1/8/19 | MCCURTAIN | 1:00 | 1/18/19 | HARTSHORNE | 12:30 |
| 1/9/19 | BOSWELL | 10:00 | 1/22/19 | RED OAK | 9:00 |
| 1/9/19 | CADDO | 10:15 | 1/22/19 | HAWORTH | 12:30 |
| 1/9/19 | CANADIAN | 12:30 | 1/22/19 | POCOLA | 11:30 |
| 1/9/19 | COALGATE | 11:20 | 1/22/19 | POTEAU | 9:00 & 1:00 |
| 1/9/19 | HUGO | 9:00 | 1/23/19 | BENNINGTON | 2:00 |
| 1/9/19 | TUPELO | 12:30 | 1/23/19 | ROCK CREEK | 1:00 |
| 1/9/19 | CROWDER | 1:30 | 1/23/19 | TALIHINA | 9:00 |
| 1/9/19 | INDIANOLA | 10:30 | 1/23/19 | WILBURTON | 1:15 |
| 1/10/19 | CLAYTON | 9:10 | 1/23/19 | CALVIN | 12:30 |
| 1/14/19 | VALLIANT | 10:00 | 1/23/19 | STUART | 10:00 |
| 1/14/19 | ARKOMA | 8:00 | 1/23/19 | EAGLETOWN | 8:30 |
| 1/14/19 | BOKOSHE | 2:00 | 1/23/19 | IDABEL | 11:20 |
| 1/14/19 | PANAMA | 12:15 | 1/24/19 | ATOKA | 10:40 |
| 1/14/19 | SPIRO | 9:30 | 1/28/19 | BATTIEST | 10:00 |
| 1/15/19 | MOYERS | 10:15 | 1/28/19 | SMITHVILLE | 8:15 |
| 1/15/19 | RATTAN | 1:00 | 1/28/19 | LEFLORE | 9:55 |
| 1/15/19 | BROKEN BOW | 10:55 | 1/28/19 | WHITESBORO | 11:15 |
| 1/15/19 | HEAVENER | 10:00 | 1/29/19 | PANOLA | 10:00 |
| 1/15/19 | HOWE | 9:05 | 1/29/19 | BROKEN BOW | 12:30 |
| 1/15/19 | WISTER | 11:30 | 1/30/19 | COLEMAN | 11:30 |
| 1/16/19 | ANTLERS | 10:00 | 1/30/19 | WAPANUCKA | 1:00 |
| 1/16/19 | CALERA | 11:00 | 2/6/19 | DURANT | 9:51 |
| 1/16/19 | COLBERT | 9:30 | TBA | CAMERON | 10:30 |
| 1/16/19 | KINTA | 11:30 | TBA | JONES ACADEMY | TBD |

Bring a copy of CDIB/Membership Card, Social Security card, drivers license, physical address verification, selective service (if male and over 18). Further eligibility requirements listed on the website or contact WIOA staff at (800) 522-6170. Applications available at <https://wioaapplication.choctawnation.com>.

If the Shoe Fits Choctaw Elder Finds Fulfillment as Horseshoe Champion

by KENDRA GERMANY

For some, the game of horseshoes is just that, a game. Families play at cookouts and get-togethers for fun.

However, for a select group of talented people, horseshoes isn’t just a game, it’s a way of life.



Each year, the best of the best gather to compete in the National Horseshoe Pitchers Association World Championship. This year the tournament was held July 9 through 21 in Florence, South Carolina. Choctaw tribal member David Davis took home the Open Men’s World Championship trophy.

Winning isn’t new for Davis. Through hard work and determination, the 70-year-old has been consistently winning in the sport he loves for 28 years.

He isn’t all talk, he has the accolades to prove he’s a force to be reckoned with.

In his quaint little shotgun house, which arrived in the small town of Wright City

by railcar, Davis has an entire room dedicated to his achievements. Trophies, awards, banners and patches line the walls of his trophy room.

You can tell by the way he lights up when talking about his achievements that he loves this sport.

His journey started many years ago when a family member introduced him to the world of horseshoes.

“When I was in high school, my aunt Bessie played horseshoes,” said Davis. “I kind of got interested in it. I didn’t play again until I got back from Vietnam.”

Davis attended a festival in Dierks, Arkansas, where he came across a young man who was searching for a partner to play horseshoes in the festival’s competition. Davis agreed to play with the young man and they ended up taking home second place.

“From then, I started attending festivals all-around so I could pitch horseshoes,” stated Davis. “During that time, I had several men tell me that I was good enough to play in the National Horseshoe Pitching Association. So, I decided to join in 1990.”

According to Davis, during his first two years, he won back-to-back state championship titles.

Davis went on to compete in his first NHPA World Championship held in Biloxi, Mississippi, in 1991.

According to Davis, after competing in his first World Championship, he was hooked.

Davis has competed in over 10 NHPA World Championships across the nation.

Horseshoe pitching is much more scientific than simply lobbing a horseshoe at a stake.

Since he started pitching, he has picked up a few tricks that he says has helped improve his accuracy.

“When I first started, I used to flip my shoes, it would flip one time and make a complete circle,” Davis explained. “The reason I had to change is because when I was in the world tournament, I was told that flip shoes were good but they bounced off.”

“He said, ‘Son if you ever want to win a major tournament, you’ll have to change your style.’”

Davis now pitches with a three-quarters turn, which he credits for his success.

“I’ve won six more singles state tournaments, four doubles state tournaments, competed in over 10 world tournaments and won two world championship titles,” said Davis.

Davis and his wife, Annie recently celebrated their 50th anniversary. Annie keeps books for Davis when he’s playing and keeps everything in order. They’ve been able to travel all over the United States, thanks to the sport.

Davis works hard, a trait that was instilled in him as a young man.

“I was fortunate. My high school principal, Paul Story, he always encouraged me to do better,” recalled Davis. “When I finished high school, I had this thought in my mind that I could do better.”

With his positive outlook and determination, Davis went on to Eastern Oklahoma State Collage, where he received his associate degree. He then went on to Central Oklahoma University, but soon after was drafted into the military to serve in the Vietnam War.

“I stayed in Cam Ranh Bay, then I went to Nha Trang. We got shelled one time and I held the radio up, to keep it from falling over. I kept the circuits in active mode so people could communicate,” explained Davis.

According to Davis, he learned a lot from his time spent in the Army, which he carried on through-out his life. “After coming out of Vietnam, I wanted to stay in that field, so I became an electrician,” said Davis.

Davis had a successful career as a master electrician. He retired a few years back, but that doesn’t stop him from working hard every day.

Davis is a proud full-blood member of the Choctaw Nation.

He wants to encourage young Choctaw men to seek every opportunity to be successful and reach their full potential.

“I need them to realize that they’ve got potential, they just need to act on it. They can do it, and if they can’t, there is someone out there that can help,” said Davis.

Davis has no plans on slowing down any time soon. He insists he is prepared to play as long as possible.

“I’ll probably compete until I can’t go anymore,” Davis said with a smile.

So for now, Davis will continue to work hard in the pit perfecting the sport he loves so much.

For more information on how to get involved in the State or National Horseshoe Pitchers Association, please visit www.horseshoepitching.com.

Choctaw Flag Waves Over Iraq Alongside Veteran

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by APRYL MOCK

Elijah Shomo, a veteran of the U.S. Army and member of the National Guard, flew the Choctaw flag alongside the American flag while stationed in Baghdad, Iraq.

According to Shomo, the Choctaw flag and the Choctaw spirit, were with him on every mission.

He presented Chief Gary Batton and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. following his 5 years of active duty.

Shomo said, "I chose to fly the flag because it symbolizes my tribe and the great Choctaw men and women who served before me."

Shomo said he felt great pride when he looked up at the Choctaw flag and was inspired to press on.

"When you look up and see it, it's like all those who served before you, all those generations that fought and stood where you stood, it's like all of it just shoots through you and you know you're not alone," Jordan said, "What you're doing isn't just for you and your family, it's also for tradition and for my culture and the people of the Choctaw Nation."

The flag is currently being framed and will be displayed in Chief and Assistant Chief's offices.



Elijah Shomo presents the Choctaw flag he flew during his time serving in the U.S. Army to Chief Gary Batton and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. Shomo was stationed in Baghdad, Iraq.

Veteran Recognized at SOSU Alumni Banquet



Photo by Charles Clark

A noted member of the Choctaw Nation was among those recognized at this year's Southeastern Oklahoma State University's Distinguished Alumni Banquet. The event, which took place on Oct. 12 in the Visual and Performing Arts Center, honored alumni and retired faculty and ushered in a new alumni board.

A member of the Class of 1989, retired U.S. Marine Corps Col. Tray Ardesse earned his bachelor's degree in history at SOSU, where he also captained the football team. "No one gets here without the help of many others," Ardesse stated as he thanked coaches and mentors.

Ardesse later earned a master's of Strategic Studies at the U.S. Army War College. As a Marine, he became a pilot and amassed more than 3,000 hours of flight time and 257 combat missions in the air. He was wounded in an intense battle and received the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star for his heroic efforts.

BIRTHDAY WISHES

Alyene Johnston Tomlinson celebrated her 100th birthday on Oct. 19.

Her children Donald, Ulene, Wayne, Lawana and her grandchildren wish her a very happy birthday. We love you Mom!



Deborah Moore will turn "Nifty Fifty" Oct. 15. Happy birthday Deborah!

Shoemaker Awarded Chahta Foundation Scholarship

Gabriel Shoemaker was awarded the Mackenzi Fae Clapp Scholarship by the Chahta Foundation. The scholarship was founded in 2016 by Clapp's mother Rebecca Hawkins.

The scholarship is available to Choctaw third grade students enrolled in the 10.5 counties of the Choctaw Nation who attended a Chahta Preschool or Choctaw Nation Pre-K

program and subsequently graduates from a public school in the 10.5 counties of the Choctaw Nation.

In order to maintain the scholarship students must maintain a 2.5 GPA, complete a minimum of 5 documented service hours per semester along with other scholarly stipulations. Shoemaker said, "I'm excited and happy and thankful that I got it."



Gabriel Shoemaker poses for a photo with the scholarship's namesake Mackenzie Fae Clapp.

Linda Logan Named 2018 Champion for Native Children



Linda Logan was posthumously named the 2018 Champion for Native Children by the National Indian Child Welfare Association.

Logan was a member of the Choctaw Nation, a descendant of Sampson Holson and the daughter of Myrtle Holson. Logan's daughter, Carla Cooper, accepted the award on her mother's behalf.

"My mother dedicated her professional life to the cause of Native children and peoples, working for the Boston Indian Council, the Dallas Intertribal Center, Native American Children's Alliance and other organizations around Indian country," Cooper said.

Trinity Skye Thorne turned 13 on Sept. 12. She is the daughter of John and Marie Thorne, granddaughter of LaHoma (Murphy) Crauthers and great-granddaughter of the late William and Ella Murphy.



Hancock Serves as Girl Scout Intern for Rep. Luis Gutierrez

Caroline Hancock served as a Girl Scout intern for Rep. Luis Gutierrez of Illinois at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C.

Caroline is the daughter of Jennifer Leeper

Hancock, a proud member of the Choctaw Nation and a descendant of original enrollees Melvina and Nevada Quincy.

Caroline is a junior in high school in Fairfax, Virginia.



Leatrice (Bishop) Carter turned 94 Oct. 11th. She is the oldest of 5 living generations (she is a great-great grandmother) and currently resides in Spiro, Oklahoma. Happy birthday Leatrice.

Joan Iker Pays Visit to 'Kindred Spirits' Choctaw Memorial



Joan Iker, recently visited the "Kindred Spirits" Choctaw Memorial in Ireland.

Iker is a descendant of Thomas LeFlore, who was Chief at the time a donation for the starving people of Ireland was collected by the Choctaw people in 1847.

"I'm very proud that our tribe reached out, even in our own poverty, to help others," Iker said.

Albert Pitzer Presented With Commemorative Choctaw Code Talkers Coin

Carole Ayers recently presented Albert Pitzer of Jones, Oklahoma, with a Choctaw Code Talker Commemorative coin.

Pitzer donated \$100 to the Choctaw Code Talkers Association to help fund a memorial in honor of the 100th anniversary of the Code Talkers' participation during World War I.

Those who donate

\$100 will also receive a commemorative coin in appreciation.

To join the Choctaw Code Talkers Association, or for more information about the Choctaw Code Talkers of World War I and World War II, please contact Carole Ayers via phone at (405) 990-0030, or send her a letter at 8692 Homestead Rd., Kingston, Oklahoma, 73439.



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COMMUNITY MEETINGS UNITE CHOCTAWS

WICHITA



Choctaw social dancing is highlighted during each community cultural meeting. The interactive demonstrations offer opportunities to learn the history of Choctaw dances.



Chief Gary Batton presents Nathan Benton Jr. a medallion for being the eldest Choctaw attending the community cultural meeting in Wichita, Kansas. Benton is a Korean War Veteran.

ROGERS



Charles Pebworth, the eldest Choctaw at the Rogers, Arkansas community meeting, is presented a medallion by Chief Batton.

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Photos by Vonna Loper



Lela Rodriguez, higher education employee, assists guests interested in pursuing a college degree.

SACRAMENTO



Rick Price, Linda Price, Robert Henderson and John Lee of Vallejo, California present Chief Batton and Assistant Chief Austin a photo of Ireland's "Kindred Spirits" memorial at the community meeting in Sacramento, California.



Joshua "JJ" Jacob shares the history and cultural significance of stickball with guests during the Sacramento, California community meeting.

DENVER



Former Army pilot Robert Fleak was presented a medallion by Chief Gary Batton for being the eldest at the Denver, Colorado meeting.



Faye Self assists Linda and Savannah Lewis-Leon at the cultural booth during the Denver, Colorado cultural meeting.

Fall Carnival Offers Spooky Festivities for Kids and Kids at Heart



Bentley Auld, 3, tries to win a prize at the soda pop ring toss.



Hianni Williams won first in the 8-11 costume contest as Wednesday Adams and Lillie Fincher won second as a ringleader.



A friendly pirate helps Vanessa Anderson, 3, and Ethan Anderson, 6, spin the wheel to win a prize.

Zombie 5k Raises Awareness for Domestic Violence



The Winners of the Zombie 5k pose for a group photo. The Zombie 5k raises awareness for domestic violence.

Photos by Apryl Mock

Outstanding Elders Honored at 2018 Banquet

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma honored its 2018 Outstanding Elders on Tuesday, Oct. 2, with a banquet held at the Choctaw Casino and Resort in Durant.

The banquet was held in the Magnolia Ballroom. Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. served as Master of Ceremonies with the Rev. Olin Williams offering prayers to open and close the banquet.

Choctaw Nation royalty, Little Miss Mia Reich, Junior Miss Kalin Beller and Miss Loren Crosby performed the Lord’s Prayer.

Chief Gary Batton gave the keynote speech commending the elders for imparting their wisdom on

the younger generations.

This year’s Outstanding Elders are Nellie Hunter from District 12 and Howard Phillips from District 1.

Nellie Hunter, 79, is a resident of Tupelo, Oklahoma. She is a service-connected veteran with eight children, 22 grandchildren and 19 great-grandchildren. She graduated from college at the age of 75 with a bachelor’s in organizational leadership.

Nellie was recently recognized for 20 years of service as a member of the Choctaw Nation Color Guard.

Other accomplishments and titles include; secretary/treasurer of the Choctaw Veterans Association for 10 years, veteran’s service officer, an associate member of the Choctaw Code Talkers Association and member of the Oklahoma Women Veterans Association.

Nellie was previously a member of the Choctaw Johnson O’Malley of Tupelo, where she was secretary for 10 years. Nellie is active at the Coalgate Senior Center and helps with the youth.

Nellie was also honored at the 10th Annual AARP Indian Elders Honors celebration, which was held on the same evening. She decided to attend the Choctaw Elders Banquet instead to “be with her people.”

Howard, 78, is a resident of Millerton, Oklahoma. He is a retired industry and university teacher. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of New Mexico, a master’s from the University of Oklahoma and a bachelor’s from Oklahoma State University.



Nellie Hunter of District 12 and Howard Phillips of District 1 were named as the 2018 Choctaw Nation Outstanding Elders on Tuesday, Oct. 2. Nellie and Howard are pictured with, from left, Chief Gary Batton, District 12 Councilperson James Frazier, District 1 Councilperson Thomas Williston and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.

Howard is an inventor with patents in the fields of biomedical engineering, electrical engineering, computer science and the production of hydrogen for future clean-fuel applications.

He is the author of more than 100 engineering and scientific papers. Howard is also a volunteer writer for the Valliant Leader newspaper.

Nellie Hunter and Howard Phillips, along with all of the nominees from the 10½ counties of the Choctaw Nation showcase the Chahta Spirit everyday and share their wisdom with those around them.



(from left) Chief Gary Batton, District 1 female nominee Matilda Paxton of Idabel and Councilperson Thomas Williston.



Chief Gary Batton, District 2 male nominee Albert Shomo of Bethel and Councilperson Tony Ward.



Chief Gary Batton, District 2 female nominee Valerie Franklin of Bethel and Councilperson Tony Ward.



Chief Gary Batton, District 2 male nominee Johnny Wade of Broken Bow and Councilperson Tony Ward.



Chief Gary Batton, District 2 female nominee Geraldine Rowell of Broken Bow and Councilperson Tony Ward.



Chief Gary Batton, District 3 female nominee Dusty Bohanan of Smithville and Councilperson Kenny Bryant.



Chief Gary Batton, District 3 male nominee Jerry Bohanan of Smithville and Councilperson Kenny Bryant.



Chief Gary Batton, District 3 female nominee Delores Dye of Talihina and Councilperson Kenny Bryant.



Chief Gary Batton, District 3 male nominee Joe Walker of Talihina and Councilperson Kenny Bryant.



Chief Gary Batton, District 4 female nominee Yvonne Foster of Poteau and Councilperson Delton Cox.



Chief Gary Batton, District 4 male nominee Bobby Harris of Poteau and Councilperson Delton Cox.



Chief Gary Batton, District 5 female nominee Dorothy Downing of Spiro, District 5 Councilperson Ron Perry and District 4 Councilperson Delton Cox.

Hunter, Sumner Honored at Oklahoma’s 10th Annual AARP Indian Elder Honors

by STACY HUTTO

Oklahoma’s 10th Annual AARP Indian Elder Honors celebration was held at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City on Tuesday, Oct. 2.

More than 800 people were in attendance as 50 elders from many different tribes were celebrated.

Among the 50 elders honored that night were Nellie Hunter and Claude Sumner, Choctaw Nation tribal members.

As the Outstanding Choctaw Elders banquet was held the same night as the AARP Indian Elder Honors, Nellie Hunter was not in Oklahoma City.

Hunter, from District 12, is one of the 2018 Outstanding Choctaw Elders who was honored at the Choctaw Casino and Resort in Durant.

Hunter has had many accomplishments in her life. She was recently recognized for 20 years of service as a member of the Choctaw Nation Color Guard.

She is truly an inspiration to those around her. Hunter graduated from college at the age of 75 with a bachelor’s in organizational leadership.

Hunter is a resident of Tupelo, Oklahoma, where she is very active in the community..

Sumner grew up as a farm boy in Gerty, Oklahoma. He has always been determined to

succeed.

He graduated from Haskell Indian School in Lawrence, Kansas, the University of Kansas and went on to graduate from the University of Oklahoma Law School.

After many years of giving pro bono advice for his Native friends, Sumner saw a need for Indian leadership and entered tribal administration.

He helped many tribal nations before joining the U.S. Air Force. He served as a flight officer and sent B-52 bombers on bombing runs during the Vietnam War.

Through his position as an executive director, which he held from January 2004 to December 2011, he improved the quality of life for 80,000 tribal members through economic expansion, development of the College of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and his consulting work.

Sumner makes his home in Okmulgee, Oklahoma.

Hunter and Sumner are both veterans. We thank you and your fellow veterans for your service.



ABOVE: (from left) AARP OK Associate State Director Outreach Mashell Sourjohn, AARP OK State President Joe Ann Vermillion, Choctaw tribal member Claude Sumner, AARP Central Region Vice President Sarah Jennings and AARP Board Chair Joan Ruff.

RIGHT: Nellie Hunter was honored twice the night of Tuesday, Oct. 2. While Sumner was at the AARP Indian Elder Honors celebration in Oklahoma City, Hunter was being honored as a 2018 Outstanding Choctaw Elder in Durant.



AARP Indian Elder Honor Claude Sumner photo provided by AARP.

Choctaw Nation Outstanding Elders photos by Apryl Mock.



(from left) Chief Gary Batton, District 4 male nominee Gerry Dale Dunn of Spiro, District 5 Councilperson Ron Perry and District 4 Councilperson Delton Cox.



Chief Gary Batton, District 5 female nominee Topsy Williams of Stigler and Councilperson Ron Perry.



Chief Gary Batton, District 5 male nominee Larry Henry of Stigler and Councilperson Ron Perry.



Chief Gary Batton, District 6 female nominee Sharon Aaron of Wilburton and Councilperson Jennifer Woods.



Chief Gary Batton, Councilperson Jennifer Woods and District 6 male nominee Charles Swafford of Wilburton.



Chief Gary Batton, District 7 female nominee Bonita Watkins of Wright City and Councilperson Jack Austin Sr,



Chief Gary Batton, District 7 male and female nominees Edgar and Hazel Taylor and Councilperson Jack Austin Sr,



Chief Gary Batton, District 7 male nominee Richard Wesley of Wright City and Councilperson Jack Austin Sr,



Chief Gary Batton, District 8 female nominee Adeline Hutson of Hugo and Councilperson Perry Thompson.



Chief Gary Batton, District 8 male nominee Neil Matthews of Hugo and Councilperson Perry Thompson.



Chief Gary Batton, District 9 female nominee Gaylia Green of Durant and Councilperson James Dry.



Chief Gary Batton, District 9 male nominee Tony Winningham of Durant and Councilperson James Dry.



Chief Gary Batton, District 10 female nominee Stella Scott of Atoka and Councilperson Anthony Dillard. District 10 Male Nominee McNew Thomas was unable to attend the banquet.



Chief Gary Batton, the family of District 12 female nominee the late Mary Risenhoover and Councilperson James Frazier.



Chief Gary Batton, District 12 male nominee Henry Ringles and wife Arlene of Coalgate and Councilperson James Frazier.

Choctaw Color Guard—Celebrating 20 Years of Service

by KENDRA GERMANY

Choctaw warriors have bravely served the Choctaw Nation and their country for generations. The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma is proud of the brave men and women who have sacrificed everything to serve. The Nation strives to honor these warriors every day. From the veteran’s tag to veterans-only parking spaces at tribal-owned properties, the nation makes it a point to honor its veterans.

For 20 years a special group of Chahta warriors have made it their duty to honor Choctaw veterans. The Choctaw Nation Color Guard was formed in 1998, thanks to the help of the chief, Gregory E. Pyle. Choctaw veteran John Burleson attended the 1997 Choctaw Veterans Day Ceremony in his uniform. Burleson, a retired Army Sgt. 1st Class, E-8, introduced the idea of having a Choctaw Nation Color Guard to Chief Pyle.

“I had been thinking about it. You see all of the other honor guards and color guards from other tribes and organizations,” said Burleson. Burleson said at that time there were a lot of Choctaw veterans being buried without a proper military funeral. He told Chief Pyle he would be more than happy to assist someone in starting the program. Burleson, who worked at the Choctaw Nation Housing Authority at the time, was asked to be in charge of the formation of the group. In 1998, a group of 18 Choctaw veterans became the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Color Guard and made their first public appearance at the Trail of Tears Commemorative Walk.



Retired Army Sgt. 1st Class, E-8, John Burleson was among the original 18 Color Guard members. The group formed in 1998 with the help of Burleson and then chief, Gregory E. Pyle. The Color Guard celebrates 20 years of service this year.

The original members included John Barry, Esau Battiest, Alto Battiest, Billy Bacon, John Burleson, Eugene Brannam, Dennis Baptiste, Bill Blankenship, Michael Thompson, James Owens, Terry Loman, George Robinson, John Townsend, Terry Cole, Ron Scott, Melvin Tom, David Jones and Mike Logan. Within the first year, Shirley Mantaghi and Nellie Hunter both joined the group as well.

During the opening ceremonies of this year’s commemorative walk, each active original member was recognized for 20 years of service. Since its conception, the Choctaw Nation Color Guard has grown to a 23-person group, with five active original members. Two of the original members, Melvin Tom and John Barry, are still active members at the age of 81. For 20 years, the Choctaw Nation Color Guard has been a staple at tribal events, ceremonies, local parades and Choctaw veteran funerals. Each member dedicates hours of their time and travels countless miles to these events. The long hours can be grueling, which according to Burleson, is something that deters younger veterans from joining. “One of the things that scare people off is we never know when we’re going to get called. If they have a full-time job, it’s tough to make it through the week,” said Burleson. “Last week we were in western Oklahoma to do a funeral and you’re talking a three-hour drive one way. So, some people don’t want to join because you don’t know when you’re going to be gone or how far away.” The future of the Color Guard lies in the hands of younger veterans like Bill Goins, a retired Army Major who served from 1989 to 2005. According to Goins, he joined for the same reason many of the Color Guard join. “That sense of service never really goes away. That kind of drive never really goes away,” Goins said. “The thing you have to look at is these folks, they served overseas, they served in wartime. When it came time for Thanksgiving, Christmas or New Year’s, they didn’t just get to pack up and go home,” explained Burleson. “So who you were around was your family and that lasts a lifetime. I’ve got three buddies left that I served with in Germany in 1974. They’re like the family I didn’t have while I was serving. It’s the same with the Color Guard. We love to get together and



Photos by Deidre Elrod

The Choctaw Nation Color Guard play an integral part in the Choctaw Nation. The group travels to tribal events, local parades and performs military funerals for Choctaw veterans who have passed away.

talk, share war stories,” Burleson said with a smile. Goins added, “It’s an instant connection. There are three of us who were the same regimental crest of the 180th, which happens to be the only regiment in the U.S. Army in a Native American language and it’s Choctaw. There’s that instant connection where Melvin wears it and he joined in ’50-something, and I wear it and I joined in ’89.” For many tribal members, they might see the Color Guard at events, but have questions about what the purpose of such a group is. The Color Guard isn’t just about carrying the flags in parades or attending events. According to both Burleson and Goins, it is truly all about honoring the Choctaw veterans. According to Chief Gary Batton, the Choctaw Color Guard plays an important and integral role in the Choctaw Nation. “They model the Chahta spirit of faith, family and culture. They are Tvshka warriors who have fought for their families and for God and Country. The Color Guard are servant leaders who volunteer their time to represent the Choctaw Nation at numerous events. They represent our Choctaw people with honor, especially when they help with the services of those who have served in our military and passed on,” said Chief Batton. The requirements are fairly simple for Choctaw Veterans who want to join. Applicants must have an honorable discharge or be currently serving. Members must be able to march long distances and have reliable transportation. There is no age limit, but those who apply must have CDIB membership. If you are needing to request the services of the Choctaw Color Guard, please contact the Veterans Advocacy department at (800) 522-6170 ext. 2160.

Pastor Olin Williams Groups of Believers



Pastor Olin Williams
Employee Chaplain

In the 26th chapter of Matthew, verses 20-23, verses 33-43, and verses 47-50, we read about the dispersion of Jesus and the disciples. At the supper table, Jesus said, “One of you shall betray me.” The disciples asked, “Lord, is it I?” Jesus said “He it is, to whom I shall give a sop.” And He took it and gave it to Judas and Judas went out. Jesus left and went to Gethsemane to pray. Since Judas had left, there were 11 with Him. When He got to the edge of the Garden, He said, “Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.” He must have said that to the eight because He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee. To them He said, “Tarry ye here, and watch with me.” He went a little further and prayed, “Not my will, but thine, be done.” We find three groups here if we exclude Judas and his group. First the group of eight who sat on the edge. Second the three who went a little deeper into the Garden with Jesus. And then Jesus alone praying to the Father, “If it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.” It appears to be the same in our modern day church. Jesus and the Father still in the same position, willing for us to be closer to them. There is a small group who is a little closer to Jesus. However, the larger group is just on the edge. Actually, that group of eight was closer to Judas than they were to Jesus. Judas and the scribes and Pharisees were on the outside, but were close by, ready to betray Jesus. We have in our churches today many who are in this larger group, “Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof,” 2 Timothy 3:5. The majority of religious people is on the periphery of church life and is closer to the secular views than the life of the Garden of Gethsemane. C. Austin Miles in the hymn titled, “In the Garden,” wrote, “I’d stay in the garden with Him.” We have to question ourselves which direction we are going.

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CELEBRATING 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHOCTAW CODE TALKERS



VETERANS DAY
CELEBRATION 2018

10:00 a.m. | November 10, 2018
Choctaw Capitol Grounds | Tvshka Homma

Honoring Our Veterans

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

There will be a drawing for:
3-Day weekend deer hunt at the Choctaw Hunting Lodge
3 days, 3 nights at Choctaw Hunting Lodge
All meals provided
(must be present to win. Subject to verification of CDIB and Veteran eligibility)

CHOCTAWNATION.COM

Reserve your 2019 Labor Day RV Site

To reserve a RV site with electric and water hookups for the 2019 Labor Day Festival, please mail this reservation request form **no earlier than Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2019**. No phone reservations will be accepted. Please include a copy of your **CDIB card only**.
RV sites will be assigned on a lottery style basis.
PLEASE DO NOT SEND ANY MONEY AT THIS TIME.
You will be notified by mail if you received a space.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Daytime Phone # _____ Cellphone # _____

RV Camper description: **(Please make sure this is completely filled out).**

Please circle Trailer type: Bumper Pull Trailer 5th Wheel RV

Please circle which amp is required: 30 amp or 50 amp

Make: _____ Model _____

Length of RV/Trailer _____ Number of slide-outs _____

If the size of your trailer changes before the festival, **you must notify us**. Failure to notify could result in not having a space to park your trailer/RV due to size restrictions.

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 only send one reservation per family.**

No reservations will be accepted before Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2019.

****NEW MAILING ADDRESS****

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
Attn: Janita Jeffreys
RV Reservations
20 Sandstone Road
Durant, OK 74701