



Doris hits 30-year mark with CNO

Page 5



Rattan a JOM exemplary school

Page 11



Fun day at Safety Camp

Page 13

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CHOCTAW NATION

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The Official Publication of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

April 2013 Issue

Tribal Council meets in regular March session

The Choctaw Nation Tribal Council met in regular session on March 9 at Tvshka Homma. Council members voted to:

- Approve budget for the Injury Prevention Program to continue.
- Approve the disposal of surplus vehicles by the Fixed Assets Department.
- Approve a grant proposal to receive funds for Family Violence Prevention Program.
- Approve the filing dates, election dates and election ordinance for the 2013 Choctaw Nation elections.
- Approve applications for legal assistance for Victims Grant Program, Native American Career and Technical Education Program (NACTEP), Food Distribution Program-Nutrition Education, Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation COPS Tribal Hiring Grant, Renewable Energy Project Development Assistance, Indian Community Development Block Grant Program and Vocational Rehabilitation Services Project for American Indians with Disabilities.

The Choctaw Nation Tribal Council holds its regular session at 10 a.m. on the second Saturday of each month in the Council Chambers at Tvshka Homma.

District elections filing dates set

The filing dates for the upcoming tribal elections for Councilpersons in District 4, District 6, District 7, District 9, District 10 and District 12 have been set for May 20-22. The election will be held on July 13. A runoff election, if needed, will be held Aug. 3. Filing will be held from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Choctaw Nation Election Board, located at the Tribal Complex in Durant. Candidates must file in person.



What's inside

Columns	2
Notes to the Nation.....	3
Nursery News.....	4
Food Distribution	4
People You Know	6
Education.....	7
Obituaries	10-11
Iti Fabvssa	14

The Mission of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

To enhance the lives of all members through opportunities designed to develop healthy, successful and productive lifestyles.

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<http://www.choctawnation.com/newsroom/biskinik-newspaper-archive/>



Pyle appointed to NMAI Board of Directors

By **CHRISSY SHEPARD**
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

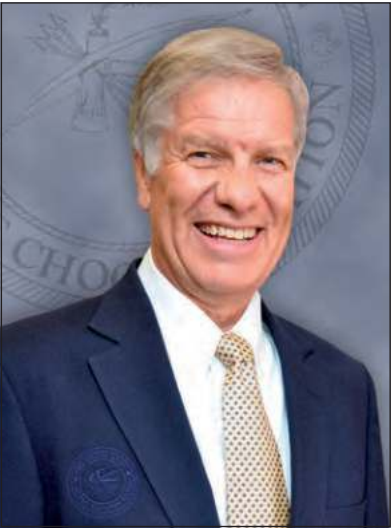
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Chief Gregory E. Pyle was appointed as one of five new members of the Board of Directors of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI), located in Washington, D.C., and New York, on March 7. Pyle and his fellow board members will serve three-year terms.

Serving with Pyle are Gov. Bill Anoatubby (Chickasaw), Margaret L. Brown (Yup'ik), Dr. Brenda Child (Ojibwa) and Lance Morgan (Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska), according to Indian Country Today Media Network.

The individuals serving on the Board of Directors are nominated by the NMAI's Board of Trustees, which is made up of 25 members, 18 being Native American. Following the nominations, the Smithsonian's Board of Regents issues the final appointments to the Board of Directors.

According to Kevin Gover, NMAI director, the Board of Regents is comprised of several notable individuals, including the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court as chancellor of the Smithsonian as well as the Vice President of the United States.

Other members of the Board of Regents include three senators, three congressmen and nine



CHIEF GREGORY E. PYLE

citizens.

"This museum board was established in 1989, when the museum itself was established," stated Gover.

As a board member, Pyle will work to support the NMAI's mission statement: the museum is committed to advancing knowledge and understanding of the Native cultures of the Western hemisphere – past, present and future – through partnership with Native people and others. NMAI works to support the continuance of culture, traditional values and transitions in contemporary Native life.

"Serving on the NMAI Board of Directors is a worthwhile endeavor," said Pyle. "My first meeting was extremely educational, and I am

excited to be working with people from across the United States to help the museum meet its mission."

Gover is anxious to witness what his new board members will bring to the museum. According to a museum press release, Gover stated, "We look forward to working with this new group of board members who bring a depth of experience and deep knowledge of working with Native constituents and communities. They will be essential in helping to determine future directions taken by the museum."

Gover and Chief Pyle have worked together since Gover served as Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs from 1997 to 2000. Their connection was renewed a few years ago when the Choctaw Nation held its first Choctaw Days event at the NMAI Washington, D.C., location. "Choctaw Days was just terrific," said Gover. "That's when the Choctaw Nation became a major supporter of the museum."

Gover said he was thankful for the Choctaw Nation's event, and he thought Chief Pyle would be a great addition to his Board of Directors. After he asked Pyle, Gover said, "he responded enthusiastically," and agreed to the nomination to the board. "He really fits the bill in a number of respects, and we're grateful to have him."

Gover said the Board of Directors' responsibilities include ensuring the cultural integrity of our program.

"As a tribal leader, Pyle is able to help us do that," he added.

Pyle said, "The Choctaw Nation is experiencing a tremendous interest from our citizens and the public in our authentic culture and traditions. In fact, I think an interest in all Native cultures can be seen from across the world."

"The NMAI helps to share that information globally," he added. "I am honored to be included on the board."

The NMAI is looking to put itself in a more business-like posture, Gover said. "The economic success of the Choctaw Nation while Pyle has been Chief is a major factor of why we've added him to the board."

Chief Pyle, of Durant, Okla., has served as Chief of the Choctaw Nation for over 15 years, after serving more than 13 years as the Assistant Chief of the nation. He has negotiated millions of dollars in new contracts for the tribe, as well as expanded existing programs and initiated many innovative services.

Under the positive leadership of Chief Pyle, the Choctaw Nation has put families first, with priorities on education, health and jobs. Deep involvement in economic development has resulted in profitable tribal businesses, such as gaming centers, manufacturing plants and travel plazas, creating numerous jobs and funding tribal programs.

For more information on the NMAI, visit americanindian.si.edu.



Choctaw Nation: BRET MOSS

Community leaders from the Atoka area dedicate a storm shelter at the Hillcrest Baptist Church in Atoka.

City of Atoka installs six new storm shelters

Remaining money from benefit concert funds new cellars for area residents

By **BRET MOSS**
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Though it has been nearly two years since an EF3 tornado marred the city of Tushka, work towards full recovery and heightened safety measures have not ceased in Atoka County. Community leaders gathered March 5 to dedicate six new storm shelters dispersed throughout the Tushka/Atoka area.

The shelters are large underground cellars designed to hold a considerable number of people in case of another tornado. They are located at:

- Pleasant View Freewill Baptist Church, 503 Star Road, Atoka
- New Zion Methodist Church, Boggy Depot Road East, near For-

rest Hill Road.

- Posey Park, on the East side of Atoka at the corner of Kentucky and B Street.
- The old Choctaw Community Center, 1410 S. Gin Road, Atoka
- Southside Baptist Church, 1200 S. McNally Drive, Atoka
- Hillcrest Baptist Church, 335 E. Highway 3, Atoka

Two of the shelters measure 6-by-6-by-16 feet, with the remaining four measuring 6-by-6-by-24 feet. All shelters are FEMA approved and are highly capable of protecting occupants from strong winds. The cellars are buried deep in the ground with concrete filling the bottom portion around the metal casing, anchoring it firmly in the earth.

According to Pastor Victor Cook, member of Atoka County Tornado Organization for Recovery (ACTOR), the shelters are designed to comfortably hold 12 people in the smaller cellars and 25 in the large ones. He went on to mention that even though these were the numbers assigned to the shelters, many more would be able to access safety during emergencies.

The shelters were purchased from Standard Machine in McAlester and installed by Keith Southerland, both

of whom, according to Cook, worked favorable deals for the community. The purchasing and installation price summed up to \$50,480, slightly more than the funds remaining from the Reba McIntire and Blake Shelton benefit concerts hosted at the Choctaw Event Center following the devastation of 2011.

Picking up the remainder of the bill was the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. "We are so grateful for the Choctaw Nation, we couldn't have done this without them," said ACTOR member Dr. Steve Havener, as he addressed Choctaw Nation's Atoka County Councilman Anthony Dillard during the dedication. "We do appreciate all the tribe has done," echoed LaQuita Thornley.

"Everybody has really been excited to get the cellars," stated Cook. It is going to benefit a lot of people, because many residents don't have their own storm shelters, he continued as he discussed the community's need for this improvement.

According to Cook, the locations were selected based on the disbursement throughout the community as well as the availability of entities to maintain and supervise them. He stated that the churches and the city have been cooperative in accepting

responsibility for the shelters, both in the upkeep and manning them in cases of emergency.

The installment of the shelters came as the third project made possible by the benefit concerts, where over \$500,000 was raised. The first two projects were to get people back into their homes and to clean up the immediate devastation.

These first two steps were extensive, requiring both a large amount of time and money. Through this work, the ACTOR was assembled. ACTOR has been behind much of the recovery and the planning for future readiness. ACTOR was formed by INCA Community Services, a national community action agency that took the reins once FEMA finished its immediate aid.

INCA has been the administration behind much of the relief efforts. It organized volunteer work, making sure everyone was working in the most effective way to rebuild, and handled the funds used to do such work. Six core personnel with 30 volunteers comprise the INCA efforts involved in rebuilding the Tushka area. INCA also assisted ACTOR by coordinating bids for the shelters and helping find the locations.

Paths to success for our future leaders



From the Desk of Chief Gregory E. Pyle

Easter seemed to pass early this year, with the usual flurry of celebrations that included egg hunts, family and food and church.

As I age in years (and hopefully knowledge) I enjoy these traditions, especially the church and Bible studies more and more, and find that the prayers for wisdom are enriched with scriptural application to everyday responsibilities.

A portion of the long-term vision of the Choctaw Nation is to have available opportunity for training and education for employees and citizens.

These education tools are necessary in order to have a chance for success at whatever endeavors and goals are set before them.

In recent Bible studies on leadership, I

noticed that the scriptures support the same principles we value in our staff.

Marks of a good leader:

Is fair to all...Deuteronomy 13: 1-3

Is courageous...Deuteronomy 13: 1-3

Is an active listener...Deuteronomy 13: 1-3 and Proverbs 18:13

Doesn't penalize people for honesty...Proverbs 17:26

Is open to new ideas...Proverbs 18: 15

Accepts responsibility...1 Chronicles 21:8

Must not ignore their families...1 Kings 1:6

Must be God-serving...1 Kings 2:5-7

Puts the best interests of others above their own...1 Kings 12: 15-19

Shows respect for others...1 Chronicles 10: 11-12

Leads by example...Nehemiah 3:1

Has integrity...Nehemiah 7:2

Must be accountable...Isaiah 3:14

Keeps focused...Acts 6:2-4

Are servants...Matthew: 20:27

Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant...Luke 22:24-27

Choctaw University is in its second year – there are accredited classes for employees to receive professional development training, build knowledge and improve skills to be more efficient and productive leaders.

Choctaw U is an important partner in the menu of education programs of the Choctaw Nation, fulfilling a responsibility to the 100-year vision. The Choctaw Nation supports proven programs such as Career Development, scholarship programs, Head Start, Adult Ed, academic recognition and other services that move Choctaw citizens on the path to success. As tribal members continue to flourish, the Choctaw Nation grows with pride, hope and success!

Three new Choctaw community centers

From the Desk of Assistant Chief Gary Batton

People at Antlers were the first to cut the ribbon to a newly constructed community center last month, and all 12 Tribal Council members were passing around the drawings to a couple more centers that are soon to be built!

Bethel and McAlester are also going to be celebrating new centers in the very near future. So although Councilman Jack Austin of Antlers had the biggest grin in March, Tony Messenger took his drawing of the soon-to-be North McCurtain County Bethel center to show his constituents, and

Bob Pate of McAlester was happy to know his meetings would also soon be held in a new facility.

Chief Pyle and I, along with all the Council members, are thrilled to see these construction projects. The Bethel Center being replaced was the first center built in 1978. The brand new one is going to be located on a larger plot of property, more convenient to the current population of elders who frequent the weekly luncheons – and will seat a much larger crowd. The Antlers Center just opened replaced a building that had been “added on” several times. The new one is adjacent and is absolutely beautiful! In McAlester, the

planned center will be built with ample parking for guests, and the facility will have more space for luncheons and meetings.

All 17 of the Choctaw centers are the hub of activities and services for many of our tribal citizens and elders in the regions of Choctaw Nation.

The Council and the representatives of programs have offices, and classes are often held on traditional crafts and language. The anticipation and excitement over the newer, larger facilities is easy to understand! Congratulations to the Council and to the citizens of Choctaw Nation!



Red vs. Blue

Durant Fire and Police Departments go head-to-head in recycling contest

The Red (Durant Fire and Rescue) is taking on the Blue (Durant Police Department) for the Great American Cleanup Recycling Contest, going on now through May 10.

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma is partnering with the police and fire departments, the City of Durant, Durant Solid Waste and the Durant Chamber of Commerce in an effort to raise awareness and involvement in recycling. Everyone is encouraged to support the department of their choice by saving and dropping off materials.

Two drop-off locations are located in Durant – in the old Goody's Store parking lot on the east side of the building and by the office complex at 1415 W. Main St. Each department will have its own recycling bin, clearly marked.

At the end of the contest, the total recyclable materials will be tallied and the winner will be announced May 31 at the Magnolia Festival.

Acceptable materials include:

- plastics 1, 2 and 5
- shredded paper
- newspaper
- magazines/catalogs
- printer/toner cartridges
- tin cans
- aluminum cans
- Styrofoam
- cardboard
- electronics*
- tires**

Electronics, including cell phones, must be delivered to the Choctaw Recycling Center, 3408 Wes Watkins Blvd. in Durant. Tires, not more than 14 inches wide or 44 inches in diameter, can be from cars and light trucks, motorcycles, mopeds, school buses, school automobiles, government vehicles, farm-tagged vehicles, commercial trucks and semi-trucks.

A ribbon cutting was held March 25 at the new Choctaw Community Center in Antlers.

Choctaw Nation: LISA REED

Chaplain's Corner

The struggle to do right

May you have an enjoyable and safe summer. We pray for the various activities the Choctaw Nation has scheduled.

As a Christian, you have struggles in your life. There will be victories and there will be defeats in your life. As long as we are still in the flesh this struggle will continue in our lives. This struggle to do right, obey God, and to do wrong, to disobey God.

The end of this struggle, between the flesh and the Spirit, will end only when Jesus Christ returns and takes us up to be with Himself. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

I want to encourage you though, you don't have to live a defeated life. Satan can hold out against every power known, except one – the power of the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

Jesus Christ has delivered us from the penalty of sin, which is death, at the cross. And as we study His Word, letting Him control our lives, we can have power over sin now.

Then when He comes back for His own in the clouds we shall be delivered from even the presence of sin. We thank God and praise Him for His only begotten Son who has conquered Satan.

Many of us want the power to win victory over sin, but we are not prepared to pay the price. What's the price for getting prepared, you might ask?

First, it is repentance, a complete turn around, turning away from sin. There is no use seeking the joys of spiritual life and at the same time holding in our minds thoughts of the pleasures of sin.

The sinful imagination will always beat us. The imagination being stronger than the will. If we are wholehearted in wanting God to remove from us the domination of our old evil nature, He can do it, but it requires this act of the will of repentance on our part.

There are many people who say, "I am going to get rid of my bad habits first." They don't seem to realize that if they could get rid of the problems themselves they would not need to come to God for power.

The New Testament makes it plain that Jesus Christ does not expect us to come to Him because we are worthy, rather He calls us to come to Him, "just as we are." And He has promised, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

Jesus Christ insists that we turn our backs on the evil past and follow Him. None of us can compromise with the evil and get away with it.

Look at what happened to Samson in the Book of Judges. Samson tried to



REV. BERTRAM BOBB
Tribal Chaplain

compromise with the evil and get away with it. From the time Samson was a baby this young strong man had been dedicated by his parents to a holy life.

You would think that Samson would at least have married a girl of his own religion, but instead he fell in love with a heathen Philistine woman. In spite of the heartbroken protests of his parents, he persisted in his plans to marry her.

At their wedding feast, Samson put forth his famous riddle, "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness" (Judges 14:14).

Unable to solve the riddle, the Philistines prevailed on the bride to learn the answer from her husband.

Samson was physically strong but was like putty in the hands of a tearful woman. Having given away his secret, he lost his temper and the final result was murder and a wrecked marriage.

Samson now had a double reason for keeping away from the Philistines. They were after his blood because he had killed so many of their people, and their woman had proved unfaithful. But some strange fascination drew him back and he allowed himself to fall in love with another Philistine girl, this time the notorious Delilah.

The Philistines were seeking to destroy Samson, but they were unable to do so because of his great strength. They prevailed on Delilah to coax Samson to reveal his secret.

Once more this strong man was like clay in the hands of a beautiful woman, and Samson fell again. He confided in her that his strength lay in his hair, which had never been cut from the day of his birth. Delilah caught him with he was asleep, and with the help of a Philistine, cut off his flowing locks. When he awoke he was as other men. The Philistine captured him and put out his eyes, making him a prisoner and a slave.

No man can compromise with evil and get away with it. If we really want the victory we must turn our backs completely on whatever may have caused our downfall in the past. It is highly dangerous to toy with evil.

God's power is found without question in His Words, the Bible.

Perhaps you have trusted Jesus Christ as your Savior but He does not have complete control of your life. You can let him take over your life today.

You can trust Him to be born again into God's family and begin to live this victorious Christian life.

Pray for America and for our leaders. Pray for our brave men and women in service.

Chilocco Indian School reunion date set, seeking classmates

For more information about the reunion, or if you have any information on the above mentioned individuals, the following may be contacted: Ida Jane (McCoy) Johnson at 601 Rolling Hills Dr., Tahlequah, OK 74464 or 918-284-1703; or Betty J. (Tanner) Belt at 1005 S. State Ave., Tahlequah, OK 74464 or 918-859-0664.

A special thanks to the Choctaw Nation Honor Guard for its tribute to a fallen warrior, Councilman Tony Messenger for his words of encouragement, the elders of the Broken Bow senior center, the staff and cooks of the Antlers community center, the Choctaw singers for their beautiful hymns in Choctaw, Rev. Ernie Baker, aunt Fay, cousin Bitsie and all of our relatives and friends. Your kindness and time will help heal our broken hearts.

Seeking information

Jr. Wilson

Choctaw appreciative of Heritage Day in Phoenix

Thanks again for bringing the Choctaw heritage to Phoenix!

J. Robert White

Storyteller recalls Trail of Tears Walk

It is always good to come back to the grounds of Choctaw Nation, and I look forward to coming back. Yakoke, Chief Pyle.

Stella Long, Storyteller

Gregory E. Pyle
Chief

Gary Batton
Assistant Chief

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

The BISKINIK is a nonprofit publication of the Choctaw Nation.

Circulation is monthly. Article deadline is the 10th of the month for the following month's edition.

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.

BISKINIK 2013

LeFlore High School Alumni banquet

The 54th annual LeFlore High School Alumni and Former Students' Association Banquet will be held May 11 at the LeFlore High School gym. Registration begins at 5 p.m. and dinner at 7 p.m. If you are a former student or graduate of LeFlore High School, make plans to come and get reacquainted with your old classmates. For more information, contact Susan Cantwell at 918-647-6327 or email smcantwell2000@yahoo.com.

Noahubi-Columbus-Battiest family reunion

The Noahubi-Columbus-Battiest family reunion will be held on May 11 at the Broken Bow city park from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. All family and friends are invited to attend. Please bring prizes for Bingo and other games, a covered dish, lawn chairs and old photos to share memories. For more information, please call Louise (Tonihka) Laney at 580-286-3647 or Flo Fairless at 580-241-5313.

Phase I Choctaw language class in Muskogee

If you have any questions concerning the class, call Frazier at 918-685-0058.

Williams family reunion

The family and friends of the late Emma Jean and Dennis Williams Jr. will be gathering for a day of socializing and fun at the Stager W Ranch, home of Donna and Nathan Williams, on May 25 from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. A meal will be provided, please bring a side dish or dessert. Go one mile east of Idabel from Valero/Roadrunner Station. Turn right to Williams Way. For more information, please call 580-212-3025.

All Nation's Frybread Showdown

For more information, please contact Couita Nucosee at 580-320-6179 or email at couita@wildblue.net.

Miss Choctaw Owa-Chito Princess Pageant

The Miss Choctaw Owa-Chito Princess Pageant is scheduled to take place on June 14 at 3 p.m. at Beavers Bend Resort Park, group camp no. 1. The Little Miss contestants must be ages 8 to 10, Jr. Miss ages 11 to 13 and Sr. Miss ages 14 to 18. Girls from all 10 1/2 counties of the Choctaw Nation are encouraged to participate. Applications can be picked up at the McCurtain County Boys and Girls Club of the Choctaw Nation, your local field office or Broken Bow and Idabel Chamber offices. Deadline for entries is May 27. For more information, call 580-584-3636.

Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma Inc.

If you are in need of assistance from an attorney with a civil legal problem, such as domestic violence, family law, consumer fraud or wrongful eviction or foreclosure, call Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma Inc. at 1-888-534-5243. LASO has offices located in Hugo, Norman, Poteau, McAlester and Shawnee.



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Arrowhead Pow Wow

April 20 • McAlester Expo
Hwy. 270 West of McAlester

Gourd Dancing: 3 p.m. - 5 p.m.
Grand Entry: 6:30 p.m.

*Honor dance for Choctaw Nation
District 11 Councilman Bob Pate*

Choctaw Nation Color Guard

Emcee: Archie Mason

Head Singer: Michael Whitecloud - Cheyenne Arapaho/Choctaw
Head Man: Michael Roberts - Choctaw/Chickasaw
Head Lady: Evelyn Kasworm - Southern Cheyenne
Head Gourd: Ira Kaulay Jr. - Kiowa
Arena Director: Bill Takeshorse - Crow

	Adults (16 and over)			All princesses
Fancy/Grass	\$300	\$200	\$100	welcome.
Tradition/Straight	\$300	\$200	\$100	Contestants' registration closes at 6 p.m.
Fancy Shawl/Jingle	\$300	\$200	\$100	Contestants must be in Grand Entry.
Buckskin/Cloth	\$300	\$200	\$100	Craft booths: \$35/ table space and donation of craft item.

Juniors (7-15)

Fancy/Grass	\$75	\$50	\$25
Tradition/Straight	\$75	\$50	\$25
Fancy Shawl/Jingle	\$75	\$50	\$25
Buckskin/Cloth	\$75	\$50	\$25

Tiny Tots (6 and under)

Contact information: Dena Cantrell
918-423-1016 or 918-421-0368

will have the only concession.
No drugs or alcohol allowed.

NURSERY NEWS

Kiya Nelson

Kiya Francine Nelson was born on Feb. 1, 2013, to Jonathan and Courtney Nelson. Kiya weighed 7 pounds 7 ounces, and measured 19.75 inches long. Her proud grandparents are Francis and Loretta Brown of Oklahoma City, and the late Catherine Louise Nelson. She also has three brothers, Manny, Craig and Dylan; and a sister, Lucia of Oklahoma City. Her family is very happy to have her in their lives and to complete their family.



Eric Duggin

Eric Landyn Robertson Duggin “Nita osi” was born March 3, 2013, in La Mesa, Calif. He weighed 7 pounds 14 ounces and measured 18 inches long. He was welcomed by his mother, Victoria Leanne Robertson Duggin of Ramona, Calif.; his late father, Brian Keith Hammet; grandparents, CWO-3 USMC, Ret., Karl and Mae Duggin of Ramona, and Dave Hammet of El Cajon, Calif.; and great-grandparents, Marilyn and George Cates of Bergman, Ariz.



Healthy eating for active lifestyle

For youth and adults engaging in physical activity and sports, healthy eating is essential for optimizing performance. Combining good nutrition with physical activity can lead to a healthier lifestyle.

WIC

WOMEN, INFANTS AND CHILDREN

- 1. Maximize with nutrient-packed foods**
Give your body the nutrients it needs by eating a variety of nutrient-packed food, including whole grains, lean protein, fruits and vegetables, and low-fat or fat-free dairy. Eat less food high in solid fats, added sugars, and sodium (salt).
- 2. Energize with grains**
Your body’s quickest energy source comes from foods such as bread, pasta, oatmeal, cereals, and tortillas. Be sure to make at least half of your grain food choices whole-grain foods like whole-wheat bread or pasta and brown rice.
- 3. Power up with protein**
Protein is essential for building and repairing muscle. Choose lean or low-fat cuts of beef or pork, and skinless chicken or turkey. Get your protein from seafood twice a week. Quality protein sources come from plant based foods, too.
- 4. Mix it up with plant protein foods**
Variety is great! Choose beans and peas (kidney, pinto, black, or white beans; split peas; chickpeas; hummus), soy products (tofu, tempeh, veggie burgers), and unsalted nuts and seeds.
- 5. Vary your fruits and vegetables**
Get the nutrients your body needs by eating a variety of colors, in various ways. Try blue, red, or black berries; red and yellow peppers; and dark greens like spinach and kale. Choose fresh, frozen, low-sodium canned, dried, or 100 percent juice options.
- 6. Don’t forget dairy**
Foods like fat-free and low-fat milk, cheese, yogurt, and fortified soy beverages (soy milk) help to build and maintain strong bones needed for everyday activities.
- 7. Balance your meals**
Use MyPlate as a reminder to include all food groups each day. Learn more at www.ChooseMyPlate.gov.
- 8. Drink water**
Stay hydrated by drinking water instead of sugary drinks. Keep a reusable water bottle with you to always have water on hand.
- 9. Know how much to eat**
Get personalized nutrition information based on your age, gender, height, weight, current physical activity level, and other factors. Use SuperTracker to determine your calorie needs, plan a diet that’s right for you, and track progress toward your goals. Learn more at www.SuperTracker.usda.gov.
- 10. Reach your goals**
Earn Presidential recognition for reaching your healthy eating and physical activity goals. Log on to www.presidentschallenge.org to sign up for the Presidential Active Lifestyle Award (PALA+).



Free help

Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline

1 800

QUIT NOW

784-8669 OKhelpline.com

Foster parents are heroes.

Are you ready to be one?



The Foster Care program is seeking Choctaw families to provide a temporary home to our foster children in the 10.5 counties. A foster family is part of a team that works toward reunifying a child with their family. They play an important role in maintaining the child’s social and cultural heritage while serving as a temporary parent to the child and providing for their basic needs. Today, there are many Choctaw children that need strong, Choctaw families to help them during their time of need. If you are interested in becoming a temporary foster family for a child or have questions regarding the program, please contact Larry Behrens, Choctaw Foster Care Program @ 580-924-8280 Ext. 2331.

Detecting air leaks cuts energy costs

Sealing your home from unwanted airflow can mean considerable savings on energy cost. A visual inspection can detect possible air leaks which increase energy consumption.

On the outside of your house, inspect all areas where two different building materials meet, including:

- All exterior corners
 - Outdoor water faucets
 - Where siding and chimneys meet
 - Areas where the foundation and the bottom of exterior brick or siding meet.
- Inside your home, inspect around the following areas for any cracks and gaps that could cause air leaks, such as:
- Electrical outlets
 - Switch plates
 - Door and window frames
 - Electrical and gas service entrances
 - Baseboards
 - Weather stripping around doors
 - Fireplace dampers
 - Attic hatches
 - Wall- or window-mounted air conditioners.
 - Cable TV and phone lines

- Where dryer vents pass through walls
- Vents and fans.

Also look for gaps around pipes and wires, foundation seals, and mail slots. Check to see if the caulking and weather stripping are applied properly, leaving no gaps or cracks, and are in good condition. Check the exterior caulking around doors and windows, and see whether exterior storm doors and primary doors seal tightly.

Inspect windows and doors for air leaks. See if you can rattle them, since movement means possible air leaks. If you can see daylight around a door or window frame, then the door or window leaks. You can usually seal these leaks by caulking or weatherstripping them. Check the storm windows to see if they fit and are not broken.

You may also consider replacing your old windows and doors with newer, high-performance ones. If new factory-made doors or windows are too costly, you can install low-cost plastic sheets over the windows.

Recipe of the Month

Zippy Zonya Mexi Mix

Recipe provided by Heart-Healthy Living

Ingredients:

- 5 teaspoons chili powder
- 4 teaspoons ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon cumin seed (optional)
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon dried minced onion
- 1/8 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional)

Directions:

In a small bowl combine all ingredients. Store for up to 1 month in a self-sealing plastic bag or covered container.

Nutrition Facts:

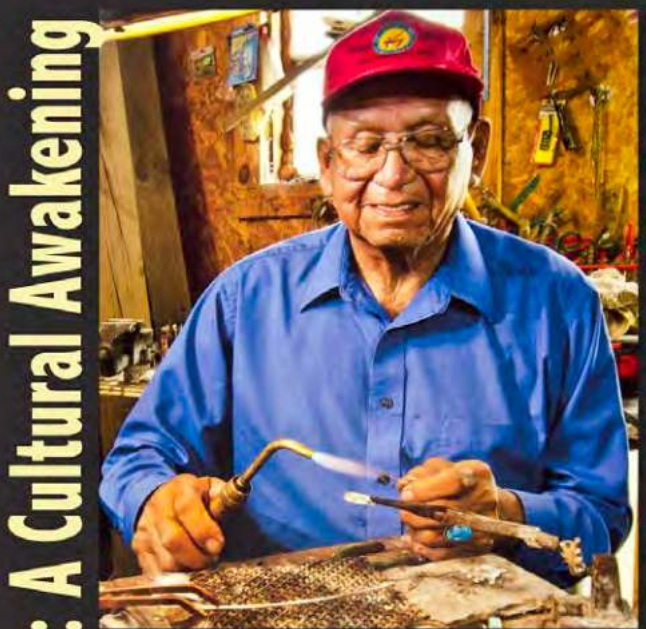
Calories - og, Fat - og, Carbs - og, Protein - og, Sodium - og
For more information you may contact: Erin Adams, RD, Choctaw Nation Diabetes Wellness Center, 800-349-7026 ext. 6959.

Choctaw Nation WIC

WOMEN, INFANTS and CHILDREN



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



Choctaw: A Cultural Awakening

A 200-page treasure to be handed down through generations: In “Choctaw: A Cultural Awakening,” award-winning photographer David Fitzgerald has captured dramatic images of Choctaw legends, historians, artists, and more – people and places throughout the country. You can have this collection of history and photos by calling 888-932-9191 or logging on to choctawstore.com. “Choctaw: A Cultural Awakening” is \$35 + shipping/handling. It can also be purchased at the Tribal Headquarters and Bookstore in Durant, the Museum in Tuskahoma, Wheelock Gift Shop in Millerton.



Orlando Wahtenberg, Pastor Melvin Gaines, Isaac Sexton, Junior Blaine, Silas Blaine, Shannon McDaniel, Councilman Ted Dosh, Carl Marlow and Lorene Blaine, commemorate the new look of thier church following an act of vandalism.

Sulphur Springs Church remodeling dedication

Following an act of vandalism, Sulphur Springs Church held a dedication program to honor those who helped restore the facility from its defaced state.

The ceremony was held prior to morning services on March 17. Several were recognized for contributions to the aid of the church, including Marlow Construction and the Choctaw Nation.

Plaques were given to individuals signifying special recognition. Shannon McDaniel, who accepted on behalf of Chief Pyle, and Councilman Ted Dosh received plaques, as well as Carl Marlow from Marlow Construction and members of the board of trustees for the church, which included: Chairman Junior Blaine, Orlando Wahlandberg, Silas Blaine, John

Henry Choate, Franklin Choate, and Isaac Sexton.

“We appreciate all the support and help given to the church,” stated congregation member Lorene Blaine. “There was more work than we could handle... We called Ted [Dosh] right away,” she continued after describing finding the aftermath of the vandals.

The crime had only been committed a few weeks prior to the dedication, but the cooperative efforts of the church, Choctaw Nation and Marlow Construction made quick work of the task. “It couldn’t have been put together in such a short time without all the help,” said Blaine.

Sulphur Springs Church is located three miles south of Bennington on Jennings and Sulphur Springs Rd.

What does blood pressure mean to you?

Blood pressure is the force created when your heart pumps blood into your blood vessels. When blood pressure goes too high it can put you at risk for heart disease, kidney failure, and stroke. Treating high blood pressure is important to help you heart and kidneys. Sometimes people need to take medication to help manage blood pressure along with life style changes. Lifestyle changes that may help to lower blood pressure include:

- Losing weight – if you are overweight, weight loss of 5-10 percent of body weight can help improve blood pressure.
- Physical activity – 30 minutes of moderate activity most days of the week.

- Limit sodium – 1500-2000 mg of sodium in a day. Take salt off the table, avoid processed foods and be sure to read food labels.

- Follow the DASH diet – The DASH diet focuses on eating a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean meats, nuts and low fat dairy.

You should talk with your Medical Provider at every appointment about your blood pressure numbers and what these numbers mean for you and your health.

If you are want a zesty way to season your foods without sodium? Try the seasoning mix featured in the “Recipe of the Month.” It is great for replacing package taco seasoning mixes.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION

ANTLERS

Market open weekdays May 1-29 , except for:

May 1 : Idabel 9-11 a.m.; Broken Bow 12-2 p.m. (market open)

May 8: Bethel 9-10:30; Smithville 12-2 (market open)

Closed May 27 for holiday and 30-31 for inventory.

Cooking with Carmen: May 10 & 20, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

DURANT

Market open weekdays May 1-29, except for:

Closed May 27 for holiday and 30-31 for inventory.

Cooking with Carmen: May 9 & 22, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

McALESTER

Market open weekdays May 1-29, except for:

Closed May 27 for holiday and 30-31 for inventory.

Cooking with Carmen: May 3 & 16, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

POTEAU

Market open weekdays May 1-29, except for:

Closed May 27 for holiday and 30-31 for inventory.

Cooking with Carmen: May 6 & 24, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

CHOCTAW NATION FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Open 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Monday thru Friday. Staff will take lunch from 11:30 to 12 noon.

WAREHOUSES & MARKETS

Antlers: 306 S.W. “O” St., 580-298-6443

Durant: 100 1/2 Waldron Dr., 580-924-7773

McAlester: 1212 S. Main St., 918-420-5716

Poteau: 100 Kerr, 918-649-0431

FOOD DISTRIBUTION SITES

Bethel: Choctaw Community Building

Broken Bow: Choctaw Family Investment Center

Idabel: Choctaw Community Center

Smithville: Choctaw Community Center

Stigler: Choctaw Community Center

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SENIOR DAY 2013

UNLEASH
THE POWER
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Events include:

Singing Contest

Name Tag Contest

Traditional Fashion Show

May 22, 2013

10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

McAlester Expo Center

Call 800.522.6170 x 2448, 272, or 4016 for info

Tribal employee does her part to better the community

Purchasing employee Connie Zalenski recycles at her home, no longer has to pay a trash bill

By **CHRISSY SHEPARD**

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma continually promotes its “going green” efforts, and one tribal employee is not only bettering her community through her recycling habit at home, but is saving money in the process.

For the past two years, purchasing department employee Connie Zalenski has recycled all of her household trash using the recycling bin located at the Tribal Headquarters building where she works, which has saved her an average of over \$200 a year. She brings a load of materials (2-4 bags) weekly, or every other week at times.

“I save an average of \$20 a month,” she said, because she no longer has to pay her trash bill.

Connie said she initially became aware of the importance of recycling when the tribe made the big push to go green. “I’ll try this,” she recalled.

Choctaw Nation Director of Project Management Tracy Horst complimented Connie on her efforts. “I have gotten to know Connie over that last couple of years, and I think what she is doing is great,” she said.

Not only does recycling save Connie money each month, it saves her time and work. “I live out in the country, so naturally, sometimes when you leave your trash out, animals get into it,” she explained. “I no longer have to clean up a big mess outside when that happens, and I no longer have to worry about putting the trash out.”

Recycling has made her home and yard look cleaner and neater without the trash in the driveway, she added.

Tracy provided some advice for recycling at home. “The best way to start at home is to designate an area of your home for recyclable material collection, much like you have a location for trash collection,” she explained. “You can purchase inexpensive trash cans and label them with names of the items you are planning to collect, so it makes it easy for everyone in the home, or visitors, to use.”

Connie’s three children and nephew visit her home often, all being out of high school, except for her nephew, who is 16. She seems to always have a full house in the summertime.

“At first, my whole family went into shock,” Connie said, laughing, recalling how she gathers up materials after family meals she knows are coming. “But now, it’s funny after two years to see family automatically go rinse their stuff off and put it into the recycling bins in the laundry room.”

Connie said her daughter, who is currently working on getting her master’s degree, will bring her items to recycle from her apartment. “My son will come home from college,



Choctaw Nation: CHRISSY SHEPARD

Connie drops off recycled materials at the recycling bin at the Tribal Complex building that she’s collected at her home.

and anything he’s bought along the drive that he might throw away, he’ll now bring into the house to recycle it,” she said. “He’ll bring his stuff in and pat me on the back.”

Connie’s oldest son, Waddell Hearn, is also an employee of the Choctaw Nation and thinks highly of his mother. “I think it’s just awesome what she is doing,” he said. “My mom has always been an inspiration in my life in that she works hard and does her very best at what she puts her mind to, and we are seeing that in her effort towards recycling.”

Not only is Connie serving as an example for her family, her recycling efforts have been noticed by her fellow community members. “When I first started, people at my church would bring me their materials to be recycled,” she said.

Now, Connie is proud to say her church members take their materials to the Travel Plaza recycling bin location. “I thought that was pretty cool,” he said.

Waddell said there is no doubt in his mind that his mother is inspiring others around her to recycle as well. “I think that she most certainly inspires others to recycle; she’s so passionate about recycling,” he said. “It just takes one person to lead, and actions speak louder than words, and her actions are definitely being seen.”

Connie is well organized in her recycling process at her home. She said she keeps three separate containers in her

laundry room, for plastic, cans and paper, which store her items she’s collected and separated. “I have really enjoyed doing it,” she said.

Along with recycling the materials she can at her home, Connie said she no longer uses paper plates and doesn’t see a problem with washing all her dishes.

“She has made a lot of progress over the past two years,” said Waddell. “And with the mindset she has, she will just keep progressing with recycling.”

The most common material Connie recycles, she said, is plastic bottles from juice, milk, sports drinks, etc., as well as egg cartons and toilet paper rolls.

“We can recycle all junk mail, catalogs, magazines, envelopes and all,” said Tracy. “Just about anything you have that is not food waste can be recycled.”

An important step one must keep in mind when recycling is to rinse off and out your materials, Connie said. “Some people don’t clean their stuff up as they recycle it, and those people at the recycling center work hard,” she explained. “You need to be courteous and clean your items.”

From having an influence on her children and her surrounding community, Connie has brought her positive attitude towards recycling to the workplace.

“We recycle as much as we can in the office,” she said. “We recycle old folders and paper, especially when we’re cleaning out our areas. There’s so much stuff you can recycle, it’s unreal.”

Connie respects the Choctaw Nation’s ongoing efforts in going green and preserving the environment. “I look at it this way,” she explained, “if it’s important to Chief Pyle and he asks us to do it, then we should do it.”

Tracy encourages everyone to begin recycling. “Recycling is really pretty easy, it just takes some practice,” she said. “If you have any questions, call us at the recycling center and we will be happy to try and help you out.”

Connie plans to continue her hobby and habit of recycling at home and encourages others to do the same. “When you see all the trash on the highway, it’s just sad,” she said. “We only have one Earth. We’re supposed to make it a better place.”

“We all have grandkids, and sooner or later, they will have to live in the mess we leave them,” she added.

“My mom genuinely enjoys bettering our environment so that we can continue to enjoy what God has created,” said Waddell.

If you have a question about recycling and would like to talk to a recycling center employee, please call 580-920-0488. The Choctaw Nation Recycling Center is located at 3408 Wes Watkins Blvd. in Durant.

Thirty years of service | Doris Ross celebrates 30-year anniversary with Choctaw Nation

By **CHRISSY SHEPARD**

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Not many people that have worked in the same job for 30 years can love their job and be as happy as tribal employee Doris Ross, director of Choctaw Nation Housing Authority’s Rental Assistance Program.

Unlike many employees at the Choctaw Nation, Doris hasn’t worked in various departments throughout her time as a tribal employee — she has proudly worked for Housing Authority all 30 years.

Doris said her job keeps her interested, and she is never bored. “Every day is different,” she added. “You can talk to different people all over, and even across the United States, which is interesting. It never gets boring.”

Her coworkers are one of her favorite parts about her job. “If I’m not talking to people who call me, I’m helping my coworkers,” Doris said. “The Housing Authority is like my family, we’re just one big happy family.”

Doris’ job duties vary, including taking care of reports to return to her executives, the tribe and her staff as well as monitoring her staff, answering questions for people who need help and call for assistance.

She said the main purpose of her department is to assist low-income families within the 10 ½ counties with their rent.

“Since I’m a tribal member, it satisfies me to work for my tribe,” she said. “It’s been very rewarding to do that in the position I am in.”

Her ability to speak Choctaw fluently is helpful with her day-to-day interactions and makes her a valuable employee for the Nation. “I speak Choctaw, so that helps me to assist the elders of our communities,” she said. “We still have elders who come in that

don’t speak English or who aren’t comfortable speaking English, so I’m kind of an interpreter.”

Through her years working for Housing, Doris has been involved in helping a lot of people, and she said that it has been a rewarding experience. “Everybody has needs, and I can relate to all of their needs,” she said. “It’s nice to have someone you can go to and get those needs taken care of.”

Doris said she is blessed to have great bosses as well. She worked with Assistant Chief Batton when he was an employee of Housing years ago, and she had nothing but good things to say about Chief Pyle. “I like both of them, they’re just wonderful,” she said, glancing at her 25-year anniversary photo with Chief and Assistant Chief hanging on her office wall. “They’re good people, and I like working for good people. I’ve always enjoyed those two guys.”

Doris said her experience as a tribal employee has been fulfilling and a great part of her life for 30 years, especially when she knows she has helped someone.

“Getting a thank you from someone we have worked really hard for, saying they’ve made it through their college years and telling us they don’t need our help anymore and thanking us for helping them, that makes us feel really good, when we’ve helped someone make a great accomplishment.”

She said she is thankful for the relationships she’s formed through working for Housing.

“All my days here are good days,” she said, smiling. “I’ve seen a lot of people coming through, and it seems like all of them were good employees. I think my department is a good department.”

Doris’ hobbies outside of the office include

playing Bingo, crocheting, pottery and basket weaving.

She also has a large family with whom she loves spending time. “I have 13 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren, so somebody always has a birthday,” she said, telling about how every month, her big family gets together for a birthday party. “It doesn’t matter how old that child is, we always have a party, we always have fun. I enjoy being with my family.”

Doris said she would recommend any young person seeking employment to apply to work for the Choctaw Nation. “They have so many advantages for young people and chances for advancement,” she stated.

“The benefits are so great, and I strongly push young people to seek tribal employment. Everybody is good to them, it doesn’t matter where down the line that person comes in at, everyone will welcome them, and it trickles on down.”

Doris has been an essential employee all



Choctaw Nation: CHRISSY SHEPARD

her 30 years working for the tribe, and the fact that she loves her job and enjoys every day at the office with her fellow employees she calls friends, makes her a special worker. “I love it and I enjoy it,” she said. “I guess that’s why I’ve been here for 30 years. I’m 70 years old, and I’m still not ready to go yet.”

The staff of Choctaw Nation’s STAR Program would like to remind all parents with children in second through 12th grades that the deadline for submission of documents is approaching. The final deadline for students to be awarded for the Spring semester is Oct. 1, but awards are processed as soon as all documents are received.

Requirements for all eligibility and incentives given are listed: Students must have Choctaw tribal membership, all A’s (\$25 Walmart gift card), all A’s and/or B’s (\$10 Walmart gift card), perfect attendance (\$25 Walmart gift card), and all students receiving an incentive will also receive a Choctaw STAR Student vehicle decal or certificate.

Required STAR documents are available online and are listed here: STAR application (one-time application), grade and attendance verification form (to be completed by a school official and returned once per semester), and copy of the semester report card. All of these documents may be submitted via mail, email or fax.

For more information about the STAR Program, please visit star.choctawnation.com or call 800-522-6170 ext. 2787. You may also visit the STAR Program’s Facebook, at facebook.com/choctawnationstar.

Welcome to Choctaw Farms

The Choctaw Casino & Resort offers a wide variety of delicious **Choctaw Farms** items in its gift shops!

Experience the very best in gourmet gift items including handcrafted jams, preserves and cheeses, all available at the Choctaw Casinos in **Durant, Pocola and Grant.**

Now available online too! Visit **choctawfarms.com**

WHAT CAN I RECYCLE?

Plastic #1 <small>With a neck or handle.</small>	Plastic #2 <small>With a neck or handle.</small>	Cell Phones
Newspaper	Office Paper	Magazines
Aluminum Cans	Print Cartridges	Styrofoam
Shredded Paper	Medicine Bottles	E-Waste <small>Anything that runs on Electricity.</small>
Phone Books	Cardboard	Steel Cans

Choctaw Nation Recycling

3408 Wes Watkins Blvd. Durant, OK 74701
(580) 920-0488

PEOPLE YOU KNOW

Happy birthday, Mason

Happy birthday to Mason Blaine Battiest, who celebrated his first birthday on Feb. 19 with his family. He enjoyed a dinner, cake and ice cream. Mason is the son of Gabi Miller and David Battiest. His grandparents, Gary and Jamie Battiest and Tamara Miller; great-grandmother Mary Watson; two special uncles, Michael Miller and R.J. Battiest; all of Wright City, wish him the best first birthday.



Happy 13th birthday

Happy 13th birthday to Alexis Faye Morgan on March 26, from her mother, Mary Lynn Morgan of Talihina.



Distracted driving a threat to community, organizations seek to lessen the problem

Submitted by CASSANDRA HERRING

Choctaw Nation Injury Prevention

With ever increasing demands on our personal and professional time in today's busy society, learning to juggle multiple tasks at once is something we all face daily. As a result, a new traffic safety epidemic has emerged on America's roadways that demands immediate attention: distracted driving.

In 2010, 3,092 people were killed in crashes involving a distracted driver. One of the most alarming and widespread forms of distracted driving is cell phone usage. According to a Carnegie Mellon study, driving while using a cell phone reduces the amount of brain activity associated with driving by 37 percent. A report from the National Safety Council found that more than one out of every four traffic accidents is caused by people talking on cell phones or sending text messages.

"Distracted driving is an epidemic on America's roadways, and we're doing our part to help put an end to it," said U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood. "Texting and cell phone use while driving is extremely dangerous, and we know simply getting drivers to turn their phones off when they get behind the wheel will make our roads significantly safer."

Text messaging is of heightened concern because it combines three types of distraction—visual, manual and cognitive. In other words, texting involves taking your eyes off the road, your hands off the wheel and your mind off the task of driving.

To tackle this ever increasing problem, NHTSA is focusing on ways to change the behavior of drivers through legislation, enforcement, public awareness and education—the same tactics that have curbed drinking and driving and increased seat belt use.

"Decades of experience with drunk driving and getting people to buckle up has taught us it takes a consistent combination of public education, effective enforcement, a committed judiciary and the collective efforts of local, state and national advocates to put a dent in the problem," said LaHood.

NHTSA's message is simple — "One Text or Call Could Wreck it All." With supporters ranging from President Obama to Oprah and legislation being passed across the nation to discourage distracted driving, we hope drivers get the message loud and clear.

So the next time you are pressed for time, and it seems like multitasking in the car is the best decision, remember those 3,092 lives that were taken because someone decided they could do two things at once. A text or call is not worth your life, or anyone else's.

Choctaw Nation Adult Education Program 16th Annual GED Graduation May 17, 2013 • 7 p.m. Eastern Oklahoma State College

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Adult Education Program's 16th annual GED graduation will be held at 7 p.m. on May 17 in Mitchell Auditorium on the campus of Eastern Oklahoma State College in Wilburton. If you plan to attend, please RSVP by May 3 by calling 800-522-6170 ext. 2319 or 2122.

GED graduates of the Choctaw Nation Adult Education Program between May 2012 through April 2013 are invited to participate in graduation ceremony; please call for more information if you'd like to attend.

6th Annual Jim Thorpe 5K Race

Native American 5K National Championship
Community 5K Run and
N.M. USATF 5K Road State Championship

Saturday, June 29

Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute
9169 Coors Rd. NW Albuquerque, NM
(Southeast of Paseo del Norte and Coord Blvd.)

Competitive Races:
5K Runs (All Divisions)
1K Kids Race (12 & Under)

Non-Competitive Races:
1 & 2 Mile Fitness Walks
300 Meter Toddler Dash

300 meter participants receive goodie bags. • Native design awards to top finishers. • Post-race refreshments with your entry. • Seven new state records set on this course. • Awards in multiple age divisions. • Special recognition awards: TBA.

5K Race Divisions:

- The Native American 5K National Championship is open to all American Indian/Alaska Natives and First Nations people of Canada.
- The NM 5K Road State Championship is open to all New Mexico USATF registered participants.
- The Community 5K Run is open to all with no restrictions.

All past and present Wings of America runners, facilitators, coaches, Board of Directors, staff and supporters are invited to join us for a renewal of friendship gathering.

For more information:
SportsWarriorsTC@aol.com
(505) 710-3323
SportsWarriorsTC.com

There will be a traditional Pueblo style throw open to everyone in attendance. • 100 percent of race proceeds support Sports Warriors Track Club Mission and Goals. • This race is certified and sanctioned by USATF of New Mexico.

Happy birthday, Cody

Happy birthday to Cody Cunningham, who will be 50 years young on April 10. His family, Caylee and Joe'al, hope he has a great birthday!

Anji wins NCAA National Swimming Champion title

Congratulations to Anji Wilson Shakya, a junior at the University of California, who finished first place in the 200 Freestyle event at the NCAA Division 2 National Swimming and Diving Championships held March 6-9 in Birmingham, Ala. With a time of 1:47.95, Anji's time was fast enough to beat out a field of 52 women from around the United States and Canada and win her first individual national title.

Anji earned All-American distinction in six of her seven events, including second place in the 500 Free and third place in the 100 Free. The now 13-time All-American and team captain also anchored her school's 400 and 800 Free relays into third place finishes and the 200 Free relay into a fourth place finish.

Anji is the granddaughter of the late Wilbor Owens Wilson of Ft. Towson and great-granddaughter of original enrollee Edward H. Wilson and Emma Everidge Wilson, also of Ft. Towson.

The Choctaw Nation Higher Education department has generously provided Anji with a scholarship so she can attend UCSD. She is majoring in Environmental Systems/Ecology, Behavior and Evolution.



Happy birthday, Michael

Michael Yuma Basura celebrated his fifth birthday on Feb. 15. He celebrated with a trip to Disneyland with his parents, Bruce and Melissa Basura, his brother, John, and sister Amanda. His grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins all wish him a happy birthday.



Happy 100th birthday to Rose

Happy birthday to Rose (Shilling) Page, who was born to W.C. and Mary Shilling 100 years ago on April 4, 1913, at Finley, Okla., in the Brair Branch community, where she still resides. Rose was a school teacher to many in Choctaw County. She married Brown Page and although never having children of her own, she was a second mother to all of her nieces and nephews. They were all welcome into her home at weeks at a time. Rose enjoyed hunting and fishing.



Happy birthday, Ronnie

Happy 15th birthday to Ronnie J. Smith Jr. on April 8. Ronnie is the son of Deloures and Ronnie J. Smith and brother to Danielle R. Smith. He is the nephew of Annett Johnson and grandson of Evelyn Johnson of Ardmore and Effie Smith of Sherman, Texas. His family hopes he has a great birthday.



Choctaw Nation Head Start employees 'pucker up' for a good cause

Submitted by DOUG RUSSELL
Stigler News Sentinel

Two staff members of the Choctaw Nation Head Start in Stigler recently got a hairy smooch for education.

Center supervisor Rebecca Good and family service worker Jessica Taylor were the "winners" of a "Kiss the Goat" contest, held to raise money for educational field trips. To the delight of the children and with good-na-

tured sportsmanship, the pair puckered up and doubled down, getting their kisses in quickly.

"We had three jars set up, one for them, one for the a.m. teachers and one for the p.m. teachers," said Brandy Miller. "Whichever jar had the most money, those are the ones that had to kiss the goat."

Children emptied their pockets in the jars, sometimes asking their parents for more change. Parents added to the

Congratulations, Gabi

Gabi Miller celebrated her 18th birthday on March 25, and she will graduate from Wright City High School in May. Her family, mom, Tamara Miller; brother, Michael Miller; grandmother, Mary Watson; and son, Mason Blaine, wish her a happy birthday.



Happy 25th anniversary

Congratulations to Larry and Darlene Hayes of Dufur, Ore., on celebrating their 25th wedding anniversary on April 8. Larry and Darlene have one daughter, Roberta Collins of Webb City, Mo. Larry is a retired heavy equipment operator and Darlene works at Mid-Columbia Medical Center in the coding department. The couple are planning a trip to Las Vegas in celebration of their anniversary.



Happy birthday, Bailey

Happy 15th birthday to Bailey Moran on May 11. Bailey is an excellent student at Southmoore High School. She maintains a 4.0 GPA, enjoys art and is a great cook. Her family, grandparents, John and Donna Moran; parents, Mike and Lisa Moran; and brother, Mason Moran, all wish her a happy birthday.



Happy 70th anniversary

On Nov. 24, 2012, Earl and Sylvia (Janway) Folsom were honored at a reception to celebrate their 70th wedding anniversary in the Family Life Center of the First Free Will Baptist Church of McAlester. The reception was hosted by their daughters, Sandra Brown, Linda Cropco, Deborah Vanlandingham and Beverly Grubb.

Earl and Sylvia were married Nov. 13, 1942, in Brooken, Okla. Soon afterwards, Earl was drafted into the Navy and served in the Pacific theater of the war.

After the war, Earl went to work for the Naval Ammunition Depot in McAlester. He worked there until he retired in 1974. After retirement, he began a second career with McAlester Public Schools, where he worked until 1984.

Sylvia worked for McAlester Public Schools, Army Munitions Plant and was a homemaker.

In addition to their daughters, they have seven grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren. Earl and Sylvia currently reside in Krebs and are members of the McAlester First Free Will Baptist Church. Earl is the son of original enrollee Sampson Folsom.



enjoy a petting zoo and more.

The money also helped pay for a recent trip to Alma, Ark., where the children enjoyed a concert of educational "pirate" fun by popular children's entertainer, Stephen Fite.

The Head Start staff said thank you to all the parents who donated to the fundraiser, adding that the donations will be used to "enlighten and educate our future generation."

Sisters excel in ballet

Pictured are Jordan Michelle Weese and MyKenzee Jana Weese, who have studied ballet for 11 years and eight years. They are both studying at the Western Oklahoma Ballet Company. They have performed in WOBC's productions of "Peter and the Wolf," "Carnival of the Animals," "The Nutcracker," "Sleeping Beauty," The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" and "Alice in Wonderland," and MyKenzee has performed in "The Wizard of Oz."

Jordan and MyKenzee are the daughters of Michael and Brandi Weese of Burns Flat. Jordan is in the seventh grade at Burns Flat-Dill City Junior High and MyKenzee is in the fifth grade. Jordan is the U.S. Senior Princess VFW and Ladies Auxiliary Post 4465 Clinton, and MyKenzee is the U.S. Senior Princess DAV Chapter 33 Altus. They are the granddaughters of JoAnn and Melvin Weese of Cordell.



EDUCATION

Choctaw University receives prestigious award for its efforts

Choctaw University, in partnership with Southeastern Oklahoma State University, has won the Distinguished Program-Credit Category Award for the Great Plains Region from the Association of Continuing Higher Education (ACHE), Inc.

The ACHE Great Plains Region includes: Iowa, Kansas, Manitoba, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Saskatchewan, South Dakota and Western Ontario.

Established in 2012, Choctaw University's

mission is to empower associates who are committed to personal and professional growth in their career. It provides educational and leadership-building opportunities.

At the conclusion of Choctaw University's first year, 73 associates completed the Leadership series and over 100 associates completed the Continuing Education series.

"Choctaw University has well exceeded our expectations," said Chief Gregory E. Pyle. "It has been embraced by our associates on several

levels and thanks to Southeastern, students are also earning college credits."

The award was presented during the 2013 ACHE Great Plains Spring Conference on the campus of Kansas State University on March 7.

Choctaw University is now eligible for recognition at the national level. The national award will be presented at the annual ACHE Conference and Meeting in Lexington, Ky., in November.

Dr. Aaron Adair, Dean of Adult and Distance Learning from Southeastern Oklahoma State University,

commented, "We're now the 'award-winning' Choctaw University Executive Leadership Program!"

ACHE is an institution-based organization of colleges, universities and individuals dedicated to the promotion of lifelong learning and excellence in continuing higher education.

ACHE encourages professional networks, research and exchange of information for its members and advocates continuing higher education as a means of enhancing and improving society.



Jack Hedrick, Choctaw University program manager; Dr. Aaron Adair, dean of Adult and Distance Education at Southeastern Oklahoma State University; and Tana Sanders, director of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Learning and Development Department, accept the award on behalf of Choctaw University in Manhattan, Kan.

Thankful for financial support with education

Thank you for your financial support granted me during my collegiate career. It has been a great experience attending the University of Oklahoma. I have worked full time to support myself while attending school, however, your scholarship allowed me to reduce my work schedule in order to maintain my grades. Through the assistance of the Choctaw tribe, I have been able to graduate with a degree in political science and a minor in history, free of any debt or financial obligation to the university or any other lender. I would just like to thank you in expression of my gratitude towards the tribe and its members, who through my processes of higher learning and education have helped to not only ease the burden of financial stresses, but have helped to encourage and motivate me to pursue my dreams and passions. Thank you again for your generosity and helping provide the opportunity to further enrich my life.



Sean Cole



The Chahta Villa Interlocal Pre-school in Bethel was recently visited by Smokey the Bear and learned all about fire safety.



Pictured are honor students from Forest Grove School who were recognized by the Choctaw Nation STAR Program for their perfect attendance and attaining all A's or A's and B's in the first semester. Pictured left to right are JOM Parent Committee member John Harjo, Jordan Duncan, Bryar Jenkins, Brooke Cauthron, Tanner White, Lindsey Battiest, Austin Cannady and Superintendent John Smith. Not pictured is Dawson Williston. Parents, teachers and the community are very proud of these Choctaw students.



McAlester JOM group attends annual conference

The Johnson O'Malley parents, staff and director of McAlester attended the 39th annual Oklahoma Johnson O'Malley Conference and "The Spirit of Native Education" Awards Banquet on March 5 in Tulsa. Pictured above are Willis Deatherage, Tracey Sontag, Teresa Kennietubbe, Serena Underwood, Deloures L. Smith, Chewelah Fry and Dana.

(Right) Deloures is pictured with the keynote speaker, Heather Shotton, Ph.D, who is a member of the Wichita and affiliated tribes and is of Kiowa and Cheyenne descent.



SUMMER CAMP AT JONES ACADEMY

July 10-12, 2013 AGES ELIGIBLE: 8-12 YEARS OLD

* Registration will be made available soon.*

Campers will be required to stay the night at this camp.

Transportation will be provided. Participants must live within the Choctaw Nation's 10 1/2 counties.

What to expect: -TEAM BUILDING -HEALTHY HABITS
 - CULTURAL ACTIVITIES - AND MUCH MORE!

QUESTIONS? Raina Sparks at 918-423-8440 ext. 31071
 or Tammie Cannady at 918-567-7121.



Trail of Tears Walk to be held in Spiro

A commemorative Trail of Tears Walk will be held on Saturday, May 18, at Spiro. An opening ceremony will begin at 10 a.m. at the historic Skullyville Cemetery and the approximately 3.5-mile walk will end at the Choctaw Community Center at 19400 Aes Road off Highway 9 in Spiro.

Please park at the community center where buses will be available to transport participants to the cemetery. Drivers will begin taking passengers at 9 a.m. Lunch will also be shared with everyone following the walk.

The Choctaw Nation invites everyone to join in on this special day.

ATTENTION

Choctaw Artists

If you are interested in participating in a Juried and Judged Choctaw Indian Art Show, let us hear from you!

Please complete the following interest form in order to receive more information regarding the show which will be in Tvshka Homma, Oklahoma during the annual Labor Day Festivities. Included will be the following categories: Painting, Graphics, Cultural, Sculpture, Jewelry, Pottery, and Basketry. Please complete the form and return it to the address below. Art information packets will be mailed beginning in April.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Artistic Category: _____

You must be at least 17 years old and have a membership card issued by the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma to participate.

Please return to:
Shelley Garner
Cultural Events
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
PO Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702-1210

For more information, call Shelley Garner at 1-800-522-6170, ext. 2377.

Choctaw Nation

Vocational Rehabilitation Calendar

	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
MAY				1 Broken Bow 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Idabel by appt.	2	3 Durant 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.	4
	5 Cinco de Mayo	6 Durant 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.	7 Antlers by appt.	8 Talihina 10 a.m.-2 p.m.	9	10 Broken Bow 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Idabel by appt.	11
	12 Mother's Day	13 Durant 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.	14	15 McAlester 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Stigler by appt.	16	17 Crowder by appt.	18
2013	19	20 Durant 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.	21 Victoria Day (Canada)	22 Poteau 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.	23	24 Atoka by appt. Coalgate by appt.	25
	26	27 Memorial Day (observed)	28 Wilburton 10:30 a.m.-2 p.m.	29	30	31 Wright City by appt.	

Durant - Mon., Wed. and Fri.; Broken Bow - Mon., Wed. and Fri.; Idabel by appt.

Phone: 580-326-8304; Fax: 580-326-2410 Email: ddavenport@choctawnation.com



Photo provided

The Choctaw Nation Head Start children in Broken Bow walked in support of child abuse awareness and held an Easter egg hunt. Organizations and agencies represented were: Oklahoma Highway Patrol, McCurtain County Sheriff's Office, Kids Kottage CAC, Broken Bow Police Department, Choctaw Nation Field Office,

Choctaw Nation Tribal Police, Choctaw Nation Career Development, Broken Bow Public Schools, Support Pregnant and Parenting Teens, McCurtain County Boys and Girls Clubs, Choctaw Nation Family Violence Program, Broken Bow Public Library and Choctaw Nation District 2 Tribal Councilman Tony Messenger.

Choctaw Nation Youth Center girls basketball team makes way to state tourney

By **CHRISSY SHEPARD**
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

The Choctaw Nation Youth Center in Talihiina promotes camaraderie, teamwork and friendship in its youth. This past year, a group of girls from the center was formed into a basketball team, and through the values mentioned above, they were able to be named regional tournament champions of their league and got the chance to play in the state tournament, earning a state runner-up title. Darrell Sorrells, Choctaw Nation Youth Center director, said the past year has been an incredible experience for this group of girls. "It's been very competitive and exciting," he said. "They really love basketball."

This year marks the second year this team has been playing basketball for the youth center. "In December 2012, the McAlester Boys and Girls Club invited the youth center to compete in their 2013 basketball league," said Darrell. "The youth center entered a team of eight girls in the sixth-grade division."

In the regional tournament, the girls were able to play against other youth center teams from Oklahoma, including Boys and Girls Club teams. They walked away from the well-played ball-games with the first place title in their age division. According to Darrell, the girls won their first games in January, then in February, won first place in the sixth-grade division of their league. Following the regional tournament, the girls were invited to play in the "Court of Dreams" game, held on the Oklahoma City Thunder basketball court. Again, the team won their age division. On March 2-3, the team competed in the Oklahoma Youth Centers State Championship and placed second in their division. "We are certainly proud of these young ladies," said Darrell. "They are looking forward to playing in next year's tournament."

Darrell said, though the center didn't have enough volunteers to form a boys' team this year, the kids of the Choctaw Nation Youth

Center were excited by the girls' team's success. "Their victory has inspired other youth center members to want to compete in the same way," he said. Darrell said the formation of teams is solely based on volunteers. They post a sign-up sheet, and if they have enough volunteers, they will form teams. The opportunity to play in all of these tournaments and ballgames has been beneficial to the group of girls, Darrell said. "We wanted to give our youth the chance to interact with other youth centers," he explained. "The youth has excelled in this area, and we are excited for them."

"It doesn't matter how well we do," continued Darrell, "we're trying to give camaraderie and teamwork."

Darrell said in addition to hoping a boys basketball team will form, he is looking to make a T-Ball team this summer as well. The Choctaw Nation Youth Center, established in 1995, offers many activities for youth, such as volleyball, mixed martial arts and fitness classes. During the school



Photo provided

Pictured are (top row), left to right, Coach Ken Hall, Elizabeth Fuller, Mikala Helm, Morgan Burke, Youth Coordinator Debra Moore, Rhiya Snead, Assistant Chief Gary Batton, Youth Assistant Patricia Palmer, (bottom row) Haylee Himes, Robyn Long, Emma McCurtain and Kailee Daney.

months, the center is open from noon to 5:30 p.m., during the summer it is open from 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. According to Darrell, the center sees an average of 100 children per day, ranging from age 6 to 18. Adult classes are available in the evening hours, including Zumba dance

classes and adult fitness classes. There is no membership fee required for the Choctaw Nation Youth Center. The school year program is currently operating, with the center closing at 5:30 p.m. each day. An application for membership can be obtained at the center's front desk. A

birth certificate and current shot record is required. The center is located on Highway 63A right after Belvin Housing in Talihiina. If you are interested in participating in the activities at the Choctaw Nation Youth Center, or if you would like to learn more, call 918-567-3498.

Choctaw Nation represented at New Harmonies Oklahoma Roots Music Concert

By **CHRISSY SHEPARD**
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

On March 16 in Idabel, the Choctaw Nation was represented by two inspiring musical performances at the New Harmonies Oklahoma Roots Music Concert, organized by the Smithsonian Institution and the Oklahoma Humanities Council. Presley Byington, a traditional Choctaw flute maker and player, resident of Idabel and member of the Choctaw Nation, was invited to perform at the roots music concert as well as the Towali United Methodist Church out of Oak Hill, located west of Broken Bow, who sang Choctaw hymns for the crowd. Byington was grateful for the opportunity to share his culture through the traditional Choctaw flute. "It's good to be here," he said on stage. "I'd like to thank you all for inviting me to come out here and perform."

New Harmonies is part of Museum on Main Street, a collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution traveling exhibition service and the Oklahoma Humanities Council. Support for Museum on Main Street is provided by the United States Congress. The New Harmonies Oklahoma Roots Smithsonian exhibit will be on display in the Museum of the Red River in Idabel until April 27. The exhibit celebrates the sounds of "roots music" and how it has inspired people throughout history, all through a fascinating, toe-tapping display of instruments, records, photographs, memorabilia and music. Ann Thompson of the Oklahoma Humanities Council said the nonprofit organization has brought cultural programming to the state for 40 years. "Tonight's concert is a kickoff to one of those programs, the Smithso-

nian's Institution's exhibit." The organization accepted applications from 13 communities around the state for six slots, and the Regional Arts Council of Idabel applied. "We're so happy they did, and we chose them to be the opening of this six-community tour," Thompson added. "So many community organizations came together and helped with this exhibit and with the concert." Dr. Hugh Foley, a professor at Rogers State University in Claremore and state scholar of the exhibition tour, served as the emcee for the evening. "As a result of the exhibit kicking off here in Idabel, we wanted to do something special, so the Oklahoma Humanities Council supported us getting this concert together and making it happen," he said. In addition to Byington and the Towali Church, the roots concert featured eight other performances. "It is a labor of love to be

here and work with all of these musicians," said Foley. Foley explained the meaning behind roots music: "the original music of the North Americas before it evolved into rock music, jazz, etc.," he said. "It's the original, traditional music of the American Indian, the original sacred music of African Americans, Anglo Americans and American Indians." Byington represented the Choctaw Nation well with his



Choctaw Nation: CHRISSY SHEPARD

Presley Byington shows his Choctaw heritage through flute playing at the New Harmonies Oklahoma Roots Music Concert on March 16 in Idabel.

thankful he was able to perform in this event. "They could have gotten anyone besides me, there are lots of

great flute players," he said. "It's an honor they invited me." Byington has represented the Choctaw Nation in many places around the state and nation with his flute playing, but he has never played for an audience in his hometown of Idabel. "It was great to represent the Choctaws, it's quite an honor," he said. He went on to compliment the Towali Church as well, saying a group of Creek attendees asked him after the concert where the church was located, so they could observe Sunday church services with them. The Towali Church group sang all hymns in the Choctaw language, beautiful renditions that earned them much applause from the audience. Following its display at the Museum of the Red River, the Smithsonian exhibit tour will continue until Jan. 4, traveling to Poteau, Hobart, Frederick, El Reno and Alva.



Choctaw Nation: CHRISSY SHEPARD

The Towali Methodist Church, located west of Broken Bow in the community of Oak Hill, sings gospel hymns in the Choctaw language at the Oklahoma Roots Concert.



Photo provided

Five Choctaw U students visited the State Capitol recently — standing from left, Audrey Jacob and Nick Cody; seated back, Christina Black, Darenda Joseph, and Judy Morgan; and seated front, Melissa Stevens and Becky Parker.

Choctaw University students visit the Oklahoma State Capitol

Contributed by BECKY PARKER
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Students of the award-winning Choctaw University were invited to Oklahoma City on March 26 to tour the Oklahoma State Capitol and visit with members of the Senate and House of Representatives. Five Choctaw University students, Christina Black, Nick Cody, Audrey Jacob, Darenda Joseph and Melissa Stevens, traveled to the State Capitol, along with Choctaw U faculty members, Judy

Morgan and Becky Parker. The trip was donated by The Sullivan Agency of Ardmore in conjunction with Ardmore Main Street Authority. The Choctaw Nation associates were greeted at the State Capitol campus by the Executive Director of Ardmore Main Street Authority, Julie Patterson, and then introduced to legislators representing Southeastern Oklahoma. The group was taken on a guided tour and treated to lunch, where they had the opportunity to

visit with Sen. Josh Brecheen and Rep. Dustin Roberts. Choctaw University's mission is to empower associates who are committed to personal and professional growth in their career. It provides educational and leadership-building opportunities. Choctaw University Program Manager Jack Hedrick emphasized this point, stating, "Leadership opportunities like this are a great example of the holistic approach to learning envisioned by Choctaw University."

Choctaw seniors' Easter egg hunt in Bethel

Right, Lucy White had a small basket she used in the egg hunt before the holiday luncheon at the McCurtain County Choctaw center in Bethel.

Photos by: JUDY ALLEN



Sisters Melissa Bohanon, Jasney Wade and Virginia Jefferson had fun at the Easter egg hunt.



Leyvoice Ludlow found the prize egg!



Jasney Wade was among the senior citizens at Bethel who filled Easter baskets with brightly colored eggs.

Native American Business Institute

July 20-26, 2013 • Deadline: May 3, 2013 • Michigan State University, East Lansing

A pre-college boot camp for Native American high school students in grades 10-12.

The Multicultural Business Program's Native American Business Institute (NABI) invites you to explore its website and learn more about our pre-college program, at mbp.broad.msu.edu/nabi. Also, check us out on Facebook.

Application process: Total participants admitted into the summer program will be set at 40 students. Priority will be given to applications submitted on or before May 3. Selected students and parents will be sent an acceptance letter with additional documents and required forms to be completed and sent back to Multicultural Business Programs accepting and confirming their son or daughters attendance to NABI 2013.

Program dates:

The Native American summer Business Institute will take place at the MSU campus during the following dates and location: Shaw Hall, East Lansing, Mich. - July 20-26 Orientation day for parents - July 20 (after student drop-off)

Mail, fax or email applications to:

Kevin Leonard
Multicultural Business Programs
645 N. Shaw Lane, Rm. 419
East Lansing, MI 48824
Fax: 517-355-09970
Phone: 517-353-3524
Email: leonard1@msu.edu

Choctaw Nation Outreach meeting and Easter egg hunt



Sharon Grass, Justine Grass, Amir Young and Jace Grass enjoy each other's company before they head to the hamburger line.



Congratulations to the winners who gathered the most eggs in age groups 0-4 and 5-8!



Photos by: CHRISSY SHEPARD



Above, all Easter egg hunt participants take a moment to take a photo with District 1 Tribal Councilman Thomas Williston at the Outreach meeting in Idabel on March 19.

Left, Mary Rios and granddaughter, Allie Moore, greet people as they line up for supper.



Photo provided

Pictured are the 9-12 age group prize egg winner, Madisson Ludlow, left, and the 5-8 age group prize egg winner, Margo Tom.

Little Malachi Maytubbi, right, was happy to receive his tricycle as his reward for finding the prize egg in his age division. He is the son of Erica Williston and Waylen Maytubbi.



OBITUARIES

Rubin Abbott

Rubin Clyde “RC” Abbott, 82, passed away on Jan. 30, 2013, in Snowflake, Ariz. RC resided most of his life in Bakersfield Calif., however his retirement goal was to move back to Ringold, Okla., where he was born. RC achieved his dream living in Ringold from 2008 until 2010, when health issues forced him to move closer to his daughter Karen in Arizona. RC was a proud veteran of the U.S. Army and served in Korea and a proud member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. RC was married for over 50 years to Alma who preceded him in death in 2007. RC’s true passion in life was fishing for catfish and he was well known for his fish fries. A special funeral service will be held for RC on June 1, 2013 at 11:00 a.m. at the Ringold Cemetery in Ringold.



Edmond John

Edmond John, 86, passed away at his home in Norman on Feb. 15, 2013, after a long illness. He was born on Jan. 14, 1927, on the family farm in the Springdale community located near Ardmore, to George John and Minnie Rasha John. In 1929, the family moved from the Springdale and Mary Niblack community. He graduated from Dickson School in 1944. He served two years in the Navy then he returned home to Ardmore, during which time he entered service in the U.S. Air Force. On March 2, 1948, he married his sweetheart, Martha Roe in Gainesville, Texas, and has celebrated 64 years of marriage. He served 26 years in the Air Force for a total of 28 years in the military. His military service included wartime in World War II, Korea and Vietnam. After retirement from the military, he graduated from East Central University in Ada with a Master’s Degree in Education and continued to work in the public school system until his retirement. Edmond was an ordained deacon in the Southern Baptist Church and was a member of Bethel Baptist Church in Norman. Edmond was a man of great character and was loved by many friends. He was a member of the Ardmore Masonic Lodge and a member of the Norman Chapter of the Eastern Star.



He was preceded in death by his parents; sister Louzella John; and son-in-law Jimmy Dale Barnes.

He is survived by his wife, Martha of the home; sons, Donald Hugh John with wife, JoAnn of Wichita Falls, Texas, Edmond Mark John with wife, Beatrice of Villa Park, Calif.; daughters, Allison Han Epperson with husband Randall of Modesto, Calif., Ann Denise Barnes of Norman, Kim Elizabeth Hume with husband Thomas of Noble; brother Donald Laverne Hon with wife Opal of Concord; sisters Georgia Faye Antuna of Ardmore, and Deloris Vaughn with husband Alfred of Concord; 11 grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren.

Reatha Freeman

Reatha Lou Freeman, 75, of Hugo, passed away on Feb 25, 2013, in Hugo. She was born July 1, 1937, in Soper, the daughter of Harley S. York and Zennie J. (Cochnauer) York, and had lived all of her life in the Hugo area. Reatha attended First Assembly of God Church in Hugo. She was a seamstress and had also worked at Campbell Soup Co. in Paris, Texas. She enjoyed quilting and formed the Choctaw Women’s Quilting Club, teaching women how to piece quilts and the art of quilting. She also enjoyed playing bingo and especially enjoyed spending time with her grandchildren.



She was preceded in death by her parents; husband Elmer Freeman; son Jimmy Ellis; sisters, Bertie Shelton and Bertha Maxwell; and four brothers, William York, Bud York, Rosco York and Henry York.

She is survived by two sons, J.L. Ellis and Jackie S. Ellis, both of Hugo; three daughters, Rhonda Goodman with husband Scott of Grant, Rebecca Hallum of Hugo and Zinna Bowthorpe of Shiloh, Ariz.; 13 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; and many other relatives and friends.

Robert Frazier

Robert William Frazier, 81, passed away on April 1, 2013, in Idabel. He was born Feb. 15, 1932, in Antlers, to Willie Caldwell and Sarah Mae (Nohio) Frazier. Robert served his country in the U.S. Army during the Korean War. He enjoyed fishing, going to the casino and spending time with his family and friends.



Robert was preceded in death by his parents; first wife, Elfriede Zollner Frazier; son Roberto Antonio Frazier; brothers, Willie Frazier Jr., Mack Frazier and Herbert Nelson Jr.; and sister Josephine M. Tyler.

He is survived by his fiancé, Odetha Billy of Antlers; children, Robert Jr. with wife Debbie, and Richard with wife Heather, all of Pawnee, Ramona Thomas with husband Jim of Iowa Park, Texas, Obie with wife Sarah of Farmington, N.M., and Pamela Aday with husband Patrick of Noble; grandchildren, Lyon, Arlo, Melissa, Bobby, Nivee, Thivae, George, Trenell, Tony, Ryan, Rio, Colton and Nichole; great-grandchildren, Freddy, Nalin, Kylie, Jordon, Lakin, Nacona, George Jr., Talon and Honey Lu; brother Harrison Frazier of Arizona; sisters, Joanna Phenicie of Anaheim, Calif., and Fay Frazier of Antlers; as well as many other relatives and friends.

Virginia Watson

Virginia Watson, 69, of Aumsville passed away on March 10, 2013, just 3 days before her 70 birthday. Virginia was born in Phoenix, Ariz., and was proud to be a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. She grew up in Arizona and moved to Oregon in 1976, having lived in the Aumsville and Salem areas. She had antique stores and enjoyed going to yard sales. She was married to Johnny Watson on Sept. 4, 1981, in Glendale, Ariz. Virginia was a member of the Pentecostal Church of God in Salem where she served as a worship leader, piano player and singer. She had strong faith in God.



She was preceded in death by her parents; son Timothy Wesson; stepsons, B.J. and Billy Watson; sister Fayrene Bowers; and brother Jacky Frazier.

She is survived by her beloved husband, Johnny; sons, Randall Watson, Douglas Wesson, Steven Wesson and Nathan Wesson; daughter Pamela Wesson; stepson Anthony Watson; stepdaughter Leann Watson; sisters, Ruth Butcher, Carolyn Reynolds, Ronda Frazier, Kelly Desbennett and Sherrie Wesson; brothers, Ronny Frazier and Roger Frazier; along with numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Onie Smith White

Onie Edith Smith White, 105, of Pauls Valley, passed away on Feb. 2, 2013, in Pauls Valley. She was born Nov. 4, 1907, in Redden, to John Hemstead Givens and Sophia Virginia (Kemp) Givens. Onie was raised in Purcell and attended school there. She married Thomas Jefferson Smith on Nov. 16, 1922, in Purcell. They raised four children, Valgene, Jackie, Jimmie, and Janice in Maysville where they ran a grocery store for several years. Later she worked as a switchboard operator for Southwestern Bell Telephone Company until her retirement. Mr. Smith passed away in 1962. She married Don White in 1965 and moved to Paoli and later Mr. White died in 1977. In 2003, Onie moved to Pauls Valley to live in the Donihoo/Colley Complex. Her hobbies were working in her yard and garden. She also enjoyed doing crafts and making quilt tops by hand. Onie was Mario Lopez’s oldest fan. She was called Canny for many years because her first granddaughter couldn’t say Granny and all of her family and friends called her that for the rest of her life. All who knew her will dearly miss her.



Onie was preceded in death by her parents; son Valgene Smith; husbands, Thomas Jefferson Smith and Don White; granddaughter Linda Indermill; great-granddaughter Tracey Indermill; and two sons-in-law, Charles Morphew and Cleo Mulford.

Her survivors include her daughters, Jackie Mulford of Wayne, Jimmie Church with husband Riley of McAlester, and Janice Downey with husband Kenneth of Harrisonville, Mo.; brother Emmitt Givens of Modesto, Calif.; 13 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren; 12 great-great-grandchildren; and many other relatives and friends.

Thomas Claus

H. Thomas “Sonny” Claus, 83, walked into the presence of the Lord surrounded by his family, on March 8, 2013, at Mayo Clinic Hospital in Phoenix, Ariz. He was born Dec. 26, 1929, in Niagara Falls, N.Y., to Huron James and Theresa Caretha Thomas Claus. He was an enrolled member of the Mohawk of the Six Nations on the Grand River, Ohsweken, Ontario, Canada. He was from the Turtle Clan.



He was also from the Tuscarora Indian Nation. When sharing his personal testimony he would always state, “I’m proud to be an Indian by race, but I am more proud to be a Christian by grace.” He always praised God for his rich heritage of being a fourth generation Christian. His great grandfather, Adam Elliot Thomas, whose Mohawk name was “Split the Sky,” was one of the first Christians in his family. “Sonny,” the youngest of the family, accepted Christ into his heart when he was 14 years old. At the early age of three, his mother trained him and his two sisters to sing many gospel songs and choruses by memory. They started singing in churches, Bible conferences and youth rallies all over the East coast. They were known as the Claus Indian Family. The Lord blessed their ministry as doors began to open to places where they never dreamed of going. In a few short years, they were singing in rallies with Jack Wyrzten in Carnegie Hall and Madison Square Garden in New York City; Percy Crawford in Convention Hall in Philadelphia; Torrey Johnson in Orchestra Hall in Chicago; and finally as staff musicians with Youth For Christ International with the Reverend Billy Graham. Sonny would look back and see how God had led his family to work with some of the greatest Bible teachers and evangelists in a generation and time of tremendous spiritual harvest. These included several members of the Billy Graham Team and many other godly leaders and people who made a great impact on his life. In January of 1945, Sonny made a life changing commitment to preach the Gospel of Christ to his own people when he saw the great spiritual need of the Seminole Indians in the Everglades of Florida. He didn’t know how he would answer God’s call, because he had stuttered and stammered all his life, except when he sang. But when he surrendered his life to preach, God took away the stuttering. Six months later, at an Indian camp on the Akwesasne Mohawk Reservation in northern New York, Chuck Pamp, a Potawatomi Indian evangelist, asked Tom to preach in a Sunday afternoon service. From that moment on, he faithfully began to preach the Word wherever he was called. In October 1951, Tom was ordained at Midwest Bible Church in Chicago, Ill., by Dr. Torrey Johnson, Pastor and Director of Youth for Christ International. Over the 70 years of his ministry, since he committed himself to God to preach the Gospel to his own people, he faithfully fulfilled his calling:

- From 1952 until 1977, he founded and was the General Director of the American Indian Crusade, a mission organization that sent missionaries to serve in bringing the Gospel to American Indian reservations and communities.
- From 1961 through 1964, he was the pastor of the Lakota Bible Chapel on the Rosebud Reservation in White River, South Dakota.
- From 1966 through 1983, he was asked to serve as a representative of evangelistic ministries to American Indians at the International Congress on World Evangelism by Dr. Billy Graham, on three separate occasions in Berlin, Germany, Lausanne, Switzerland and Amsterdam, Netherlands.
- From 1975 through 1990, he served as the Outreach Coordinator to American Indian communities for the Billy Graham Crusades in Denver, Colo., Seattle, Wash., Tampa, Fla., Buffalo, N.Y., Detroit, Mich., Albuquerque, N.M., and Toronto, Canada.
- In recent years, he worked with Dr. Bill Bright of Campus Crusade for Christ International, Coach Bill McCartney, founder of Promise Keepers, and Dr. John MacArthur, Pastor-Teacher of Grace Community Church in Sun Valley, Calif.

In March 1975 he founded Christian Hope Indian Eskimo Fellowship, or CHIEF. He felt led of the Lord to bring together 100 Christian American Indian and Eskimo leaders to discuss the spiritual, physical and social needs of Native American people and develop a plan of action to minister to their needs. In 1987, the Chief Shepherd Discipleship Center was established on an eight-acre campus and in Phoenix. To date, Native pastors and individuals representing over 300 tribes have completed the discipleship training and teaching that has been provided through this ministry. In 1948, Sonny met a beautiful Kiowa Indian girl, Alfreda Tsoodle, from the Rainy Mountain Kiowa Indian Baptist Church during a church softball game when he was the pitcher and she was the catcher. They were married in 1954. They had three children named Huron Thomas, Cynthia Ann and Sharolyn Ruth. Along with his preaching ministry, he continued a singing ministry with his young family. God used them to take the Gospel to more than 300 tribes throughout the United States and Canada. He had a love of the mountains and outdoors and took every opportunity to enjoy hunting, camping and fishing with his family. His family and friends all shared the joy and laughter that his great sense of humor brought. He was a wonderful husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather. His life was one truly lived to the fulfillment and completion of God’s will and purposed call.

He is preceded in death by his parents and sister, Shirley Antone. Survivors include his loving wife of 59 years, Alfreda Claus of Phoenix; son Huron Thomas with wife Lois Claus; daughters, Cynthia Ann Claus and Sharolyn Ruth Claus, both of Phoenix; four grandchildren, Sonny with wife Pearl Claus, Melissa with husband Daniel Stone, and Adam and Spencer Piron; five great-grandchildren; and sister Dorothy Hill of Oneida, N.Y.

Nell Jo Bowen

Nell Jo Bowen, 75, a lifelong Comanche resident, passed away peacefully on Feb. 10, 2013, at Duncan Regional Hospital. Nell was born Oct. 5, 1937, in Comanche, to Dewey and Opal Nelson Richards. On Oct. 23, 1952, she and Kenneth Ray Bowen were united in marriage in Henrietta, Texas. They raised their two children, Theresa and Kenny, in this community. Nell was very active in church. She loved spending time with her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Being with her family during the holidays was very special to her.



Nell was preceded in death by her husband Kenneth in 2007; son Kenny Bowen in 2001; her parents; and brothers, Jack Richards, Garland Richards and Jerry Richards.

Survivors include her daughter, Theresa Randolph of Comanche; grandsons, Cary McCreight of Durant, Coby Beck and Shannon Perry of Dallas, Texas, and Chance Beck with wife Miranda of Comanche; and great-grandchildren, Michaela Beck, McKenzie Beck, Hunter Beck, Easton Beck and Carson Beck.

Jesse Merryman

Jesse Orval “Jess” Merryman, 79, of Springdale, Ark., passed away on Feb. 15, 2013, at Circle of Life Hospice. He was born Oct. 10, 1933, in Hot Springs, Ark., to Sherman Lee and Pearl Mae Cummings Merryman.

Jess farmed throughout his life and also worked various other jobs. He enjoyed time in the outdoors and sports. He served in the U.S. Marine Corps during the Korean War. Jess married Marilynne Judith “Judy” Levine on May 15, 1965, in Las Vegas.

He was preceded in death by a grandson, Steven Michael Merryman; brother Sherman Lee Merryman Jr.; and sisters, Mary Florence Relay and Leota Carter.

He is survived by his wife, Judy Merryman, of the home; sons, Benjamin Merryman with wife Amy, and Jeffrey Merryman, all of Springdale; daughter Tonya Williams with husband Ron of Powderly, Texas; nine grandchildren, Jessica Merryman, Brianna Merryman, Tyler Merryman, Tristan Merryman, Zoey Williams, Riley Williams, Mason Merryman, Christian Merryman and Julianne Merryman; great-grandchild Brooklyn Nix; brother Earl Merryman, of Prairie Grove; and other family members.

Hellen Johnson

Hellen Zeltha Johnson, 87, of Newman Lake, Wash., passed away on March 12, 2013, in Spokane, Wash. She was born on March 14, 1925, in Kirby, Ark., to the late Enoch S. and Mabel (Pucket) Hilburn. Hellen grew up in Oklahoma. She married Edward M. Luce on Jan. 6, 1944, in Tulsa. Edward was killed in action on June 19, 1944, during World War II in France. She worked for a short time at the Spartan Aircraft Company during World War II, where she was employed as a sheet metal worker. She married Ralph P. Johnson on March 9, 1946, in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho, and moved with him to Bremerton, Wash. She later relocated to Hillyard, Wash. before settling down in Newman Lake in 1953, where she lived until her passing. She attended the Otis Orchards Community Church.



She was preceded in death by her parents; husbands; son Gary P. Johnson; and brother Bud Hilburn.

She is survived by her daughters, Claudia (Steve) Calistro of Cusick, Wash., and Linda (Steve) Stitt of Newman Lake; grandchildren, Gary Calistro of Houser, Idaho, James Calistro of Newman Lake, Samuel Stitt of Seattle, Wash., and Trudi (Stitt) Dip of Long Beach, Calif.; great-grandchildren, Marissa Morris, Camilla Calistro, Sequoyah and Aiyanna Stitt, and Miranda and Hadassah Dip; and her sister, Cleo Myers of Oklahoma.

Patsy Allen

Patsy Allen, 70, passed away on Nov. 27, 2012. She was born on Sept. 23, 1942. She was proud of her Choctaw heritage and was loved very much and will be terribly missed by all. She was the wife of Ron Allen. They resided in Ukiah, Calif. She had three daughters, Samy, Penny and Ronell, eight or more grandchildren; four great-grandchildren and five living siblings, Betty Buttram with husband Dan, Ethel Schuler, Letha Teague with husband Otho., and Elvin C. Dodson Jr. with wife Norma.



She is preceded in death by her parents, Elin and Leona Dodson; sister Wanda Sue St. Clair; brother John Dennis Dodson; and a baby granddaughter, Jamie.

Lora Mae Rhoden

Lora Mae Rhoden, 86, passed away on Feb. 22, 2013. She was a loving wife, mother, grandmother, sister, aunt, and friend.

She is preceded in death by her parents and husband.

Survivors include her daughter, Judy Martinez (Michael) and son, John W. Tom (Lawana). She will also be missed by her grandchildren, great-grandchildren, other family members, and friends.



A message from Tribal Membership

The Tribal Membership office focuses on keeping all files current. A death certificate is required for all deceased members’ records to be up to date. Having these records complete enables the Membership department to better assist Choctaws in obtaining CDIB and Membership cards. If you have lost a loved one in the last five years and have not contacted the Membership department, please do so. They can be reached at 1-800-522-6170 or 1-580-924-8280.

OBITUARIES

Edna Dawson

Edna Dawson, 89, passed away on Feb. 18, 2013, at Sayre. She was born on Jan. 4, 1924, in Snow, to Nancy and Thomas Hardy. Edna grew up in Snow and attended the Wheelock Choctaw Indian Academy. She later moved to Wichita, Kan., and lived with her aunt. Edna was a "Rosie the Riveter" and worked at the Boeing Aircraft Factory assembling bombers. While living in Wichita, she began nursing school but had to return to Oklahoma to care for her mother. She resumed her nurses' training at Talihina Indian Hospital. While riding the bus to and from work she became acquainted with the driver, Bert Dawson. Their relationship blossomed and they were married in McAlester on Sept. 1, 1946. In 1947, they moved to Borger, Texas where they remained until 1964, when they moved to Sayre to make their home. Edna was employed at Grand Place Nursing Home for many years until retiring in 1986. She loved to be outdoors working in her garden. She also enjoyed sewing, working jigsaw puzzles and was an avid fan of the Atlanta Braves. Edna was a faithful member of the Sayre First Baptist Church and served on many committees, but was best known for her homemade bread that she provided for funeral dinners and welcome baskets.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband; a son, L. C. Dawson; a son-in-law, Gary Osborne, an infant sister; two sisters; and a brother.

She was survived by her three daughters, Evadith Ahmad with husband Ahmad of Oklahoma City, Evelyn Osborne of Elk City, Nancy Reed with husband Earl of Sayre, OK; seven grandchildren, Kate Moss with husband Dennis of North Fork, Va., Rhonda Coffman of Oklahoma City, Tom Osborne of Elk City, Sarah King with husband Patrick of Weatherford, Tim Osborne of Elk City, Josh Reed of Sallisaw, Shaddy Ahmad with wife Michaela of Oklahoma City; seven great-grandchildren, Jada Galley, Isaac, Joseph and Lydia King, Ty, Xavier and Isaiah Ahmad; four sisters, Eleanor Caldwell, Louise Smith with husband Phil, Jean King with husband Danny; and a host of other relatives and friends.



Charleston Ward

Charleston Ward, 78, passed away on Feb. 28, 2013, at his home in Bethel. He was born Feb. 28, 1935, in Honobia, the son of Henry Elias and Amanda (Harrison) Ward. Charleston was a member of Pickens Assembly of God. He loved his family, especially loved playing with his grandchildren. Charleston enjoyed coaching co-ed softball, watching basketball and when he was young, loved playing softball.

He was preceded in death by his parents; wife Serena; and daughter Kathy Wade.

Charleston is survived by his two daughters, Sheila Washington with husband Jessie of Longview, Texas, and Janelle Ward and Gene Nelson of Broken Bow; sons, Steven Ward with wife Linsy of Bethel, and Channing Ward with wife Samantha of Springfield, Mass.; brother Rubin Ward of Talihina; sisters, Lorene Ludlow of Farmers Branch, Texas, and Kuma Battiest of Ada; 14 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; several nieces and nephews; and a host of friends.



Syble Simmons

Syble Norrene Simmons, 89, stepped into the presence of her Lord and Savior on Jan. 29, 2013, in Madera, Calif. She was born on May 1, 1923, in Caddo to Bun W. and Flossie McGee. She married Bennie Joe Simmons Dec. 9, 1943, in Rockwell County, Texas. She operated a home day care center for 25 years, caring for many children of the community. She was active in her local church as a Sunday School teacher for both children and adults, as well as a women's ministry leader.

She was preceded in death by her parents and husband.

She is survived by her daughters, Linda Garner with husband Lloyd, Barbara Thomasson with husband Ed, all of Madera, and Gail Adair with husband Roger of Eureka, Calif.; son Bennett Simmons with wife Farris of Escalon, Calif.; grandchildren, Greg Garner with wife Elizabeth and children Taylor and Jack of Denver, Donna Atherton with husband Scott and children Chase, Tyler and Samantha of El Cajon, Calif., Brian Simmons with wife Sarah and children Kayla and Caden of Chico, Calif., Damon Simmons with wife Senisha and children Nina, Nick, Jimmy and Josh of Chico, James Adair with wife Gina and children Julian, Anthony and Trinity of Weaverville, Calif., and Jacob Adair with wife Cassandra and daughter Lilly of Eureka, Calif.; siblings, Bunny Toschi of Madera, Buck McGee of Calera, and Mozelle Collins of Ashtabula, Ohio; along with several nieces, nephews and friends.

Agnes Bohanon

Agnes Bohanon passed away on Feb. 18, 2013, and opened her eyes in the presence of her Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. One of eight siblings, she was born on Oct. 14, 1918, in Bray, the daughter of a Southern Baptist missionary minister, Rev. Thomas J. Wade and Myrtle Elizabeth Hopkins Wade. She graduated from Goodland Indian Orphanage and School where she met her future husband. She also attended Oklahoma Presbyterian College in Durant, before marrying Julius Bohanon on Sept. 19, 1940. Next to her faith, family was very important to her. She was a devoted mother to an equally devoted family. Many precious memories were made by time spent not only with her children, but with her grandchildren as well. She retired from Choctaw Memorial hospital after 28 years and served as department manager for the Physical Therapy Department. Many of her past patients and co-workers ask about her and talk of her compassionate caring attitude and sweet smile. They all remember her as "Little Bo."

She was preceded in death by her husband of 41 years, Julius Bohanon; her parents; sons, Dewey Downey and William Lee Bohanon; grandson Mason Lee Bohanon; sisters, Margie Wade, Ada Hammons and Vinnie (Savanna) Whitley; and brothers, Paul Wade, and Thomas J. "T.J." Wade Jr.

Agnes is survived by her daughter, Gail Hillyard with husband Don of Hugo; sons, Douglas D. Bohanon with wife Pam of Hugo, and Dr. Joe P. Bohanon of Cleveland; daughter-in-law Paula Bohanon of Ashdown, Ark.; 12 grandchildren; several great-grandchildren; brothers, James H. Wade with wife Barbara, and Tony P. Wade, all of Duncan; sister-in-law Betty Baker of Hugo; and several nieces and nephews.



Cecil Spring

Cecil Lamar Spring passed away after a short illness on March 16, 2013, in Mena, Ark. He was born on Dec. 3, 1914, in Hugo. He was the youngest son of original Choctaw enrollee Christopher Columbus Spring. Cecil spent his early childhood on a farm and dairy that the family had outside the Hugo area. When Cecil was around the age of eleven, economic troubles struck the family. Losing the farm and dairy, his family began moving to find work. His dad moved the family to the Horton, Texas area, where a younger brother of his father, who also lost his farm in Hugo, had found work. Following the advice of his mother's younger brother, they moved to Coolidge, Ariz., where work was more plentiful. By high school Cecil was living in Cashion, Ariz., and later the family moved to the Hanford area in central California. He joined the U. S. Army early in World War II, serving in the 963rd Field Artillery Battalion. He saw combat from Normandy, France all the way to Germany before the end of the war. While training in North Carolina in 1943, he met and married his wife of 63 years, Ruth Cassady Spring, who passed away in 2006. After the war, they settled in the Monterey, California area and raised their two children. Cecil worked as a Barber for 27 years and retired as an Insurance Agent after 20 years, while Ruth taught Elementary School. He was active in the American Legion and held several offices including Commander of Post number 41 in Monterey. In the late 1980's, Cecil and Ruth decided to move to the Ouachita Mountain community of Mena. Cecil wanted to be near his Oklahoma Choctaw roots and Ruth to be in mountains that reminded her of her western North Carolina childhood. Once they moved to Mena, Cecil began visiting family members in Oklahoma and Texas that he hadn't seen since childhood. He began reconnecting with his Choctaw roots, applying for tribal membership and helping his children and grandchildren become tribal members. He attended many tribal activities over the years, including the Trail of Tears walks, the Labor Day Festivals and the Veterans Day Ceremonies. Starting in 2004, Cecil received the oldest Choctaw in attendance award at the Labor Day Festival. He would continue to receive that award for eight more years. He instilled pride in their Choctaw heritage to his family and encouraged participation in Choctaw activities. Cecil's grandson Ryan took that pride to heart and began a quest to develop his Choctaw cultural knowledge while in college, spending his summers working for the Choctaw Nation in Durant. After graduating from college in 2011, Ryan was hired by the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, and began working for the Historic Preservation Department. Cecil was proud that his family was able to serve the Choctaw Nation and help others understand the rich cultural heritage that we were given from our ancestors.

Cecil was preceded in death by his parents, Christopher Columbus and Lennie Spring; his wife, Ruth Cassady Spring in 2006; sister Tommie Arena Spring Killebrew Hosea; and brothers, John Emmitt and Wilbur Neal Spring.

He is survived by two sisters, Leta Madeline Spring Hardcastle of Armona, Calif., and Anna Mae Spring Wagner of San Simeon, Calif.; son Gary Lamar Spring with wife Rosemary of Talihina; daughter Linda Spring-Andrews with partner Seymour Friedel of Jersey City, N.J.; four grandchildren, John Paul Andrews of Casselberry, Fla., Matthew Clayton Andrews with wife Adrienne of Mena, Rebecca Andrews Capone with husband Patrick of Portsmouth, N.H., and Ryan Lamar Spring of Durant; and two great-grandchildren, Tyler Vaughan and Zane Vaughan of Mena.



Larry Marris

Larry Marris, 53, of Durant passed away on Jan 15, 2013, at the Oklahoma Heart Hospital in Oklahoma City. He was born Jan. 4, 1960 in Torrance, Calif. He went to school in Durant where he was a pitcher on the baseball team. He was also on the football team. He graduated from Bennington. He enjoyed spending time with his nephews, Brad and Mike, who he took fishing and hunting. He also taught them to drive a truck when they were younger. As years went by, he worked many jobs in his lifetime from heavy machine operator and oilrig worker to other odd jobs.

He also went to Vo-Tech to study computer, which he enjoyed. Larry was one to help others, volunteering to assist homeless, helping them get food, shelter and clothing. He was very fond of his family and enjoyed spending time with his brother and his children. He also recently met another brother from California and had a great time meeting him. He loved being outdoors in the woods, having cookouts, hunting, fishing and listening to music. He will be greatly missed by all.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Junior Marris and Glassie Evans; stepfather Herman Evans; sister, Mary Beth Evans; aunts and uncles, Robert Sanden, Silas Billy, Alex Sanders, Alma Cole, Lillian Hamill and Samantha Williams; grandpar- etns, Daniel and Mary Sanders, and Gilbert and Bessie Marris.

He is survived by his sister, Sheila Johnson with husband Travis of Bokchito; brothers, Rodney Evans with wife Debbie of Durant, and Herbert Marris with wife Christy of Foothill, Calif.; niece Ranell Kay Stone with husband Virgel of Durant; nephews, Brad and Mike Scott, both of Durant; great-nieces and nephews, Dillan and MyKayla Marris, Salea Rock and Taylon Scott, Taylor, Jordan, Alana Scott, Kristan, Michaela Scott Debbie, Tracie, Tarence, Johnson and MaKayla Ludlow; aunts, uncles and their families, Silas Blaine with wife Loren, Vanita Sanders, Fannie Marris, Dena Marris, Even Gilmore with wife Roseie, Naomi Johnson, Tom Marris, Charlie Marris, Truman Marris, Woodrow Marris and Dusty Parnet; the Evans family; cousins; and friends.



Billy Mills Sr.

Billy Ray Mills Sr., 74, of Tulsa, went to be with his Lord and Savior on Feb. 24, 2013. He was born in Tulsa on June 24, 1938. Bill graduated from Berryhill High School in 1957. He then enlisted in the U.S. Air Force that same year and served his country until 1964. He enrolled in the I.B.E.W. Local 584 Electrical Apprenticeship Program in 1965, and upon completion in 1969 was named the Outstanding Electrical Apprentice of the four-state area. He was very proud of his IBEW-NECA affiliations and was awarded his 45-year pin in December 2012. Bill was an avid car enthusiast, enjoyed fishing, bird watching, gardening and his number one enjoyment was sailing.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Mary Etta Mills; and sister Carole Jean Wood.

He is survived by his children, Elizabeth Christine Mills of Tulsa, Billy Ray Mills Jr. of Tulsa and James Jeffrey Mills of Albuquerque, N.M.; father Alfred Mills; brothers, Lacy, Milan and James "Dunie" Mills; sister Martha Lynn Blaylock; ex-wife Carolyn Mills with companion sweetheart of 23 years, Donna Shipman; grandchildren, Bradley Allen, Nastassia Cecily, Brittney Nichole, James Jeffrey Jr. and Alexandria Katherine Mills; great-grandchild Alexandria Cecily Mills; and numerous aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins, other relatives and friends.



David Chavis

David Lee Chavis, 69, passed away on Feb. 17, 2013, in Moyers. He was born Oct. 14, 1943, in Vernon, Texas, to Joe and Florence (Nowabbi) Chavis. David served his country in the U.S. Navy during the Vietnam War. He enjoyed artwork and loved his horses. Most of all, he loved spending time with his family and friends.

David was preceded in death by his father, Joe Chavis.

He is survived by his children, Tammy Price of Pottsboro, Texas, Danetta Smith and Tabatha Rangel with husband Johnny, all of Sherman, Texas, and Michael Martin with wife Rachel of Antlers; grandchildren, Chad Franklin, David Price, Brendon Haliburton, Michael Smith, Michaela Smith and Zane Chavis; mother Florence Chavis of Moyers; brother Joe Chavis with wife Vickie of Sherman; sister Ella Martin with husband Ronnie of Big Lake, Texas; as well as many other relatives and friends.



Dolores Muller

Dolores Lorena (McIntosh) Muller, 92, formerly of Hartshorne, passed away on Feb. 17, 2013, in Talihina. She was born on July 16, 1920, in Antlers to Chostin McIntosh and Annie (Loman) McIntosh. Dolores was a full blood Choctaw and was very proud of her heritage. She attended school in Antlers at St. Agnes and Bacone in Muskogee. She had lived in Oklahoma, California, Missouri and Pennsylvania during her life. For the past eight years she had been resident of Talihina Manor. She was a homemaker and had also worked t several different hobs over the years. Dolores was a member of the First Christina Church in Indiana, Penn. She had a love for and cared for animals, especially her cats.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Robert Muller; sister and brother-in-law, Lucille (McIntosh) and Rev. Edgar Times; nieces, Emmaline Tims; and brother Clifton McIntosh.

She is survived by her nieces and their husbands, Ruth and Gene Hancock of Collinsville, Angeline and John Lewis of Scottsdale, Ariz., Ann and Ray Tobey of Hartshorne, Sue Bad-Moccasin of Lincoln, Neb., and Lois and Ed Arterburn of Keota; 13 great-nieces and nephews; 34 great-great nieces and nephews; and five great-great-nieces and nephews.



Tommy Wilson

Tommy Dee Wilson, 64, a lifelong resident of Olympia, passed away on Feb. 23, 2013, at his home. Tommy attended both local area schools and the Chillicothe Indian School in Oklahoma. He worked in various occupations, including Union Carpentry, driver for the Tri-City Meat Company, and at the Department of Labor and Industries until he became disabled.

A proud member of the NRA and the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Tommy's passions included helping friends, hunting, and shooting.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Charles and Mammie Wilson; and his grandparents, Amanda Lomer Sumtter and John Sumtter, original enrollees.

He is survived by his siblings, Richard J. Wilson of Tumwater, Wash., Cheryl I. Wilson of Anchorage, Alaska, Barbara L. Wyatt with husband Brian of Shelton, Wash., Sheila J. Wildman of Terre Haute, Ind.; many cousins, nieces and nephews; and his close friend/brother, Steve Prohaska with wife Korliss.



DeLois Scott

(Retha) DeLois Scott passed peacefully during the night on Feb. 24, 2013, at Sandalwood Manor in Calimesa, Calif., where she had been lovingly cared for in the last few weeks of her life. She was born on Sept. 22, 1927, in Whitefield, Okla., the daughter of Dewey Beene and Gertrude West Beene, the granddaughter of Choctaw roll member Jennie Taylor West, and great-niece of World War I Choctaw code-talker Robert Taylor. Long-time residents of Stigler, Mrs. Scott's parents moved with their four children to California in 1942 during difficult economic times and settled in the Bakersfield area. A teenager when she moved from Oklahoma, Mrs. Scott stayed in touch with family and many friends in Haskell County in the years since. Until last few years, when her health kept her a little closer to home, she regularly attended and took great pleasure in the Oklahoma reunions and tribal events held annually in Southern California. A faithful reader of the Biskinik, Mrs. Scott was widely acknowledged as the family historian and for keeping everyone up-to-date on Stigler friends and civic events. Many times she noted the generous tribal opportunities that allowed both her own continuing education and that of her grandchildren. The family wishes especially to acknowledge Oklahoma friends who stayed in contact and whose letters and cards were a source of great joy throughout her life.

She was preceded in death by her daughter, Pamela Scott Dominguez in 1969; and her husband of 60 years, Frank P. Scott, in 2010.

Mrs. Scott is survived by her son, Frank Scott of Austin, Texas, and his children, Lindsey Ann and Sean Casey; grandson, Joseph Kyle Dominguez of San Jacinto, Calif., and his children Joseph, Trystan, Elijah and Ethan; siblings, June Williams and Franklin D. Beene, both of Bakersfield, Calif., and Delmar Leon Beene of Phoenix, Ariz; and numerous coworkers and friends from the Cherry Valley area, where she lived for over 50 years.



Morris LaFlore

Morris James LaFlore, 76, of Hugo passed away on Feb. 13, 2013, in Hugo. He was born Oct. 29, 1936, in Corrine, the son of John LaFlore and Suzanna (Nehka) LaFlore. He had lived all of his life in the Hugo area. He married Lillie Jane Miller on Oct. 19, 1985, at Sandy Creek Church in Rufe. James was a person of love, peace, and self-control. He loved to fish every chance he had but more that that, he loved to help people if they needed it. He loved to teach his grandkids the way he was raised, to be unselfish and to love everyone the same. In his spare time he loved to tinker with lawnmowers and cars even if he knew he couldn't fix it. He loved to be outside, no matter the weather. He also loved to listen to Choctaw Hymns and he always read his Choctaw Bible before he went to sleep.

He was preceded in death by his parents; sisters, Gladys Moore and Mariane Aaron; and brothers, Dave "Sonny" Wickson and Edmond Wickson.

He is survived by his wife, Lillie LaFlore; sons, Morris James "Jimmy" LaFlore Jr. with wife Amanda of Hugo, and Chance John LaFlore of Durant; daughters, Cindy Johnson and Regena Shepherd with husband John, all of Hugo; siblings, Ethel Ischcomer and Ray Wickson, both of Sobol, Annie Wickson of Hugo, Fred Wickson of Frogville, and Holliston Wickson of Ft. Towson; eight grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; 29 nieces and nephews; along with many other relatives and friends.



Jumping at a second chance

By LARISSA COPELAND
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Pam (Carter) Sweat, a 5-foot-8 center originally from Idabel, played her last college basketball game ever last month. While playing for Southern Crescent Technical College in Griffin, Ga., she started all 19 games this season and attracted attention everywhere she played.

And by the way, this ball player is a 49-year-old mother of three.

“I’m the oldest woman playing college basketball,” says Sweat. “Not sure I want that title though!” she says with a laugh.

Sweat, a forensics major, was also a basketball standout when she played more than three decades ago in high school at Idabel, under the guidance of renowned coach Burl Plunkett, and in Haworth, then later in college at East Central University in Ada.

Basketball, it seems, is in her blood. Her mother, Norma (Green) Carter, was herself a star ball player in her youth when she played for Haworth High School. Her team won the 1959-60 Class A State Basketball Championship and Norma was named All State Guard. Then, in 1974, Norma was selected by the Jim Thorpe Award Committee as a member of the All Time Greats of Oklahoma girl’s basketball team for the decade 1960-69.

“Both of us love the sport of basketball,” Norma says about her daughter. “The challenge to excel and determination to win with a happy spirit proves to be a mutual trait.”

Years earlier, Sweat attended ECU on a full sports scholarship and played on the team for three years, leaving the school just short of her senior year to start a family. This left her with one year of college sports eligibility.

After raising her three children – Brandice, 27, Zach, 24, and Jacee, 19 – she enrolled back in college. It was there at a student fair that Robert Gilbert and

Duane Reed, the women’s basketball coaches at Southern Crescent, approached her about trying out for the team. It was an offer that caught her by surprise but one she found herself seriously considering. Gilbert said to her, “You look like you’ve played some ball in your day,” she said, replaying the conversation. “And I said to him ‘yeah, I played in my day,’ and then under my breath said, ‘you just don’t know how many days ago it’s been,’” she says, laughing.

“I thought, man, he must not realize how old I am,” she continued.

Sweat was skeptical about going out for the team at first, knowing it’d take a lot to be successful going up against players close to 30 years her junior. Two close friends encouraged her, saying, “You can do it, Pam! You’re in great shape; you can keep up with the younger girls.”

Her health and physical fitness have always been a priority, but playing college basketball meant taking it up a notch to be conditioned to perform at her best.

“I’ve always tried to keep in shape,” she says. “My concern wasn’t to look good; it’s just that I’ve seen so many people that, as they age, they develop health issues like diabetes, heart problems, gout,



During her high school days in Haworth and Idabel, Pam (Carter) Sweat, above and left, was hard to stop on the basketball court. Today at 49 years old, below, she hit the floor again after an almost three-decade hiatus, going up against players 25-30 years her junior.

problems like that. And I thought, you know, I don’t want that. I don’t want to have to take medication the rest of my life. And if it means a little bit of sweat and working out to try to prevent it, that’s what I’m going to do.”

With that attitude and drive, she decided to give it a shot and try out for the ball team.

Before the tryouts though, she wanted to look up and see if there were any age limits that would keep her from playing. There were none that she could find but she did read that the oldest woman playing college ball was 47 years old and it dawned on her that, should she make the team, she would then be the oldest woman to play.

She decided she would keep her age to herself initially, not telling any of the other players trying out. “I didn’t want to tell how old I was at first,” she says. “I wanted to be known for my athletic ability, not my age.”

And it was that athletic ability that carried her through tryouts that day – she stood out to the coaches and she made the basketball team.

“I never dreamed I’d be doing this at 49,” she says.

Another thing she never dreamed of was the reaction she has received because of her performance on the court. Along with the support of her family, including husband, Rodney, her children, and



parents Bobby and Norma Carter of Idabel, she’s experienced an outpouring of support from friends on her Facebook page, from fans of her school and even those from opposing teams.

“I didn’t realize what an impact this had on people,” she says, “but the response has been incredible. I get cheers from the stands at home games and on the road and comments from players and coaches, saying I inspire them. It’s been a great, humbling experience.”

The season is over now, her last college game ever in the books. While the season didn’t turn out as successfully as she hoped, she says it was a wonderful endeavor for her to be able to play on the team.

“One thing I can say about my team was that no one ever quit. Everyone played as hard as they could up until the very last buzzer, no matter the score. I really admired that about this team,” she says about the impression her Lady Tiger teammates had on her.

That impression is mutual, it seems. On March 12, at the school’s annual sports banquet, along with numerous awards for her accomplishments, Sweat was also presented with her jersey, #14.

She has no regrets about the entire experience and is thankful to have been able to live it. “Every day when I step out of bed, I want to be able to say I am doing and being the best I can,” she explains.

“Looking back, you don’t get a re-do. You only get to go around the mountain once. Each day you have, that’s it, you know. And I don’t want to have any regrets over not trying something.

“Not many people get a second chance at something,” she continues. “I’m thankful I was able to have this second chance to play ball one last time.”



Choctaw Nation: BRET MOSS
Chief Gregory E. Pyle, Rattan’s JOM Coordinator Felicia Morse, Superintendent Shari Pillow, Vice Chairperson Roseanna Sorrells, Chairperson Kendra Taylor and Choctaw Nation Sr. Director of JOM Rebecca Hawkins display the award for exemplary school.

Rattan school wins JOM exemplary school award

By BRET MOSS
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

The Muscogee (Creek) Nation hosted the 2013 Johnson-O’Malley (JOM) Awards Banquet to honor the exemplary JOM programs from each of the Five Civilized Tribes of Oklahoma. The meeting was held on March 5 at the Tulsa Renaissance Convention Center and featured an invocation by tribal princesses from all nations represented.

Chief Gregory E. Pyle and a number of the Choctaw Tribal Council were in attendance to display their support for the JOM program and education of Native students. District 7 Councilman Jack Austin was especially proud of the Rattan JOM program from his area, which won this year’s exemplary JOM Program Award from the Choctaw Nation.

“It is a testimony to what great services we provide to our Native American students,” said Rattan School Superintendent Shari Pillow. “It makes me very proud of our school,” she continued. Pillow was accompanied in accepting the award by Rattan’s JOM Coordinator Felicia Morse, Chairperson Kendra Taylor and Vice Chairperson Roseanna Sorrells.

June Praytor, member of the Joint Tribes Planning Committee, presented Rattan’s JOM associates the award, making note of the longevity and consistency of the program’s uninterrupted service to Native students. She mentioned that though the down economy funding has caused difficulties in the realm of education, Rattan’s JOM program has done an

exceptional job providing steady support for Native students.

The evening served as a conclusion to a two-day JOM gathering and was complete with entertainment from flutist Rev. Nelson Harjo and musicians Julian B and Nokvs Haga. Tickets were drawn for door prizes as well as items raffled to raise money for educational programs.

Muscogee (Creek) Principal Chief George Tiger addressed the audience, expressing his appreciation for all in attendance.

“I feel like we have been invaded by Choctaws,” he jested as he acknowledged the strong Choctaw presence at the banquet. He continued by stating that the turnout was a testament to how much the Choctaw Nation cares about education.

- **The Johnson-O’Malley Act was signed into law on April 16, 1934.**
- **It is a federally-funded program which provides supplemental education programs for Native American students attending public schools.**
- **The Choctaw Nation, under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Muskogee Area Office, contracted the Johnson O’Malley Program on Oct. 1, 1984.**
- **The JOM Program currently serves more than of 8,640 students in approximately 68 schools within the Choctaw Nation’s 10-½ counties.**

Diabetes awareness and prevention

To celebrate National Diabetes Awareness and Prevention Day March 26 the Choctaw Nation Community Diabetes Educators had tables in the clinics of Idabel, Hugo, Rubin White, and McAlester. Each table included information to manage diabetes as well as prevention of diabetes. The American Diabetes Association “Are you at risk for Type 2 diabetes” was administered to visitors in clinics and persons scoring 5 or higher on the seven question test were counseled on prevention. Take the risk test for yourself and with a score of 5 or higher speak to your provider or diabetes educator in your clinic to learn methods to prevent



diabetes.

Choctaw Nation has received a grant from AADE and CDE for prevention of Type 2 diabetes. This grant will target clients with diagnoses of pre-diabetes, women with diagnoses of gestational diabetes, and a BMI of greater than 24 kg/m2.

The one year pilot program will began the end of May in McAlester Clinic with Lee Ann Sherrill, RN, CDE, and Mandy Grammer as Lifestyle coaches.

If you live in the McAlester area and wish to participate in the year-long education process to live a healthy lifestyle contact Lee Ann Sherrill at 918-423-8440, ext. 31069 or lasherrill@cnhsa.com.

ARE YOU AT RISK FOR
TYPE 2 DIABETES?

Diabetes Risk Test

1 How old are you?

Less than 40 years (0 points)
40–49 years (1 point)
50–59 years (2 points)
60 years or older (3 points)

2 Are you a man or a woman?

Man (1 point) Woman (0 points)

3 If you are a woman, have you ever been diagnosed with gestational diabetes?

Yes (1 point) No (0 points)

4 Do you have a mother, father, sister, or brother with diabetes?

Yes (1 point) No (0 points)

5 Have you ever been diagnosed with high blood pressure?

Yes (1 point) No (0 points)

6 Are you physically active?

Yes (0 points) No (1 point)

7 What is your weight status? (see chart at right)

Write your score in the box.

Add up your score.

Height	Weight (lbs.)	
4' 10"	119-142	143-190 191+
4' 11"	124-147	148-197 198+
5' 0"	128-152	153-203 204+
5' 1"	132-157	158-210 211+
5' 2"	136-163	164-217 218+
5' 3"	141-168	169-224 225+
5' 4"	145-173	174-231 232+
5' 5"	150-179	180-239 240+
5' 6"	155-185	186-246 247+
5' 7"	159-190	191-254 255+
5' 8"	164-196	197-261 262+
5' 9"	169-202	203-269 270+
5' 10"	174-208	209-277 278+
5' 11"	179-214	215-285 286+
6' 0"	184-220	221-293 294+
6' 1"	189-226	227-301 302+
6' 2"	194-232	233-310 311+
6' 3"	200-239	240-318 319+
6' 4"	205-245	246-327 328+

(1 Point) (2 Points) (3 Points)

You weigh less than the amount in the left column (0 points)

Adapted from Bang et al., Ann Intern Med 151:775-783, 2009.

Original algorithm was validated without gestational diabetes as part of the model.

If you scored 5 or higher:

You are at increased risk for having type 2 diabetes. However, only your doctor can tell for sure if you do have type 2 diabetes or prediabetes (a condition that precedes type 2 diabetes in which blood glucose levels are higher than normal). Talk to your doctor to see if additional testing is needed.

Type 2 diabetes is more common in African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, American Indians, and Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

For more information, visit us at www.diabetes.org or call 1-800-DIABETES

Visit us on Facebook

[Facebook.com/AmericanDiabetesAssociation](https://www.facebook.com/AmericanDiabetesAssociation)

STOP DIABETES

Lower Your Risk

The good news is that you can manage your risk for type 2 diabetes. Small steps make a big difference and can help you live a longer, healthier life.

If you are at high risk, your first step is to see your doctor to see if additional testing is needed.

Visit diabetes.org or call 1-800-DIABETES for information, tips on getting started, and ideas for simple, small steps you can take to help lower your risk.

2013 YOUTH OUTREACH SAFETY CAMP

By **BRET MOSS**
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

A number of Choctaw Nation departments gathered at Hugo Lake on March 21, to teach Choctaw youth about safe practices for everyday activities. Students from various schools were able to learn many life skills though several stations set up around the shore of the lake. Stations included boat safety, fishing lessons, skeet shooting, drunk driving simulations, and practice on fire safety and prevention. Fitness and recycling were also a strong subjects during the day. Participants were able to compete in a recycling

race - learning to distinguish between recyclable and non-recyclable materials. Regular foot races and well as jumping contests were also offered for students to test their physical abilities. Tribal D.A.R.E. Officer Isaac James taught students to importance of saying no to drugs, and Youth Outreach's Jessie Pacheco gave a speech on what it means to be successful in life. Safety Camp is an annual event hosted to better improve the health and safety of Choctaw youth.



Choctaw youth practice some speedy sorting during the recycling race.



Joey Tom encourages Junior Standridge of Battiest to jump just a little higher.



Dallas Roberts of Poteau practices his low crawl while in the smoke maze.



Thomas Blakely of Idabel and Dominic Winn of Calera team up to place the nozzle on the fire hose.

Photos by **BRET MOSS** | Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma



Students gather under the tent after lunch to grab a group photo to remember the day.

Use a tape measure to help clean up the clutter

Ready to tackle your annual spring clean tasks? Along with your broom and mop, be sure to grab a tape measure, too. That's right. A tape measure. Measuring the distance between your belongings will make your house a safer place to live for you and your family, said Gina Peek, Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension housing and consumer specialist. "Making sure there's plenty of space to move around the house cuts down the chances for trips, slips, falls, bumps and bruises," Peek said. There are a couple of key numbers to keep in mind as you are wielding that tape measure - 18 inches and 32 inches, said Tracey Watts, Choctaw County Extension Educator. Eighteen inches is a good distance to place between a coffee table, if you have one, and a couch or other type of seating. However, for most people, leaving at least 32 inches around furniture and other stationary items allows for comfortable movement in

kitchens, bedrooms, living rooms and other living spaces. This is enough space to allow walkers and wheelchairs to pass, and provides a comfortable amount of room for people to enter, exit and move around in a seating area. "To test the spacing, use a walker to see how easily you can navigate," Watts said. "If it's too hard or you have to make too many turns, think about rearranging or removing pieces to cut down on clutter and overcrowding, which should make it easier to maneuver." As you are taking a tour of your house with your tape measure, take note of other potential hazards such as poor lighting, loose rugs, less than sturdy furniture, and most common, objects on the floor that could cause you to trip. "Be honest with yourself," said Watts. "If you're not good at identifying your clutter, call a friend or family member to help you." When it comes to evaluating the lighting in your house, pay special attention to walkways, stairs, kitchen

counters, closets, workshops and sewing areas to make sure there is not only proper illumination, but also that the lighting is even. "Shadows can be just as much of a hazard as poor lighting," Watts said. "Place night lights in bedrooms, bathrooms and hallways, and put lamps near the beds. Don't forget to ensure you have a clear path to any light switches, and especially ones located away from doorways." If more information is needed, please contact the Cooperative Extension Office at 580-326-3359 or come by the office 415 E. Rena in Hugo. Free Fact Sheets are available concerning home safety and many other topics. Oklahoma State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, State and Local Governments Cooperating: The Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, or status as a veteran, and is an equal opportunity employer.

Parents as role models for healthy choices

Dining in more than dining out is easier on the waistline, not to mention the wallet. But when special occasions roll around or schedules get too hectic, is it possible for the family to eat out and stick to those healthy habits we all worked so hard to instill? Absolutely. "When you can, plan your meals, grocery shop ahead of time and eat at home. But, sometimes that's just not possible," said Deana Hildebrand, Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension nutrition specialist. "In those cases, go to restaurants where you know healthier options are available for kids as well as adults." There are some effective strategies families can use to make sure everyone, including the young ones, stay on a healthy track while eating out, said Tracey Watts, Choctaw County Extension Educator. For instance, when ordering at the restaurant, point out the healthier menu items and encourage the kids to pick from those options. Positive choices could include grilled instead of breaded and fried meats, a side salad, fresh vegetables, some fruit, low-fat milk or water. Or, since most children's meals come with an entrée, side item and beverage, give kids a chance to pick two healthy items and one that is less nutritious. For

example, they could choose a hamburger, apple slices and a small soda or a grilled chicken sandwich, small fries and low-fat milk. "You can even take this a step further and set a goal with your kids to eventually make all three choices healthy," Watts said. "The real key to making these strategies work is parents role modeling good choices when eating out." These positive strategies become even more important in light of a recently released report by the nonprofit Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) criticizing some of the nation's top chain restaurants for offering kids' menu items lacking in nutritional value. In the report, CSPI found the majority of restaurants' offerings had too many calories, too much salt or fat or not enough fruits and vegetables. The organization reviewed almost 3,500 meal possibilities from chain restaurants such as Applebee's, Denny's, Dairy Queen and Subway, and 97 percent fell well short of CSPI nutrition standards for 4 to 8-year-olds. Watching the calories and making good nutritional choices hit close to home in Oklahoma, with about one in three youth and two out of every three adults in the state being overweight or obese. Children who are obese af-

ter age 6 are 50 percent more likely to be obese adults, and that likelihood jumps to 80 percent if kids remain obese into adolescence. Besides health concerns such as increased risk for Type 2 diabetes, people who are obese generally spend nearly \$1,500 more a year on health care costs compared to a person maintaining a healthy weight. "For these reasons, it's critically important we help kids learn to make healthy food choices early in life," Watts said. "One way you can encourage your kids is to expose them to healthy foods and role model healthy behaviors as soon as older infants and toddlers move from breast milk or formula to solid foods." For more information on healthy eating options and nutrition classes, contact Choctaw County Extension office, 580-326-3359. Free Fact Sheets are available on many topics related to nutrition and eating, including special needs such as diabetes, pregnancy, children, and aging. Another excellent resource is www.choosemyplate.gov. This information is brought to you by Oklahoma State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and state and local governments cooperating: The Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service.



Contact us to participate in running for our Okla Chahta Princess

18TH ANNUAL OKLA CHAHTA Choctaw Gathering

at Bakersfield College in Bakersfield, California

Saturday, May 4

Visit with Chief Pyle & Assistant Chief Batton
History & Culture ♦ Heritage Booth ♦ Traditional Items on Display
Join in Traditional Dance ♦ Learn about Traditional Weaponry

Make-and-Take Classes on Traditional Dressmaking, Lace Collar Necklace, Basket Making, Pottery and more

Also on Saturday - A Traditional Wedding and Stickball and Tribal Membership/CDIB will have a booth available.

Sunday, May 5

Church Services ♦ Social Dancing ♦ Children's Games ♦ Crafts



For more information:
661-368-2067
or
choctaws@oklachahta.org

Shell Beads

The ancient Choctaw ‘bling’

One basic and timeless characteristic of human nature is that people like to look good. Observation shows us that, whether back in 10,000 B.C. or today, individuals were and are often willing to go to extraordinary lengths to have a “knockout” appearance. This month’s edition of Iti Fabvssa will focus on what was traditionally one of the most important personal accessories for both Choctaw men and women: shell beads.

Choctaw ancestors made beads from a variety of different types of shell, but the largest and most impressive beads were made from the columella of the Busycon shell. Some readers from last month may remember that the outer part of Busycon shells was removed and used as the raw material in making gorgets. The remaining, inner, part of the shell is the columella. These long, thick, solid, spiraling pieces of shell were a highly prized material for making clothing pins, ear ornaments, and of course, beads. The ancient Choctaw word for these columella beads was probably “oksup” (see Byington 1915:301).

Due to the hardness and toughness of the shell, making columella beads requires patience, skill, and good tools. In the early 1700s, English blacksmiths experimented with trying to make Native American-style columella beads. Even with their hardened steel tools, they were unable to do it effectively (Lawson 1813). Native Southeasterners stopped making columella beads more than 200 years ago, and unfortunately the few written descriptions of how they did it are very incomplete. However, by examining archaeological materials left behind in ancient villages, and experimenting with replicas of the ancient tools, it has been possible to reconstruct this Indigenous technology (Kinsella 2002; Kozuch 2003; Thompson 2008). Recovering this knowledge is important because it documents one specific way that our ancestors applied their intelligence and ingenuity to accomplish a difficult technical process.

The first step in making columella beads often involved heating the columella in a fire (Fig. 2). Temperatures high enough to turn a freshwater mussel



Figure 1. Necklace of whelk shell disk beads with native copper gorget, made by author

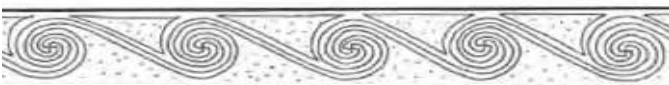
shell into powder will only somewhat soften the tough columella.

After the columella cooled, ancient artisans carefully chipped away and remaining edges of the whorl with a sharp-edged stone (Fig. 3-A). Thereafter, the columella was more finely shaped by grinding its edges on sandstone. Then, it was cut into blanks (Fig. 3-B), using a flake of stone dipped in wet sand that was sawn back and forth over the shell. After the columella bead blanks were cut, artisans individually smoothed up each of them by grinding them one at a time on a piece of sandstone (Fig. 3-C).

The hardest challenge in making columella beads lies in drilling holes through them so that they can be strung.

The first difficulty to overcome is finding a way to hold the small, round, slippery bead blank so that it can be drilled. An ingeniously simple vice can be made by tightly bending a section of a green mulberry branch in half. The wood splinters at the bend, but the tough bark remains, making a flexible joint. The two sides of the bent branch are pushed together and then bound with leather. Each wrap makes the vice tighter and tighter (Fig. 4).

Tools made from tiny chips of stone are common at pre-contact Native American



Iti Fabvssa

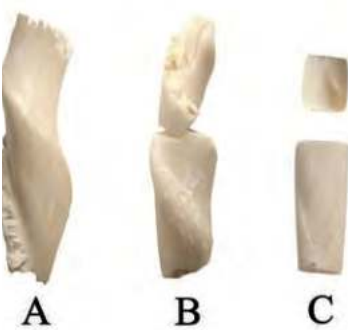


Figure 3. Making bead blanks: (A) columella after chipping; (B) mid-way through cutting bead blanks (C) bead blanks ready for drilling



Figure 2. Heating a whelk columella

villages in the southeastern United States. Studies on the edge wear and residues on these tools make it clear that many of them were used for drilling shell (e.g. Ensor 1991:30-31). These tiny drill bits are quite effective if they are slid into a hollow piece of river cane, which serves as a drill shaft.

The simplest way to use these drills is to spin them back and forth in the hands. With this technique, the author has been able to sustain drilling speeds in excess of 950 rpm. This setup is effective, but it can be improved by wrapping the string of a small bow around the drill shaft, pushing down on the top of the drill shaft, and pulling the bow back and forth. The string of the bow grips the drill shaft and spins it many times with each stroke. Using this technique, the author has attained drilling speeds of nearly 3,000 rpm (faster than most modern high-speed hand drills). Once a small hole is started in the shell, the

effectiveness of this setup can be increased by dipping the drill point in a cutting slurry made from water and very finely crushed pieces of flint (Fig. 5).

Even with this bow-drilling technique, it still takes several hours to make even one columella bead (Fig. 6). Making a necklace would have taken weeks. Judging from some surviving pre-contact artwork, it appears



Figure 4. Holding a columella bead in a mulberry branch vice, drilling with a bow drill.

Figure 5, below, shows a close up of the drilling.



pleasing to the senses. Today, we are surrounded by hard, smooth shiny objects made of glass, plastic, and polished metal. Our ancestors had little or no contact with these types of materials, and so the sensation created by a beautiful shell necklace must have been even greater for them than it is for us. Making these beads was clearly worth the effort.

Because of their beauty, compact nature, and the high amount of labor investment, shell beads represented a standard of wealth, and were often used in trade. Adair said that in Choctaw/Chickasaw country one shell bead the length of a finger (1775:170) was worth four buckskins in trade value. According to Byington: “Ikonla apakfopa achvffakmvt isuba iti illibekatok,” “One necklace was worth a horse” (1915:301). However, it is uncertain how standardized the value of these beads originally was. They were probably not used exactly like European money.

What is certain is that from an early date European traders did all they could to quantify the value of Native shell beads. Their purpose in doing this was to standardize trade with Native groups so that they could ultimately control the market and dictate the terms of trade. Sadly, these efforts were pretty successful. In the 1700s, beads mass-produced by Europeans flooded the market, and all but ended Native manufacture of columella beads.



Figure 6. Columella beads: (A and B) Ancient Choctaw columella beads, Lubbub Creek Site; (C) Columella bead made by author with stone tools

Choctaw youth basketball teams play on Texas Legends court

Choctaw Nation Summer Camps Program and the Texas Legends hosted 23 youth Choctaw players at Dr. Pepper Arena in Frisco, Texas, on March 16. Both boys and girls teams held scrimmage games on the Texas Legends court, watched the professional athletes prepare for the evening’s game and experienced the excitement of watching the Legends play the Santa Cruz Warriors.

“The goal of our program is to help Choctaw youth build character through participation in sports. Events like these allow our kids to build strong relationships with each other, experience new places and people, and develop values that can positively impact their lives in other areas besides on the court or on the ball field. We hope these opportunities are fun, educational and inspirational for our players” says Brad Clay, assistant Summer Youth Camp coordinator.

The Texas Legends were founded in 2006 and are part of the NBA D-League and are affiliated with the Dallas Mavericks. This is the second year the Legends have hosted Choctaw teams in Dr. Pepper Arena.

“Events like these allow our young players to see how much work goes into every game. The practice, the warm up and the actual event... They get the feel of a professional court and get to watch how each player prepares for each game. Experiencing venues like Dr. Pepper Area first hand helps them envision themselves beyond their high school gym. What makes it special for our kids to see the D-League players is the fact that they’re still working hard every day to accomplish their ultimate goal of being on an NBA roster. We want our kids to understand that the hard

work pays off, whether in the classroom or on the court, you will always be rewarded for putting in the time and trying to be better,” states Clay.

Upcoming Choctaw youth basketball events include the Jim Thorpe Native Games in June, Choctaw Nation Summer Youth Basketball Camps and The July Jump Off sponsored by 4 Love of the Game both in July.

“Getting our youth involved in sports at a young age has such a positive impact on their lives. In these days of social networking, computers and video games, it’s tough to get the young people to get out and play, so we try to create a fun environment and teach the basic fundamentals in our camps that will give each kid a foundation for success and hopefully keep their interest throughout their young adult life. Some will go on to get college scholarships and even play professional sports as they graduate high school. That’s the most rewarding part of our job, seeing these young kids grow right before our eyes and take the things we teach them in our camps and use them to become successful young adults,” continues Clay.

For camp applications, visit the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Cultural Services website at www.choctawnationculture.com or www.choctawnation.com. For additional information on the other youth events listed above, please contact Brad Clay, Assistant Summer Youth Camp Coordinator, Curtis Steve, Summer Youth Camp Coordinator, or Kevin Gwin, Director of Summer Youth Camps at 1-800-522-6170. Summer Youth Camps are a part of the Choctaw Nation Cultural Services Department.

Chahta Anumpa Aiikhvna

◆◆◆ Lesson of the Month ◆◆◆

Chi hochowa ho?

Pronounced:

Che ho-cho-wa ho? (question marker)

Are you cold?

Word Meaning:

chi – you hochowa – cold (body temperature)

ho – question marker

Question markers o, ho, yo, come at the end of a question and the vowel ‘o’ is underlined to show it has a nasalized sound.

Rules to follow for correct usage of question markers.

1. *o* – follows a word that ends in a consonant
2. *ho* – follows a verb
3. *yo* – follows descriptive words/adjectives, numbers, etc.

The use of ‘chi’ means ‘you’ and is in the second person singular form. This usage shows how ‘you - chi’ is affected by an action or adjective.

**Ex. Ofi yät chi haklo tuk.
Chi chaha.**

**The dog heard you.
You are tall.**

A, sv hochowa.

Pronounced:

Anh, sah ho-cho-wa

I am cold.

Keyu, sv hochowa kiyo.

Pronounced:

Kee-yoh, sah ho-cho-wa kee-yoh.

No, I am not cold.

Word Meaning:

sv – I am hochowa – cold (body temperature)
keyu – no kiyo – not A – Yes

Remember: You may also add the adverbs of degree words:

fehna – very chohmi – sort of/ kind of/ somewhat
chiiyohmi – very(emphatic)/ really/quite

1. **Sv hochowa fehna.** I am very cold.
2. **Sv hochowa chohmi.** I am sort of/kind of cold.
3. **Sv hochowa chiiyohmi!** I am really cold.