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CHOCTAW NATION

The Official Publication of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

April 2016 Issue

Tribal Council holds regular session

The Choctaw Nation Tribal Council met in regular session March 12 at Tvshka Homma. Committees from the following departments reported: Real Property Management, Hugo Health Clinic, Idabel Travel Plaza, Food Distribution, Historic Preservation, Cemetery Crew, and Casino Too in Antlers.

- Approve the Family Violence Prevention Grant proposal
- Application for the Tribal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program
- Application for the Native American Library Services Basic Grant
- Application for the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program
- Application for the Year Two Continuation for the 2015 Replicating Evidence-Based Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program Grant
- Funds and budget for the Indian Community Development Block Grant-Antlers Elder Housing, Broken Bow Elder Housing, and Coalgate Elder Housing
- Sewer line easement on Choctaw Tribal Fee land to be dedicated to the City of McAlester, Pittsburg County, Oklahoma
- Approve a limited waiver to sovereign immunity, community center and Head Start/Preschool facilities in Hugo, Bethel, and Atoka

For detailed meeting information on these resolutions and council bills, go to <http://www.choctawnation.com/government/tribal-council-bills/2016-council-bills>.

Tribal Council meets at 10 a.m. on the second Saturday of each month in the Council Chambers at Tvshka Homma.

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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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From the Earth to the Sky: New Headquarters, Regional Clinic Signal Progress for Nation

By CHARLES CLARK
Choctaw Nation

A much-anticipated event today gave a glimpse into the future of the Choctaw Nation. The topping out ceremony for the Regional Medical Clinic and ground breaking ceremony for the Tribal Headquarters campus were held at 10 a.m. March 29, in Durant.

Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. welcomed the crowd of nearly 300 people who witnessed the event.

“It is an historic day for the tribe,” he said before introducing Chief Gary Batton.

“This is a blessed day for the Choctaw Nation,” said Chief Batton. Because of

the two new facilities, he said, “Soon Choctaw members will not have to travel so far for their services.”

Tribal Councilman Joe Coley led an opening prayer followed by introduction of the Tribal Council and other leaders, local officials, and other dignitaries.

Teresa Jackson, Senior Executive Officer of Health Services, offered a history of the topping out ceremony then invited guests to sign the final steel beam.

With a resounding “Raise the beam, please!” by Chief Batton, the beam was raised high overhead by a crane and set atop the steel frame.



(Above) Various tribal and local dignitaries took part in the topping off ceremony for the Regional Medical Clinic on March 29. (Left) Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. and Councilman Ted Dosh look on as Chief Gary Batton signs the beam used in the ceremony.



Photos by Deidre Elrod

Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr., District 9 Councilman Ted Dosh, and Chief Gary Batton turn dirt at the future site of the Choctaw Nation Tribal Headquarters. The Tribal Headquarters is set to be completed in 2017.

After the topping off ceremony for the clinic, the ground breaking for the headquarters was announced. Tribal and other civic leaders traveled a few yards east of the clinic site, took ceremonial shovels in hand, and turned the earth, completing the ceremony.

Both facilities are located north of the Choctaw Community Center.

Choctaw Nation Regional Medical Clinic Facts:

- The Choctaw Nation Durant Regional Medical Clinic is a 20-acre, campus-style development, which includes three buildings totaling 174,000 square feet. The three buildings include the Clinic, Health Administration, and Facilities Maintenance.
- The Clinic functions include Primary Care

- (including WIC, Pediatrics, Geriatrics, Podiatry and Specialty Care), Employee Health, Rehabilitation Services, Outpatient Surgery, Dental Care, Audiology, Eye Care, Pharmacy services, Lab and Radiology services, Behavioral Health, Education and meeting facilities, and a Wellness Center.
- Administration functions include WIC, Public Relations, Public Health Nutrition, Healthy Aging, Rapid Results, Education and meeting facilities and CNHSA Administration offices. Estimated completion date is January 2017.

Choctaw Nation Tribal Headquarters Campus Facts:

- The new Tribal

Headquarters will be a 500,000-square foot facility and will consolidate more than 30 Choctaw Nation offices that are now at multiple locations in Durant. It will also have outdoor architecture featuring two ponds and a walking track.

- The building also will showcase culturally significant artwork and symbolism.
- In addition to the main building, the campus will be home to a Data Center, Conference Center with Cafeteria, Wellness Center, Public Safety, Facilities Maintenance, Construction, and a 765-space parking garage. It is expected to be complete by the end of 2017.

If Disaster Strikes, Who Will You Call?

By CHARLES CLARK
Choctaw Nation

Photo by Charles Clark

Jeff Hansen, Emergency Manager for the Choctaw Nation, arrives at the department's new offices at 3008 University Blvd., Durant.

When Jeff Hansen sends out an email, people tend to read a little more closely.

Hansen is the Emergency Manager for the Choctaw Nation. The tribal member from Madill was a firefighter for a decade. While Hansen could have continued in the U.S. Air Force, he left because he “wanted to help people” and “give back to my tribe.” He and his wife, a fourth grade teacher, have two children.

Maintaining his own preparation, Hansen received his Emergency Manager Certification at the International Association of Emergency Managers Conference this winter in Las Vegas. The recognition makes him the only Tribal Emergency Manager in the

State of Oklahoma to hold the CEM.

This year Hansen launched a new individual assistance program offering \$30,000 in housing loans and grants.

The Choctaws are now the first tribe to have such a program, modeled after what FEMA does.

Another important and potentially life-saving project in development is a Choctaw Nation Alert System, featuring weather warnings by cell phone, text, and email.

“It will be focused on the 10 1/2 counties of this area,” Hansen said. Select Choctaw Nation employees “will go live” with it on May 1, 2016. He hopes to have it fully tested and available for tribal members by this year’s Labor Day Festival.

With a staff of two, including himself, his office has the daunting task of safety from natural disasters for the 10 1/2-county service area.

“Our office also utilizes a volunteer committee made up of Choctaw Nation employees from Health, Facilities, Housing, and more,” said Hansen.

The committee comes together for regular meetings, with the purpose of being prepared to draw upon their various departments if needed when a disaster strikes.

“There’s a lot of pre-planning to find out what our strengths and needs are,” Hansen said.

Pre-planning is a big part of the EM mission, but so is gathering data after

the fact for reports.

In November 2015, Hansen said, “We are still collecting information from the severe flooding that hit the hospital in Talihina last May.”

By December, another flood set a disaster record for his office to deal with, impacting 4,256 individuals.

From all the data in those reports, Hansen’s office can better coordinate the various facets of the next response, including having plenty of clean water available, knowing what facility to secure for those needing shelter, and completing forms for reimbursement from FEMA. Even with all that, Hansen knows there is a good chance for a surprise.

“It varies from year to year,” he said. “But we can count on there being three or four events.”

An event could be a tornado, flooding, drought, or an ice storm.

Emergency Management recently made a move to new offices at 3008 University Blvd., Suite 126, in northwest Durant. Other Choctaw Nation programs that work closely with Emergency Management also made the move, including Risk Management, Property & Casualty Insurance, Safety Management, and Workers Injury.

Two years from now, they expect to move their Emergency Operations Center into the Data Center that will be part of the new administration complex.



The Trail of Tears Commemorative Walk will be held this year at Tvshka Homma on Saturday, May 21, beginning at 10 a.m. The annual Walk is held to honor and recognize the Choctaws forced to march from their ancient homelands to Indian Territory nearly two centuries ago.

The Choctaw Nation Color Guard will lead the Walk. Chief Gary Batton will follow with Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr., the Tribal Council, and Choctaw royalty along with the hundreds of Choctaws and friends who will make the walk.

Activities will include gospel singing in the traditional Choctaw style and Chahta Anumpa language, cultural demonstrations, basket weaving, beading, pottery, and Choctaw social dancers.

Lunch will be served in the cafeteria and shuttle buses will be available between parking sites and the Capitol.

Faith ♦ Family ♦ Culture



A Celebration of Life, An Affirmation of Faith

The Easter celebration at Tvshka Homma was held on a beautiful Saturday in March. It was a true celebration of faith, family and culture with an inspirational message by Employee Chaplain Olin Williams. We celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”—John 3:16.

It is also about families spending time together. Moms, dads, children, grandparents—they all gathered on the Capitol grounds for the celebration and to enjoy lunch, fellowship, listen to gospel music, hunt eggs and play stickball. It meant so much to me to see them together for the day. The staff who worked for months in preparation did an outstanding job. Yakoke!



Arabella Gubanov enjoys the holiday festivities in her new Easter bonnet.

Events such as the Easter celebration, wild onion dinners, cultural meetings, the commemorative Trail of Tears Walk and the Labor Day Festival all provide the opportunity for Choctaw families to get together. They aren’t just events, they are celebrations of life and the culture of the Choctaw Nation.

Our ancestors endured atrocities we can’t imagine during the removal to Indian Territory. They started a new life and began building for the future—homes, churches, schools and businesses.

They weren’t just thinking of actual framed buildings, they were thinking of the values taught within the walls—faith, honor, respect, integrity—and together they could build a foundation that would withstand the many challenges of life. Today, the Choctaw Nation is continuing to build on that foundation for a sustainability that promotes growth and success of all tribal members.



The Future Belongs to the Youth of the Nation

Spring is here and this year was our grandchild’s first Easter, a time to start teaching him the true meaning of Easter and the reason we celebrate. We have thoroughly enjoyed the family traditions of attending Easter services together, lunch at church, decorating Easter eggs, and repeatedly hiding them for the kids.

It’s a busy time of year with many activities scheduled and planning more for the summer. School will be out soon and the end-of-year events celebrating our youth and their accomplishments will be upon us. The annual Johnson-O’Malley conference, year-end Youth Advisory

Board celebration, and high school or college graduations are just a few to name. It’s a time to rejoice with our youth over their accomplishments. The air is full of their excitement! As we honor them for their achievements, we urge them to continue to excel and set the example for future generations.

The Youth Advisory Board is an excellent example of leadership in the making. The YAB students participate in tribal events and are active in their communities in the Choctaw Nation. They work together to instill the values of faith, family and culture. Individual groups are teaching Choctaw culture in their schools while others are involved in Project Falvmichi, Too Much to Lose, fundraisers, recycling, and other projects beneficial to all ages. They are holding “A Real Taste of Choctaw” this month and will end the year with a banquet at Tvshka Homma.

Again this year, the Choctaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, Muscogee-Creek and Seminole Nations and the Bureau of Indian Affairs will honor exemplary JOM programs in Oklahoma. The Choctaw Nation is currently serving more than 12,000 students in JOM. There is a lot of work involved in becoming a successful JOM program and I’m thankful for the Choctaw Nation staff, the schools’ staff, and parents who understand the importance of the program while supporting the educational needs of Native American youth.

A good education will give our youth the tools to build a bright and secure future, one in which they can continue to share the values they have been taught.



Members of the YAB program participate in a Choctaw craft during the Taste of Choctaw event.

SOUTHEASTERN OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
NIKE N7 YOUTH MOVEMENT FOR CHOCTAW YOUTH

April 16, 2016
9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Paul Laird Field
218 W. University Blvd.
Durant, OK 74701

Guest Speaker
James Winchester, Kansas City Chiefs, Choctaw Member

Contact Jennifer Kemp at (580) 745-3101 to request assistance due to a disability. Accommodations cannot be guaranteed without adequate advance notice.

For more information contact Nicole Billy at (580) 924-8280 ext. 2717 or email nbilly@se.edu

Activities
Choctaw Dancing, stickball, lacrosse, language activities and more.
Open to all Choctaw youth ages 9-12.
Lunch & T-shirt Provided.

Sponsors: Chata Foundation, Choctaw Nation Culture Department, Choctaw Nation Youth Outreach, SE Native American Student Association, and SE Native American Institute.

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

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

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

Iti Fabussa

We recently answered a letter from a tribal member who was interested in exactly how a Choctaw donation made it across the Atlantic Ocean and into the hands of those suffering during the Irish Famine. This was such a fascinating story that we thought other readers might like to know as well. This month’s Iti Fabvssa reflects on the compassionate spirit of our ancestors and a single act of empathy.

To begin, the Irish Famine was not just one year of hardship, but rather a series of crop failures, or potato blight, responsible for the deaths of over one million people and the resulting emigration of over two million people beginning in 1845 and lasting to 1855 (Donnelly 2002, Kinealy 2012). Potato blight is caused by Phytophthora Infestans, a fungus that is extremely hard to treat in potato and tomato crops once a field has been infected because spores lie dormant in rotted plants and leaves, seeds, plant tubers in the ground, and the soil, even between seasons of planting (Hooker 1986, Uchida 2006). To make matters worse, once the spores become airborne, the infection quickly

tion, had no food to purchase even with the added wages. Added pressure to complete the projects just aggravated an already dire situation. International relief was generous, but in the end, the flood of imported grain and international charitable efforts were simply not enough to stop the spread of disease and starvation that swept the country.

At this time, in Indian Territory, Choctaw people were continuing to rebuild their lives after the forced removal from our homeland sixteen years earlier. Remembering our hardships along the Trail of Tears, Choctaw families identified with the anguish of the spread of disease and the starvation of the Irish people; it was a familiar heartache. In 1847, after the first potato blight, Choctaw people collected money and donated it to families in Ireland

Ireland in this manner. What is particularly interesting about this story is the very nature of how the Quakers helped the Irish people. Other religious organizations providing

Kindred Spirits, a tribute to the Choctaw people, was completed last year and sits in Bailic Park in County Cork, Ireland.

relief wanted something in return for their donation to Irish families. Whether it was a day’s labor, school attendance by Irish children, a verbal conversion, a baptism, or other request, aid was conditional. The Quakers, however, provided their services to Irish families unconditionally. This unconditional charity likely appealed to Choctaw people having suffered so greatly the years leading to removal, during the Trail of Tears, and after. This single act of compassion to seeming strangers some 4300 miles across the Atlantic Ocean, united two nations, forging a bond to last for generations. Today, Choctaw people can visit the beautiful monument commemorating this act of empathy created by artist Alex Pentex entitled: “Kindred Spirits” in Bailic Park in Middleton, Ireland (Kemp 2015).

The act of compassion by the Choctaw people was commemorated in a painting by America Meridith.

spreads to adjacent fields and can devastate farming communities for miles. Unfortunately, the loss from potato blight left an enormous food shortage in Ireland (approximately 60%), especially in remote areas, that was nearly impossible to remedy even if the British Empire had restricted the export of other crops from Ireland (Donnelly 2002). The British Empire responded to the famine, not with additional food supplements but with the implementation of work relief programs and management strategies; these quickly proved problematic. From the start they were ineffective solutions because the Irish people already suffering from the effects of malnutrition and exhaus-

through a philanthropist by the name of Myndert van Schaick (Kinealy 2015, Donnelly 2002). Schaick led the General Irish Relief Committee located in New York City who gave the money to the Society of Friends in Dublin, Ireland, which had been established in 1846 after the first potato blight. The Society of Friends worked with the Quakers to provide direct support to Irish families in the form of cash, fuel, seeds, blankets, and soup kitchens (Kinealy 2015). Several historical accounts attest to funds donated by Choctaw People, some at various locations, others at only one location, some even credit a much larger donation, but it is clear that at least \$170 did make it to

References:
Donnelly, James; 2002 The Great Irish Potato Famine. Sutton Publishing.
Hooker, W. J.; 1986. Editor. Compendium of Potato Diseases. American Phytopathological Society Press. St. Paul, Minnesota.
Kemp, Adam; 2015 Ireland Monument to Choctaw Nation Finished. NEWSOK Blogs. <http://newsok.com/article/5440927>
Kinealy, Christine; 2012 This Great Calamity: The Irish Famine 1845-1852. Gill & Macmillan. Ireland.
2015 Personal Communication
Uchida, Janice Y.; 2002 Knowledge Master. The University of Hawaii, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, Hawaii Department of Agriculture.

Looking for a Choctaw Veteran . . .

The Choctaw Nation Veterans Advocacy is in search of any relatives of Civil War Veteran, Captain Simeon Hamilton. Captain Hamilton died in February 1864 while a prisoner of war on Johnson’s Island in Ohio. Anyone with information can contact the Choctaw Nation Veterans Advocacy at (800) 522-6170 ext. 2735, Harlan Wright, or ext. 2160, Roger Hamill.

2016 T-Shirt Order Form

Children — (2-4), (6-8), (10-12), & (14-16)
Adults—Small, Medium, Large, X Large, 2XL, 3XL & 4XL
Deadline for ALL orders is **Friday June 30th, 2016**

Item	Size	Quantity	Total Price
T-Shirt — \$10 Ea.	_____	_____	_____
Cap — \$10 ea.	_____	_____	_____
Name _____			
Address _____			
City/State/Zip _____			
Phone Number _____			
Email _____			

Price includes postage & handling. Limited supply of children, 3X & 4X sizes. To order, send cash or money order (NO PERSONAL CHECKS) with completed form to:

Cultural Events Dept.
Trail of Tears Walk T-Shirt
P.O. Box 1210,
Durant, OK 74702-1210

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Choctaw Tag Sales Boost Needed Funding for All of Oklahoma

By CHARLES CLARK
Choctaw Nation

The Choctaw Nation, in the historic tradition of coming to the aid of its neighbors, is adding millions of dollars directly into programs benefiting Oklahoma communities.

While the Transportation Department of the Choctaw Nation continues to re-surface county roads, build school parking lots, and more, serving all who travel these roads, another tribal program has emerged as a substantial benefit to all Oklahomans.

Choctaw tribal tags for vehicles, a program operated by the Finance Department of the Choctaw Nation, was created through a compact with the State of Oklahoma and went into effect Jan. 1, 2015.

“As sovereign nations, many tribes are issuing their own tags,” said Josh Riley, of the Choctaw Nation’s Tribal Policy Department. “The Cherokee were the first in the state to go into a compact with Oklahoma. The Choctaws and Chickasaws went in together on a joint compact.”

Tribal members living anywhere in Oklahoma may opt to tag their vehicle with a Choctaw Nation license plate, rather than an Oklahoma plate.

Whitney Malott, Senior Accounting Manager, and Brooke Cooper, accountant, with Choctaw Nation Finance, have answers to the most frequently asked questions, including: If I buy a Choctaw tag, will state or local programs supported

by tag sales get less support?

Their answer: “No. The Choctaw Nation has negotiated a compact that ensures all programs will continue to be supported at the same rate. Examples of programs that are supported by tag sales include local school districts, County Highway Maintenance and Construction Fund, County Improvements for Roads and Bridges Fund, County Road Improvement Fund, County for Cities and Incorporated Towns, County Road Fund for County Roads, Oklahoma Law Enforcement Retirement Fund, Counties for Support of County Government, State Transportation Fund and Wildlife Conservation Fund.

Malott added, Choctaw tags can be purchased not only for cars, but “pickups, normal sized SUVs, and motorcycles, but not farm or commercial vehicles. Even some trailers can be tagged.”

According to Choctaw Nation Finance, 32,275 Choctaw tags were sold between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31, 2015 (the first full year of sales).

Figures available for total revenues from the Choctaw tags to the State of Oklahoma are (available only for the last six months of the year) totaled \$3,842,577.

Malott said, all rebates for the last calendar year have been mailed to the address listed on each member’s title.

Revenues for July through December 2015 from Choctaw tags to the State of Oklahoma reached \$3,842,577.

The Oklahoma Tax Commission reports

collections retained by the state from the sale of Choctaw license plates for the second half of the year were distributed to several city, county and state entities. Topping the list, school districts received \$1,391,013 of the funds. Among the distributions, over \$1 million were also allocated for construction and improvements on county roads and bridges, \$278,203 for county highways, and \$119,120 to cities and towns.

As figures are gathered for a complete picture of the fiscal year, the Choctaw Nation expects more good news to come. Choctaw Nation leadership plans to continue operation of the vehicle tag and other programs in such a way as to assist not only Choctaws, but, all of its neighbors in Oklahoma.

Choctaw Chief Gary Batton said, “The Chahta people wanted to show their pride by displaying the car tags. We are very fortunate to be able to provide a program that saves them money and helps the communities.”

Malott adds that if a tribal member purchased a tag in 2015 and have not received their rebate in the mail, or

if they have other tag-related questions, to email or call the car tag program. The phone number is (800) 522-6170 Extension 2921 and the email is cartags@choctawnation.com.

Information callers should have ready when contacting the tag office includes their tag identification number (if possible), month tag was purchased, and address listed on the title.



Photo by Charles Clark

Whitney Malott, Senior Accounting Manager, seated, and Brooke Cooper, accountant with Choctaw Nation Finance, are often the voices at the other end of the phone answering questions about Choctaw tag purchases.

Voter Registration: What You Need to Know

CHOCTAW VOTE

Be a Voice

Be a Choctaw Voter

The Choctaw Nation is excited to announce updates to our Voter Registration Department. In order to provide the best service to members, the mission is to preserve a separate voter information database and maintain communication with voters.

This initiative is to increase voter participation and promote election process transparency. To align with the goals, the department will strive to maintain accurate voter records for all eligible members by the next Tribal Elections in the summer of 2017.

It is the intent of the Voter Registration Department to provide every opportunity for tribal members to vote and have a voice in the Choctaw Nation.

Registering to vote is optional to all who qualify, but they are encouraged to take up the responsibility and the

privilege to do so. Even if a member has voted in tribal elections before, they should complete the new, updated Voter Registration Form to ensure information is up-to-date.

All voters will be required to provide a physical address so they are registered to vote in the proper District. Voters living outside the Choctaw Nation boundaries may choose to affiliate with a District or remain unaffiliated.

If you have received a Voter Registration packet for a loved one who has passed, please use the provided postage paid return envelope to send a copy of the obituary or death certificate.

Please refer below for information and instructions on what to do about the new voter registration procedures.

The Voter Registration Department will have staff available year round to assist Tribal Members regarding Choctaw Nation voter registration and tribal elections. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us at your convenience.

Can You Vote?

Anyone who meets the eligibility guidelines detailed in the Choctaw Election Ordinance, as such:

- Membership with the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.
- 18 years of age or older
- Completion of the Voter Registration Form.

Where is my Voter Registration Form?

A packet was mailed to eligible Tribal Members who have a current address on file with the Choctaw Nation Tribal Membership Department at the end of February 2016. You may also contact the Voter Registration Department in order to request the new form.

Voter Registration Contacts

Email:
voterregistration@choctawnation.com
Phone:
(580) 924-8280 or (800) 522-6170
Address:
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
ATTN: Voter Registration
P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702

What is in my Packet?

Packet included the following:

- Voter Registration Form with pre-populated information of Tribal Member.
- Registration Form Instructions.
- Cover letter.
- Postage paid return envelope.

Step 1 Open packet.



Step 2 Read cover letter.



Step 3 Read the voter registration form instructions.



Step 4 Review pre-populated information sheet. Make any changes needed, write date, sign in box.



Step 5 Place updated pre-populated information sheet in the provided postage paid return envelope.



Step 6 Mail updated information sheet to Voter Registration.



SAVE THE BOX TOPS

Choctaw Nation will select a school district within the nation to be the recipient of each Box Tops Program. The 2015-16 recipient will be Hartshorne Public School. Don't have anyone to give your box tops to? Here's how you can help!

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

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

Yakoke to all of the Biskinik readers for your Box Top contributions. You are making a difference!

For further information contact Jerry Tomlinson at 580-924-8280 ext. 2904

Research Participants Needed

Are you American Indian?
Do you live in the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma tribal boundaries?
Are you 18 years or older?
Are you female?

If the answers are YES, you may be eligible to participate in this voluntary research study. The purpose of this study is to learn more about the relationships between health, foods, and American Indian identity in your community. Individuals participating in this study will be interviewed about their memories, thoughts, and experiences with foods and eating, and will be asked to complete surveys about health, food environments, cultural identity, and body image. Participation in this study will take about 90 minutes, but could take up to 120 minutes. Study volunteers will be compensated for their time. Please contact Kasey Jernigan to learn more about the study and see if you qualify.

Kasey Jernigan: 617-595-3016 kjerniga@anthro.umass.edu

WANTED : Choctaw Foster Homes

2016 Tribal Foster & Adoptive Family Recruitment Fair

Saturday, May 7
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
The Riverwalk
1000 Riverwalk Terrace
Jenks, OK 74037

Choctaw foster homes needed in the Tulsa area

HEALTH

Can the Cancer

By ERIN ADAMS

Choctaw Nation

Halito, April is National Cancer Control Month. As mentioned in previous articles, people with diabetes have been shown to have a greater risk of developing cancer. Many of the lifestyle habits encouraged to be followed by people with diabetes, are also recommended by the American Cancer Society to decrease the risk of developing cancer. Colon cancer is one of the most common cancers linked to diabetes. Around one in 20 Americans will develop colon cancer at some point in their life, as reported by the American Cancer Society. According to the American Cancer Society there are several lifestyles which can help to decrease the risk for colon cancer. A few of those lifestyles are as followed:

- Being screened for colon cancer starting at the age of 50. However, if there are other risk factors, such as, family history of colon cancer, you should talk with your doctor about when and how often you should be screened for colon cancer.
- Having a wide variety of colorful fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Also avoiding or limiting red meats and processed meats such as hot dogs, bacon, sausage, etc.
- Daily physical activity is very important and can be as simple as going for a walk or doing upper body exercises to increase circulation.
- Getting and maintaining a healthy weight. By having evenly spaced and balanced meals with wide variety of colors from fruits, vegetables and whole grains along with lean meats, fat free or low fat dairy and having daily physical activity can help to get and keep a healthy weight.
- Do Not Smoke. If you are a smoker and want to quit go to American Cancer Society Guide to Quitting Smoking or call the American Cancer Society at 1-800-227-2345 for additional help.
- Limit Alcohol. Colon cancer has been linked to heavy drinking. The American Cancer Society recommends no more than 2 drinks per day for men and no more than 1 drink per day for women.

Adopting some or all of these lifestyle habits can not only decrease the risk for colon cancer, but for many other types of cancers, diabetes and heart disease.

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Project SAFE offers support and assistance to victims of sexual assault. Prevention is Possible is the motto for the 2016 SAAM Campaign. Sexual violence is any type of unwanted sexual contact. This can include words and actions of a sexual nature against a person's will and without their consent. Consent is voluntary, mutual, and can be withdrawn at any time. Reasons someone might not consent include fear, age, illness, disability, and/or influence of alcohol or other drugs. A person may use force, threats, manipulation, or coercion to commit sexual violence. Anyone can experience sexual violence, including children, teens, adults, and elders. Sexual violence affects people of all genders, ages, races, religions, incomes, abilities, professions, ethnicities, and sexual orientations. There is a social context that surrounds sexual violence: oppression and social norms that allow for sexism, racism, and other forms of inequality are all contributing factors. Victims are never at fault: It doesn't matter what someone is wearing or how they are acting, victims are never to blame. A person may use force, threats, manipulation, or coercion to commit sexual violence. An absence of injuries to the victim does not indicate consent. Sexual violence is preventable. We can all help create a culture of empathy, respect, and equity. Prevention starts with challenging victim-blaming and believing survivors when they disclose. In your personal life, you can model supportive relationships and behaviors and speak up when you hear sexist, racist, transphobic, or homophobic comments. Each of us is essential in challenging harmful attitudes and the societal acceptance of rape. Communities can successfully reduce the risk of sexual violence through efforts promoting respect, equality, and accountability. Download free resources at www.nsvrc.org/saam. Project SAFE services are confidential. Prevention is possible and we're here to help, regardless of Native American status. Call (800) 522-6170 to speak to a Project SAFE Coordinator and get help today.



Ethiopian Ginger Vegetables

Recipe from Fiery Cuisines

Recipe of the Month

This is a recipe to help increase vegetable intake with a wonderfully flavored vegetable dish from Ethiopia. **Ingredients:**
5 green chilies – skin, seeded and chopped
1 tsp fresh ginger – grated
6 small potatoes – cubed
½ lb green beans
4 carrots – cut into strips
2 med onions – quartered and separated
2 tbsp olive oil
2 cloves garlic minced
Salt and pepper to taste
Directions:
Place potatoes, green beans, and carrots into boiling water, cover and cook 5 mins. Remove veggies and rinse. Sauté the chilies and onion in oil until soft but not brown. Add the ginger, garlic, salt and pepper and sauté 5 mins. Add the rest of ingredients, stir well, and cook over medium heat until veggies are tender.

Nutrition Facts
Amount Per Serving
Calories 45, Total Fat 2.4g, Protein 0.9g, Carbohydrate 5.8g, Fiber 1.8g, Cholesterol 0mg, Sodium 22mg, Calcium 2%, Iron 2%

I hope you will enjoy this flavorful vegetable dish. For further information you may contact: Erin Adams, RD, LD, at the Choctaw Nation Diabetes Wellness Center 800-349-7026 ext. 6959.

***** Public Hearing Notice *****

Choctaw Nation Child Care Assistance Program
May 6, 2016, 9 a.m.
Choctaw Nation Child Care Assistance Office
3710 Choctaw Road, Durant, OK

The purpose of this hearing is to allow the public an opportunity to comment on the provisions of child care services under the Development Fund Plan. Child care providers, parents, and the public are invited to attend the hearing or may forward comments or questions to:

Choctaw Nation Child Care Assistance Program
ATTN: Monona Dill, Director
P.O. Box 1210, Durant, OK 74702
800-522-6170 or 580-924-8280 Ext. 2391

Poteau Clinic Rededicated

A rededication ceremony was held at the Choctaw Nation Rubin White Health Clinic in Poteau November 24, 2015, honoring Mr. Rubin White, a prominent Choctaw Member of LeFlore County. In 2015, the Rubin White Health Clinic underwent a major expansion and remodel to the original building. Recognizing Mr. White's significant role among Choctaws, Choctaw Nation Health Services Authority decided that a formal dedication and significant recognition of the clinic's namesake, Rubin White, was warranted.



Photo Provided

Dr. Benjamin Thompson standing next to his drawing of Rubin White.

Dr. Benjamin Thompson, Choctaw Nation Stigler Clinic Facility Director, and artist, was commissioned to complete a pencil drawing depicting Rubin White for the clinic's new display.

NURSERY NEWS

Ava Jayne Moore

Ava Jayne Moore was born at 4:23 a.m. on December 19, 2015, at Palomar Medical Center in Escondido, California, to proud parents Darrin and Valerie Moore. She weighed 7 pounds, 6 ounces, and was 19 3/4 inches long. Grandparents are Cecil and Betty Moore of Lancaster, California, and Kristina Pofahl of Escondido; great-grandparents are the late Joe and Jessie Dick of San Jose, California, and the late Charles and Marian Case of Roveside, California; aunts are Deborah Clipper and Theresa Moore; big sister is Megan Moore and big brother is Aaron Moore.



Wyatt Kane McCoy

Wyatt Kane McCoy was born on Jan. 28, 2016 at 1:11 p.m. He was born at Lakeside Women's Hospital in Oklahoma City and weighed 8 pounds 4 ounces and 21 1/2 inches long. He is the son of Dustin and Jenna McCoy of McLoud. Proud big siblings are Paizley, 9, Carter, 9, and Cooper, 7. Wyatt is the grandson of Phillip and Sandy Hood of McLoud, and Garry and Shelly LaFave of Cashion. He is the great-grandson of Delmer and Betty Farnham of Shawnee, the late Tommy and Dorothy Hasbell, Anita Jo Cawley of Oklahoma City, and Frenchy and the late Betty LaFave of Kingfisher.



Braxton Hayes Pearce

Braxton Hayes Pearce was born on Feb. 2, 2016, at 11:16 a.m. weighing in at 8 pounds 3.2 ounces and 9 inches long. Braxton was welcomed by big brothers Brennan, Bricen, and Braylin. He was also welcomed by Meamaw Connie and Grandpa Bruce, and many aunts, uncles, and cousins. He is the grandson of the late Eddie and Dajuana Pearce and Robert Caddell Jr.



APPLY NOW!

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Early Head Start

Now Accepting Applications for the Durant Area

Early Head Start is a federally funded, low-income, community-based program for eligible families with infants and toddlers up to age 3. The program also follows a Selection Criteria that families will need to meet.

It is a program that came out of the Head Start Program providing school readiness for children. In addition to providing or linking families with needed services—medical, mental health, nutrition, and education—Early Head Start can provide a place for children to experience consistent, nurturing relationships and stable, ongoing routines.

Call 580-924-8280 Ext. 2644 or go by 3815 Enterprise Drive, Durant, OK. 7

Breastfeeding assistance is just a phone call away.
1-800-522-6170 extension 2507

Choctaw Nation WIC supports breastfeeding moms. We welcome breastfeeding questions, and offer classes in five locations.

McAlester May 11 - July 13 - Sept. 14 - Nov. 9 1-3 p.m. Choctaw Nation Health Clinic Downstairs Conference Room	Talihina May 4 - July 6 - Sept 7 - Nov. 2 9-11 a.m. Choctaw Nation DWK	Durant April 6 - June 1 - Aug. 3 - Oct. 5 1-3 p.m. Choctaw Nation WIC Office
Poteau May 18 - July 20 - Sept. 21 - Oct. 12 9-11 a.m. Choctaw Nation Community Center	Idabel April 13 - June 8 - Aug. 10 - Oct. 12 9-11 a.m. Choctaw Nation Clinic Education Room	

Come join us for a breastfeeding class in your area! Many mothers want to learn more about breastfeeding, so that they can feel more confident in their decision to breastfeed. This breastfeeding class will address the following topics:

- * latch
- * frequency of feedings
- * breastfeeding resources
- * positioning
- * growth spurts

Choctaw Nation WIC



WOMEN, INFANTS and CHILDREN

Site	Hours	Days
Antlers (580) 298-3161	8:30-4:00	Every Tues.
Atoka (580) 889-5825	8:00-4:30	Every Mon., Wed., Thur., & Fri.
Bethel (580) 241-5458	8:30-4:00	1st Tues.
Boswell (580) 380-5264	8:30-4:00	Every Fri.
Broken Bow (580) 584-2746	8:00-4:30	Daily, except 1st Tues. & 2nd Thurs
Coalgate (580) 927-3641	8:00-4:30	Every Wed.
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., Thur., & 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 Thur.
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 Thur.

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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

NOTES TO THE NATION

—YOUTH of the NATION—

Drug Abuse a Youth Issue in 21st Century

By Dillon Bodine, 8th grader and Youth Advisory Board member in Antlers.

Drugs are the number one killer in the world! The abuse of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs has run “our nation more than 700 billion dollars a year, in costs related to crime, lost work, productivity, and healthcare.”

Drugs continue to be on the rise. The most common drug for youth in 2015 was marijuana.

Drugs have a negative impact on your health. They cause you to have an altered mental state due to the different chemicals being absorbed into your system. Some drugs block a lot of the fat absorbed by your body, and others cause you to feel full or disoriented to where you do not eat. The outcome is often extreme weight loss. Drugs such as cocaine, methamphetamine, heroin and many others can cause tooth decay, discoloration, and lead to poor oral health

habits.

Illegal drugs may cause cancer of the lungs, heart, lip, and throat, and failure of the liver, heart, lungs, kidneys, and many suffer from seizures and strokes.

There were nearly 4.6 million drug-related incidents that were reported in 2009 that required emergency room visits.

Youth in the 21st Century often turn to drugs due to peer pressure, popularity, and boredom. However, there are much better ways for the youth to spend their time. Participating in physical activities, such as weightlifting, sports, and bike riding are some of the ways for youth to stay busy and off of drugs. They could also participate in fine art activities like band, choir, and arts-and-crafts. Another great solution is to become a part of some organizations such as Student Council, Youth Advisory Board, and the Boys and Girls Clubs.

References: National Institute on Drug Abuse. Trends & Statistics retrieved from <https://www.drugabuse.gov/related-topics/trends-statistics>

My Cultural Heritage

By Gavin Morris, Room 2 of Mrs. Console’s class, Fresno, California. Gavin, 8, is the grandson of Eldon Morris.

I am very proud that part of my cultural heritage is Native American. I am a member of the Choctaw Nation that originated in the Mississippi Valley more than one thousand years before it was the United States of America. This is why we are called “Native” Americans, because we were born in this land before it came to be America. Unfortunately, the Choctaw people lost their original lands to Americans and were not considered to be Americans for many, many years.

One tradition the Choctaw people have is to walk the Trail of Tears every year. In the 1830s the government forced the Choctaw people to move to different land. They were moved from the Mississippi Valley to now-day

Oklahoma. This move was difficult and many Choctaw died making the trip. They named this journey the Trail of Tears to honor their ancestors who had made the journey



I was glad to learn more about my Choctaw heritage doing this report. Another tradition I learned about was ishtabol, also known as stickball, which has been part of Choctaw tradition for hundreds of years.

My Native American heritage is very important to my grandfather. He says we are related to Chief Mushulabbee (1778-1838).

I hope in the future I will be able to visit Oklahoma and learn more about my heritage and walk the Trail of Tears.

LETTERS

Yakoke (Thank You)!

I just read two great articles in my Biskinik October issue. First, “A Lineage Remembered” by Ron Querry. I love the picture of his mother and grandmother. His research and information were excellent.

I had forgotten that the Seminole were one of the Five Civilized Tribes.

I am almost 80. My mother and grandmother were born on the reservation in Oklahoma. I’ve had an interesting life, maybe someday I’ll tell my story.

The other was “Green Corn.” I’m saving these articles. I love our Biskinik paper. Thank you for your good work as editor.

Beverly “Black Bird” McCune
Lytle, Texas

Dear Chief Batton,

Thank you for the beautiful blanket you and others sent to me on my ninetieth birthday. We prominently display it on our couch in the front room and frequently wrap up in it on cold mornings.

Especially I enjoy pointing out to our friends the emblazed word in the middle of the blanket, “Wisdom.” Never before have I been accused of being wise. I like being called wise and accept the compliment with no reservations—maybe a little doubt as to its accuracy.

To be aware that I am a nonagenarian is a shock. I do not know how to say nonagenarian in the Choctaw language. In fact, I was one before I knew what I was in English.

On another subject my wife and I were briefly in a Bible study with Rev. Bobb at Dallas Bible College years ago. I hope Biskinik will publish again some of his old columns. It seemed like he reached a lot of people over his lifetime.

Ben Pushmataha McCorley,
Edmond

Our deepest thanks to all those who offered their kindness and sympathy following the passing of our father. Your thoughtfulness and assistance were greatly appreciated.

Special thanks to our Aunt Emma Wilson and nephew Ike Tisho; to the Choctaw Nation Color Guard for the honor you bestowed him; Choctaw Nation for all the numerous types of help and support; to Rev. Stanley Shomo for your visits and support.

Thanks to Rev. Eli McHenry for honoring him. Your words and support were not only a comfort, but a source of strength for our family and at this difficult time.

The family of Newman “Gee” Pisho

Halito,

The article in the February issue of Biskinik in the Sports section about the Jones Academy youths’ Heavener Runestone Run was truly an inspiration. I am a 58-years-young Choctaw-Creek and avid runner.

When I read that article about how the students didn’t let a 15-minute head start by the rest of the pack get them down, I recalled another race in which another Native American came from behind, Billy Mills.

And I totally agree on the life lesson about perseverance; running is not only good for keeping fit, but good for the soul. I personally thank that group of students for keeping me in the running groove.

Terry Holloway
Stigler

Notes to the Nation Submissions
Send thank you notes and event notices to:
Biskinik, Attn: Notes to the Nation
P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702
or email to:
biskinik@choctawnation.com

EVENTS

Wild Onion dinners

Idabel Choctaw Nation Community Center
2408 E Lincoln Rd.
Idabel, Oklahoma

Tuesday, April 19 6 p.m.
Free Open to the public (580) 286-6116

Sponsored by Councilman Thomas Williston

Crowder Choctaw Nation Community Center
707 Bond St.
Crowder, Oklahoma

Friday, April 22 5-7:30 p.m.
\$7, Adults / \$4, Kids under 12 Open to the public
(918) 429-7542

Sponsored by Choctaw Senior Citizens Group

Family Reunion

Noahubi-Columbus-Battiest

Saturday, May 7
8 a.m.-8 p.m.
Choctaw Community Center
Broken Bow City Park
Broken Bow, OK

Bring a covered dish, pictures to share, lawn chairs, and prizes for bingo.

Louise Janey, (580) 286-3647 Susie Rose, (580) 584-2971

School Reunion Hartshorne Class of ‘66

May 21

Our class is planning its 50th class reunion. We need help locating classmates who attended Jones Academy:
Annie Culley Shaw, Edna Francis Natseway, Clara McClure.

Please have them contact:

Carol Ranallo Brown at 918-429-2908
carolabrown1966@yahoo.com
OR
Kay Isbell Day at 918-637-4094
bday967768@yahoo.com

Siloam Spring Cemetery Clean-up Day

Saturday May 14 / 9:30 a.m.

Siloam Spring Cemetery is located near McCurtain, 11 miles south of Stigler in Haskell County. In case of inclement weather, the event is canceled.

Bring a dish for a fellowship luncheon; also bring lawn chairs and yard tools.
Bill Durant, (918) 917-7322
Katherine Durant Prince, (918) 799-5167

Choctaw Royalty Pageants



*1
May 14, 6:30pm
Idabel Community Center

*2
May 6, 6:30pm
Broken Bow Community Center

*3
May 5, 5:00pm
Talihina Community Center

*4
May 14, 4:00pm
Poteau Community Center

*5
May 25, During Sr. Lunch
Stigler Community Center

*6
May 26, 6:00pm
Wilburton Community Center

*7
May 22, 2:00pm
Wright City Community Center

*8
May 27, 6:00pm
Hugo Community Center

*9
June 3, 6:00pm
Choctaw Event Center

*10
June 4, 3:00pm
Atoka Community Center

*11
April 22, 6:00pm
McAlester Community Center

*12
May 19, 6:30pm
Crowder Community Center

Choctaw Nation Vocational Rehabilitation

May 2016

Durant - Monday, Wednesday and Friday Broken Bow - Monday, Wednesday and Friday Idabel by appointment
Phone: 580-326-8304; Fax: 580-326-0115 Email: ddavenport@choctawnation.com

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

Gary Batton
Chief

Jack Austin Jr.
Assistant Chief

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

The BISKINIK is a nonprofit publication of the Choctaw Nation.

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

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



OBITUARIES

Newman “Gee” Tisho

Newman “Gee” Tisho Sr., 90, of Oak Hill passed away on Oct. 14, 2015. He was born on May 4, 1925 to Lasen (Anderson) Tisho and Wesley Tisho in the Oak Hill community.

Newman was a full blood member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

Newman was a member of To-hwali United Methodist Church in Oak Hill, where he served as church trustee for 15 years.



Newman served in the United States Army. His active service began on Oct. 12, 1943 as a rifleman, in the CP1 rank, battles and campaign in So Philippines, Ryukyus. He received many decorations and citations which include: Victory medal, American Theater ribbon, Asatic-Pactic Theater ribbon, W/Bronze service stars Philippine Liberation ribbon, Good Conduct medal and the Purple Heart. Newman was wounded in action, May 11, 1945 in Okinawa. He received an honorable discharge – disability on Jan. 1, 1946.

Newman was a school bus driver for Oak Hill and Luk-fata Elementary from 1963 to 1976.

Newman loved his family, enjoyed reading newspapers, attending the Broken Bow senior citizens group.

He was preceded in death by both parents; wife, Mary Mae Tisho; son, John Dale Tisho; two grandsons, Allen Ray Tisho and Arlin James Tisho; and sister, Mable Tisho Jacob. Newman is survived by eight children, Kenneth Tisho and wife, Sue of Shawnee, Newman Tisho, Jr., Wendell Tisho, Jeanetta Jackson and husband Richard, all of Broken Bow, Lambert Tisho of Glennpool, Wesley Tisho, Rico Tisho and Kathy Tisho, all of Broken Bow; and sister, Emma Wilson of Broken Bow; 15 grandchildren, Robbie, Crystal, Jim, Steven, Jay, Kyle, Kiesha, Shawna, Jerrod, Candace, R.J., Isaac, J.R., Kayla and Lindsey; 43 great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren; special friends, Tony Messenger and Thomas Williston; along with numerous other family members and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Brumley Funeral Home in Broken Bow.

Otis Melton Fox Sr.

Otis Melton Fox Sr.,83, passed away on Dec. 8, 2015, at his home in Wilburton. He was born on June 24, 1932, to Otis and Louisa (Moore) Fox in Jumbo.

At the age of 19, Otis entered the U.S. Army, and served during the Korean War.

After receiving his honorable discharge, he worked for Duke Timber Construction Company. There he built roofs for warehouses in South California.

After his retirement, Otis owned and operated a trucking company in California. Later on, he returned to Oklahoma, where he lived until his death.

He was preceded in death by both parents; first wife, Anna Grace Miller; second wife, JoEllen Fox; son, Otis Fox Jr.; and sisters, Pearl Gallagher and Ruth Helen Feranti.

Otis is survived by daughters, Lisa Ann Fox of Harts-horne, Mary Kay Fox of Riverside, California and Carol Sue Young and husband Robert of Hartshorne; son, Jared Scott of California; fiancé Sharon Wells; along with numerous other family members and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Bishop Funeral Service and Crematory in McAlester.



Garry Wayne Fulton Sr.

Garry Wayne Fulton Sr., 62, passed away on Oct. 15, 2015, in Portland, Oregon. He fought a fierce battle with pancreatic cancer. Garry was born on April 25, 1953, to Marie and Theodore Fulton in Levelland, Texas.

He was a long-time resident of Prospect, Oregon. Garry was a retired auto and diesel mechanic, who loved camping, fishing and friends.

He was preceded in death by his father, Theodore Fulton; and his brother, Johnny Fulton.

Garry is survived by his wife, Debra Fulton; mother, Marie Fulton; son, Garry Fulton Jr.; daughter, Melissa Yates; brothers, Ted and Tim Fulton; and seven grandchildren.

Donations can be made to the American Cancer Society or the Oregon Clinic Cancer Research Center.

Doris Jean Courson

Doris Jean (Cole) Courson, 58, of Coalgate, passed away on Feb. 5, 2016. She was born on Dec. 10, 1957, to James and Betty Lou (Hall) Cole in Talihina.

Doris graduated from Olney Public Schools. She also attended East Central University.

Doris worked for Coalgate Public Schools for many years. She later worked as a caregiver for the elderly. Doris attended Lone Star Presbyterian Church. She loved hanging out with family and friends.

She was preceded in death by both parents; husband, Robert Courson; siblings, Esther Cole, Mary Wood, Jim Cole, Raymond Cole, Preston Cole, Larry Cole and Henry Cole.

Doris is survived by her children, Charles Tekubie and wife Janna of Coalgate, Jennifer Haddox and husband Jerrell of Calera, David Cagle and wife Kyrstan of Durant, Desirae Cagle of Coalgate and Brandon Courson of Durant; grandchildren, Haliey Tekubie, Ty Tekubie, Isaac Tekubie, Zayden Haddox; siblings, Marsha Burgess of Coalgate, Kenneth Cole of Coalgate, Mike Cole of Texas and Vonda Cole of Idabel; along with other relatives and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Brown’s Funeral Service of Coalgate. Interment was at Lone Star Cemetery.



James Robert Fails

James Robert Fails, 82, passed away on Jan. 25, 2016, at his home in Broken Bow. He was born on July 12, 1933, to Lee and Geneva (Davis) Fails in Soper.

He was a member of the Community Baptist Church in Broken Bow. James had lived in Broken Bow for the past 30 years. He enjoyed fishing, gardening and spending time with his family. James was a truck driver for 45 years.

He was preceded in death by his first wife, Ethel Bell (Ward) Fails; both parents; son, James Michael Fails; grandson, Eric David Williams; brothers, Billy Wayne Fails and Donald Raeford Fails.

James is survived by his wife, Verna Fails of Broken Bow; children, Brenda Ivie and husband Tommy, of Broken Bow, Marsha Williams and husband Bob of Joshua, Texas, Bobbie Frost, Brian Fails and wife Barbara, all of Broken Bow; step-son David Webb and wife Kristie of Missouri; brother, Raymond Fails and wife Wanda of Soper; sister, Sue Mann and husband, Burt of Houston, Texas; sister-in-law, Paula Fails of Soper; eleven grandchildren, Lana Fails and Darren Fails, Ian Leitch-Williams, Jon Frost, Blaine, Jak and Zack Ivie, Kaleb, Kaitlind, Kayleigh and Kamryn Fails; six great-grandchildren, Riley Johnson, Keegan Fails, Keegan and Kaiden Williams, Korbin Frost and Lily Frost; numerous nieces, nephews and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Brumley Funeral Home in Broken Bow. Interment was at the Canfield Cemetery in Idabel.



Nelma Jean Izard Johnson

Nelma Jean Izard Johnson, 85, passed away on Jan. 17, 2016, at her home in Liberty, Texas. She was born on Aug. 27, 1930, to Hixie Louvenia (Knowls) and Paul Joseph Johnson in Harlingen, Texas.

At the age of 16, she married the love of her life, Hardy. Nelma was a mother of two and homemaker throughout her life. She managed the household, while Hardy worked as a fireman for the Austin Fire Department.

Nelma was a charter member of the Capitol City and Southern Texas Early Ford V-8 regional groups. She had a personal passion and gift for oil painting, and was a member of the Porcelain Art Club of Austin.

She was preceded in death by husband, Hardy A. Johnson; both parents; son, Paul Joseph Johnson; infant son, William Richard Johnson; and brother, Joseph Elbert “J.E.” Izard, Jr.

Nelma is survived by her daughter, Joyce Nell (Johnson) Parsons; granddaughter, Keri Danell and husband, Travis Lansdell; grandson, Joseph Scott Parsons and fiancée, Angie Sarmiento; sister, Betty Wiley; sister-in-law, Jo Izard; brother, Glynn Izard; brother and sister-in-law, Lynn and Sylvia Izard; and sister and brother-in-law, Joyce Robertson and Jake LeGate.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Cook-Walden Davis Funeral Home. Interment will follow at Hopewell Cemetery in Liberty Hill, Texas.

Donations can be made to the Cancer Support Community Central Texas or the charity of your choice.



Donna Jean Maytubbie

Donna Jean (O’Kelly) Maytubbie, 68, passed away on Jan. 23, 2016, in Midwest City. She was born on Dec. 29, 1947, to Betty Sam and Marvin Hoyt O’Kelly in Talihina.

Donna went to school at Jones Academy and Central High Muskegoe in Hartshorne, where she graduated in 1966. Donna then attended college at Southeastern, Eastern New Mexico University, Eastern Oklahoma State College, the University of Central Oklahoma and Rose State. She earned associate’s in art and a bachelor’s in education.

Donna married Melvin Doug Maytubbie on Aug. 20, 1978 in Idabel.

She enjoyed arts and crafts. She also enjoyed learning new things. Donna and Doug enjoyed traveling.

Donna was a member Mary Lee Clark Church, and loved teaching children’s Sunday school class and cooking dinners throughout the years. She enjoyed donating to different charities.

She was preceded in death by both parents; and siblings, Marvin and Lahoma O’Kelly.

Donna is survived by her husband, Doug; children, Thomas Joseph Yow and wife Amy Yow of Salisbury, North Carolina, and Jodie Hunt and husband Darius Hunt; grandchildren, Thomas Joseph Yow Jr., Aaron Albert Monreal and Jackie Harris, Antonio Douglas Monreal, Seth Phillip Stodghill Maytubbie, Austin Patrick, Jacob Cole Tinch Houston, Jathon Christian Hunt, Marissa Cheyenne Yow, Alana Marie Yow and Elizabeth Talina Hunt; siblings, Ted Holt, Kelly Schuler, Peggy O’Kelley, Jackie McKenzie, Patty O’Kelley, Susan Jackson, Colleen Wingo and Mike O’Kelly; and numerous cousins.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Ford Funeral Service of Midwest City.



Monty Ray Olsen

Monty Ray Olsen passed away on Dec. 23, 2015. He was born on Sept. 4, 1938.

Monty is survived by his mother Sara Cummings; sister, Neva Jean Thomas; nephews, Joseph and Mark Blemmel; niece, Mary Blemmel; and long time friend Earl Carlson.

Interment was at the Choctaw Nation Veterans Cemetery.

Floyd Junior Brokeshoulder

Floyd Junior Brokeshoulder, 78, of Dallas, passed away on Jan. 5, 2016. He was born on June 15, 1937, to Thomas Brokeshoulder and Rena Rasha Brokeshoulder in Ardmore.

Floyd married Dolores Spikes on Oct. 5, 1963. They were married for 52 years.

Floyd was a member of the Piedmont Baptist Church and later Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, before their merge with First Baptist Urbandale, where he has served as Deacon.

He worked for ISI Commercial Refrigeration for over 30 years. Floyd was an avid sportsman. He excelled in many sports while attending Haskell Institute in Lawrence, Kansas. He played softball for over 20 years, before coaching his daughter and later his great-grandchildren. He was a loyal University of Oklahoma fan. Floyd was also a fan of the Texas Rangers, Dallas Cowboys and Dallas Mavericks. His greatest joy in life was serving the Lord, as well as his family.

He was preceded in death by both parents; and brother, Eugene Brokeshoulder.

Floyd is survived by his wife, Dolores of Dallas; daughters Elicia Brokeshoulder of Dallas, Debbie Busbee and husband Jimmy of Mesquite, Texas, and Teresa Shindoll of Mesquite; grandchildren, Brandi Schmitz and husband Justin of Royse City, Texas, Shanda Montalvo and husband Marc of Royse City, Lisa Munoz of Mesquite and Bryan Busbee and wife Angie of Rockwall, Texas; great-grandchildren, Devin, Tyler, Madison, Kaylee, Micaela, Gracie, Brooklyn, Jeremiah, Annabelle, and Marc, Jr.; sisters, Pat Brokeshoulder of Norman and Serena Underwood of McAlester.

Arrangements were made under the direction of the Grove Hill Funeral Home in Dallas. Interment was at the Grove Hill Memorial Park.



Amos Jackson Steele

Amos Jackson Steele, 92, of Broken Bow, passed away on Oct. 21, 2015. He was born July 30, 1923, to Jency (Thompson) Steele and Andrew Steele at Sunkist.

His mother and father died when Amos was a young child. The late Sissy and Johnny Belvin of Boswell raised him.

Amos married Sweetley Ann Sampson on May 9, 1946 at a Methodist Church at Hugo.

He was an active member of the Oka Achukma Presbyterian Church near Broken Bow. He became an ordained deacon of the church in 1995. He also held other various offices in the church for many years.

Amos worked for Weyerhaeuser Company for 38 years in the planer mill, retiring in 1985.

He was an avid hunter for many years.

Amos was a quiet person, yet a man of deep faith in God. He loved the Choctaw Testament. Amos also loved the Choctaw hymns and gospel singing.

He was preceded in death by wife, Sweetley; infant daughter, Viola Fern Steele; and sister, Josephine Ishcomer.

Amos is survived by five children, Sue Willis and husband, Cleland of Idabel, Dorothy Willis of Broken Bow, Dale Steele and wife, Eveline of Broken Bow, Edwin Steele of the home, Roger Steele and wife, Shanna of Idabel; sister Edith Williams of Paola, Kansas; 10 grandchildren, Kevin, Corey, Brad, Derek, Kara, Veronica, Andy, Anmarie, Emily, and Mandy; five great-grandchildren, Matthew, Aaron, Kai, Atticus, and Mikaela; along with numerous other family members and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Brumley Funeral Home in Broken Bow. Interment was at Oka Achukma Cemetery in Broken Bow.



Dale Gene (Fisher) Underwood

Dale Gene (Fisher) Underwood, 69, passed away on Jan. 17, 2016. He was born on Nov. 17, 1946, to Casey and Betty Jo Fisher in Denison, Texas.

He married the love of his life, Tracy Dawn, on March 24, 2001. They celebrated 14 years of life together before he became ill.

Dale was an auto mechanic for 50 years, having earned his Master ASE Certified Technician for both Ford and Chevrolet. He worked at many shops and drove a wrecker in Salt Lake City and Windover, Utah throughout the mid to late 70s. Dale worked at dealerships in Northeast Texas and Southeastern Oklahoma, and owned several shops in Durant throughout the years.

He spent most of his life working on cars. Dale enjoyed fast cars, hunting, and rescuing horses. He enjoyed animals, and watching old western movies. Dale preferred a quiet, stay at home life surrounded by his wife, family, and close friends.

He was preceded in death by his father, Casey Fisher.

Dale is survived by his wife, Tracy of Calera; sons; David Underwood and wife Clydene of Salt Lake City, and Casey Underwood and wife Krysty of Durant; mother, Betty Jo Campbell of Fort Worth, Texas; stepfather, William “J.R.” Underwood and his wife Jo of Salt Lake City; sisters, Judy Underwood of Fort Worth, Texas, and Janie Ledford and husband Dave of Pickerington, Ohio; his aunt, Pat Johnson of Azle, Texas; five grandchildren, and one great-granddaughter; as well as numerous other family members.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Brown’s Funeral Service in Durant. Interment was at Restland Cemetery in Silo.



OBITUARIES

Susan Wilkerson

Susan Hope Wilkinson, 62, passed away on Dec. 27, 2015, with her loving family by her side. She was born July 18, 1953, to Victor and Ruth Porter in Frankfurt, Germany.

Susan grew up in Lawton, and graduated from Lawton High School. She attended Cameron University and obtained her masters in sociology.

Susan married Brock Wilkinson in 1998, and made their home in Cache. She enjoyed spending time with her family, snow skiing, going to the lake and even climbed Pikes Peak.

She was preceded in death by both parents; and sister Linda Porter.

She is survived by her husband, Brock; sons, Guy Marcus Ambrose and girlfriend Robye Cole of Oklahoma City, Matthew Victor Gainfort and fiancé Molly Temple of Cache; daughter, Brook Wilkinson and Carlos Parks of Oklahoma City; grandchildren, Meghan Hope Ambrose and Devereaux Jackson Ambrose of Oklahoma City; and her beloved pet Rocky Balboa.

Arrangements were made under direction of Comanche Nation Funeral Home.



Jimmie Gene Marshall

Jimmie Gene Marshall, 85, passed away on Feb. 18, 2016 at his home in Waynesville, North Carolina. He was born Aug. 28, 1930, to Nat Marshall and Virginia LeFlore Marshall in Talihina.

Jimmie grew up in Talihina. He spent his youth working cattle and breaking horses, on family owned land. He was also the quarterback for his high school varsity football team.

Jimmie received his bachelor's from Rollins College in Winter Park, Florida, and was an alumnus of Oklahoma State University.

Jimmie married Wilene Dyson on Feb. 17, 1950, and celebrated 66 years of marriage.

He began working for Minute Maid in Orlando in 1951. Later he became a Citrus Associate of the New York Cotton Exchange, and Director of Trade Associations. After retirement from A. Duda and Sons in 1991, he volunteered and served as a Project Manager for USAID in Poland.

In 1952 he was raised a Master Mason. He was a charter member, Perpetual Member, and Past Master of LaBelle Lodge No. 379. He was also a Perpetual Member of Talihina Lodge No. 73 AF&AM. He was active in the Scottish Rite and Araba Shriners in Fort Myers, Florida. Jimmie was a 38-year Jester and Past Director of the Fort Myers Court.

Jimmie served for several years on numerous boards and committees. He was appointed to the Site Selection Committee for Florida Gulf Coast University, by the late Governor Lawton Chiles. He was active in the First Christian Church of Labelle, and the Francis Cove Methodist Church in Waynesville.

He was preceded in death by both parents; brothers, Nat, Charlie, and Jon Marshall and; sister, Virginia Eve.

Jimmie is survived by his wife, Wilene Dyson Marshall; sons, Gene Vance Marshall Sr. (Becky) of Fort Myers, and Prospect, Kentucky, Jon Allen Marshall (Roxann) of Houston, Texas and Healdsburg, California; daughter, Gale Rae Marshall of Canton, North Carolina; four grandchildren, G. Vance Marshall Jr. (Jennifer) of Florence, Kentucky, Jared A. Marshall of San Diego, California, Lindsey R. Marshall of Houston and Lacey N. Marshall of Los Angeles; and sister-in-law, Evelyn Marshall of Talihina.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Wells Funeral Home & Cremation Services of Waynesville.



Fern Bess

Fern Bess, 81, passed away on Sept. 9, 2014. She was born on Oct. 10, 1932.

Fern shared her life with her family for many years. They will always hold her memory a keepsake in their hearts. Fern will be remembered for the love she gave to everyone. Being with a gentle touch of her hand, smile, or a gift of a special quilt. Aunt Fern- you have taken the last step on your journey home. Although you are gone, you will never be forgotten.



Betty (McCulley) Hill

Betty (McCulley) Hill, 56, passed away on Feb. 13, 2016 in Denison, Texas. She was born on Jan. 5, 1960, to Ernest and Elizabeth (Henry) McCulley in Vernon, Texas.

Betty married Rodney Hill on Sept. 23, 1983.

Betty enjoyed going to garage sales and looking for hidden treasures. She loved her parrot Willie and dog Sissy. She loved her family, and considered them her greatest blessing.

She was preceded in death by both of her parents.

Betty is survived by her husband, Rodney of Durant; daughters, Glenda Hall and husband Scott Underwood of Mead, and Vanessa Rodriguez and husband Michael of Coppel, Texas; granddaughter, Niesa Hall of Coppel; sisters, Pat Emmons of Cumby, Texas, Minnie Glenn of Great Mills, Maryland and Brenda McGuire of Josephine, Texas; granddaughter, Jessica Boland of Garland, Texas; great-grandson, Mikey Boland of Garland; along with numerous nieces and nephews.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Holmes-Coffey-Murray Funeral Home in Durant.



Wallace Brice Durant

Wallace Brice Durant, 85, passed away on Jan. 20, 2016, at his home in Krebs. He was born on Oct. 9, 1930, to Gaines M. and Gracie Marie (Stark) Durant in Enterprise.

Wallace attended school in Quinton.

He lived in California for a short time, before joining the U.S. Army and served during the Korean War. After receiving his honorable discharge, he attended and received his associate's degree from Eastern State College in Wilburton.

Wallace worked at what was then the Naval Ammunition Depot, before beginning his long career with the U.S. Postal Service. He worked for the postal service, until his retirement.

Wallace married Carol June Campbell on June 13, 1956.

Wallace attended church at the First Baptist Church of Krebs and Victory Park Baptist Church. He was most recently a member of the First Baptist Church of McAlester. Active in the churches, Wallace served as deacon, Sunday school teacher, treasurer, various other offices and committees. He also served on the Krebs School Board for several years.

Wallace enjoyed gardening, reading, and spending time with his family.

He was preceded in death by both parents; sisters, Nalda Kern, Virginia Anderman, Imogene Cofskey and Ramona Herandy; brother, Jimmy R. Durant; and grandchildren, Sarah Beth and Amanda Durant.

Wallace is survived by wife Carol; children, Nathan Durant and wife Melody of Donna, Texas, Dwayne Durant and wife Carmen of McAlester, Kevin Durant and wife Maye of Krebs, and Braxton Durant; grandchildren, Alissa Beck, Audra Golightly, Elizabeth Vague, Abigail Randolph, Matthew Durant, Brice Durant, Michael Durant, and Ashley Haines; great-grandchildren, Paige and Kena Beck, Dillon, Addison and Brinlee Golightly, Jace and Jacob Frazier, Toby and Talon Vague, Corbin, Camdin and Cailin Randolph, and Alondra Durant; sister, Margaret Russell of Muskogee.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Brumley-Mills Funeral Home of McAlester.



Gregory Jim Tate

Gregory Jim Tate, 42, passed away on Feb. 15, 2016 at his home in Oakland. He was born on Aug. 3, 1973, to Jimmy Norman Tate and Sisteline Lucy (Scott) Kusler in Tishomingo.

Greg was raised in Oakland by his stepfather and mother, Jim and Sisteline Kusler.

He graduated from Madill High School in 1991.

He worked at Jim's Station and Tire Shop, Michelin Tire Company, and Texoma Septic Tank. Greg spent the past four years working for Mid America/Oklahoma Steel and Wire.

Greg was a member and a deacon of the Pickens Baptist Church. He also played in the church band. Greg enjoyed riding motorcycles and playing the guitar. He also enjoyed watching the Atlanta Braves and the Dallas Cowboys.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Jim and Sisteline; uncles, Roy, Quincy and Gary Scott; and best friend, Matt Dollar.

Greg is survived by his son, River Jordon Tate of Oakland and mother Polly Phillips of Ardmore; father, Jimmy Tate of Dickson; sister, Cheree Lindamood of Oakland; brothers, Randy Tate and wife Carla of Durant, Jimmy Michael Tate of Lone Grove, and Kim Henley of Coppel, Texas; aunts, Sue Jackson of Tulsa, Mona Mayfield of Burleson, Texas, Earlene Marris of Ardmore, Patricia Cly of Oakland, Jeanette Torres of Tulsa and Bobbi Scott, of Ada; nieces and nephews, Josh Rorex, Kyle Tate, Kyla Tate, Lexus Davis, Zakk Davis, Addie, Cord, Jax and Holden; and special friend Paula Eldridge of Madill.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Watts Funeral Home of Madill. Interment was at the Oakland Cemetery.



Calvin Thomas Beams Jr.

Calvin Thomas Beams Jr., 78, passed away on Dec. 5, 2015, in Henderson, Nevada after a battle of Obstructive Pulmonary disease. He was born on May 10, 1937, to Calvin T. Beams and Hazel Anderson Beams in Yuma, Arizona.

He graduated from Claypool High School in Oklahoma. After graduation, he enlisted in the Navy and spent four years in the service.

He was preceded in death by both parent's; and grandparents, Calvin S. and Lucy Beams, and Curley and Kate Anderson.

Calvin is survived by his wife of 54 years, Phyllis; son, Mike; daughter Tracy; stepson, Mike; sisters, Mary Sue Hudson of Ardmore, Jerry Davis and Husband Ed of Ringling, Jimmye Browder and husband Bill of Durant; brothers, Sammy Beams of Ringling, and Richard Beams and wife Karen of Osborne, Kansas; along with numerous other family members and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Desert Memorial Cremation and Burial of Las Vegas.

Obituary Policy

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

Send official obituary notices to:
Biskinik
PO Box 1210
Durant OK 74702
email: biskinik@choctawnation.com

Richard Gardner

Richard Gardner, 83, passed away on Jan. 21, 2016. He was born on July 26, 1932, to Ona (Norris) and Greene Gardner in Madill.

Richard attended Dunbar Grade School and graduated from B.T. Washington High School.

Richard married Shirley A. Gardner in 1954. The couple later moved to Omaha, Nebraska.

He attended Nebraska School of Barber in 1955. Richard owned four barbershops in Omaha for 46 years.

Richard would attend Freedom Worship Center to support his family.

Richard was a champion in table tennis, pool and checkers.

A guitar player, "King Richard" was one of Omaha's most prominent jazz and blues musicians, starting in the 1950s.

He was preceded in death by both parents; wife, Shirley A. Gardner; daughter, Kimberly Michelle Gardner; brothers, Billy, Bobby and James Leroy (Sonny); and sister, Deloris Miller.

Richard is survived by his children, Richard Gardner Jr. Debbie Hunter, Latrina Coleman, Brenda (Irvin) Jones, Donna Gardner, David (Shari) Griffin, and Jason Griffin all of Omaha, Dajuan and Dajuana Jones of Houston, Texas; brothers, Cecil (Susan) Gardner of Wichita, Kansas, Johnny Gardner of Koffman, Texas; sister, Mary Gardner-Watson of Altus; goddaughters, Rosaline (Michael) Clark, Tina Harris; and a host of grandchildren and great-grandchildren; and other relatives and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Forest Lawn Funeral Home in Omaha.



Phillip Winlock

Phillip Winlock, 59, passed away on Feb. 18, 2016. He was born on March 20, 1956, to Tony and Thelma Winlock.

Phillip was a resident of Mayesville. He was also a former resident of Talihina.

He was preceded in death by his father, Tony; brothers, Warren and Kenneth Winlock; sister, Eunice Bruce; and nephew, Drew Winlock.

Phillip is survived by daughter, Brandy Winlock and husband Rodney Woods of Mayesville; sons, Tony Winlock of Lindsey and Wesley Winlock of Washington; mother, Thelma Winlock of McAlester; grandchildren, Erin Pounds, Jaylee Winlock, Tanner Winlock, Skylee Woods, Zayden Winlock, and Shakya Winlock; brothers, Harry Winlock of McAlester, Stuart Winlock and wife Judy of Wilburton, Kelly Winlock and wife Teresa of Ignacio, Colorado; sisters, Carmen and husband Ron of McAlester, Barbara Dunlap and husband Harold of McAlester, Cindy Bailey and husband Doug of McAlester, Sherrel Mitchell of Owasso, Marilyn Parker of Savanna, Rita Davis of Okmulgee, Patricia Chowning and husband David of Fallbrook, California, Doris McMurrian and husband Roy of Buffalo Valley and Carolyn Adaith and husband Corky of Albuquerque, New Mexico; along with numerous nephews, nieces, family and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Chaney-Harkins Funeral Home in McAlester. Interment was at the New Talihina Cemetery.



Loraine Lanette Rogers

Loraine Lanette Rogers, 52, of Lawton passed away on Jan. 31, 2016 with her loving family by her side. She was born on Oct. 3, 1963, to Robert and Jenett Rogers in Altus.

Lorraine attended Altus Public Schools and obtained her GED.

She enjoyed spending time with her family, riding motorcycles, and cooking. Loraube also liked to play chess and watch spaghetti westerns.

She was preceded in death by her beloved Aunt Dan.

Lorraine is survived by sons; Kenny Joseph Rogers of Greeley, Colorado, James Michael Tiernan, Bobby Pierce-Correll of Lawton, and Quinton Ridge Correll; parents, Robert and Jenett Rogers of Ardmore; and brother, Robert Rogers Jr. of Tulsa.



Larry Don Coley

Larry Don Coley, 59, of Red Oak passed away on Feb. 16, 2016, at Sparks Hospital in Ft. Smith, Arkansas. He was born Jan. 6, 1957, to Roosevelt and Martha (McCurtain) Coley in Talihina.

Larry graduated from Red Oak High School in 1975. He married Sissie Elaine Thompson on March 6, 1976, at the South Rock Creek Baptist Church in Red Oak.

He worked at the Red Oak Public Schools, and Panola Public Schools as a bus driver and custodian. He was a lifetime evangelist. Larry was a pastor at the Lodi Fellowship Church.

Larry was preceded in death by both parents; sisters, Dorothy Gotes and Lenora Brewer; brother, Albert Dean Coley; and nephew, Randall Adams.

Larry is survived by his wife Sissie; children, Starla Coley of Ada, Presley Coley and wife Mary of Red Oak, Timothy Coley and fiancé Marie Mathis of Red Oak, Jaclyn Sutton and husband James of Wilburton, Adrianna Coley of Red Oak, Rosetta Coley of Red Oak, Christian Coley of Red Oak, and Taylor Odom of Tvska Homma; brother, Bobby Coley and wife Doris of Talihina; sister, JoAnn Coley and husband John of Red Oak; grandchildren, Trejan Blue, Richard Blue, Amos Coley, Malachi Coley, Randall Coley, William Coley, and Baby Coley; along with numerous nieces, nephews, family and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Jones Harkins Funeral Home in Wilburton. Interment will follow at the Red Oak Cemetery.



EDUCATION

Jordin Willett Graduates Summa Cum Laude

Jordin Willett recently graduated Summa Cum Laude from Park University with a bachelor’s degree in middle school education, with concentrations in English and social studies.

Jordin was the 2014-2015 recipient of the Park University School for Education Outstanding Junior Award, 2014-2015 recipient of the Park University School for Education Outstanding Junior Award, Pi Upsilon Chapter of Alpha Sigma Lambda Member, Dean’s list for 5 semesters, vice president of ASCD/MNEA 2014-2015, the National Society of Leadership and Success Member with Presidential status, and co-presenter at OMEP World Conference in Washington, D.C.

Jordan is currently a teacher, teacher assistant, substitute and involved with Kids Club.

Throughout her college career, Jordin has shared her Choctaw heritage in classroom discussion, papers submitted, and in photographs with her students.

Jordin has always appreciated the financial assistance the Choctaw Nation has given her which helped her to achieve her dreams.

She is the daughter of Annette Willett, Kansas City, Missouri, and Wes Willett of Parkville, Missouri. She is the granddaughter of Jerry and Peggy Newcomb of Fritch, Texas.



Ash Siblings Find Success in Academics

Siblings Eli and Julia Ash have both had successful academic careers, and continue to make outstanding academic accomplishments.

Eli graduated from Caddo Magnet High School in May 2015. He scored 35 on his ACT.

Eli received scholarship offers from many different universities throughout the United States, but he chose to attend the prestigious Princeton University. Eli has been enjoying his challenging coursework in the honors physics sequence and continuing his violin studies. He has been playing the violin for 15 years and has received numerous honors and awards for this talent.

Julia scored 36 on her ACT. Only 1 percent of the 1.9



million students taking the college exam this year scored 36.

She is a finalist in the United States Presidential Scholars Program, 2016.

Julia is in the process of choosing a college to attend. She has already received scholarship offers from multiple universities. Julia was selected as March’s Texas Christian University Chancellor’s Scholar winner. She plans on majoring in computer science with the ultimate goal of becoming a lawyer.

Julia has been playing the cello since she was six years old. Eli and Julia are the children of Jennifer and Braden Ash. They are the grandchildren of William Jones of Bossier City, Louisiana, great-grandchildren of Ruby Jewel Sanders-Jones and great-great-grandchildren of George W. Sanders.

Tonihka Named as Eighth Grade Co-Salutatorian

Enchil Tonihka earned the title of Co-Salutatorian of the Battiest eighth grade class.

The 13 year-old participates in Indian Student’s Association, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and is a member of the Gifted and Talented. She is a member of the Lady Panther Junior high softball and basketball teams. Enchil is a member of the Bethel Hill United Methodist Church, and is an active member of the youth group. Her future plan is to be a pediatrician.

Enchil Tonihka is the daughter of Dwayne and Michelle Tonihka of Battiest. She is also the granddaughter of Edgel and Jane Samuel of Broken Bow and the late Flader and Elizabeth Tonihka.



Students Inducted into Honor Society

The evening of March 3, 2016, was a time to celebrate for two Jones Academy students. High School student TeQuanna Poor Bear and middle schooler Jordan Hayes were both inducted into the Oklahoma Honor Society during a banquet and ceremony at the Hartshorne public school.

TeQuanna and Jordan were recognized for their academic achievements, including their grade point averages during the 2015 spring and 2015 fall semesters. Both students were ranked within the top tenth percentile of their respective classes.

TeQuanna is a member of the Oglala Sioux Tribe from Pine Ridge, South



Seventh grader Jordan Hayes, was inducted into the Oklahoma Honor Society on March 3.

Cherry Wins Third Grade Spelling Bee

Cheyenne Cherry recently won the spelling bee for the 3rd grade at Central Elementary School in Idabel. This is the second consecutive year the 9-year-old has won the spelling bee for her grade. She is the daughter of Joann Battiest.



Winchester Top Ten Freshman at Southeastern

Kelsi Winchester was selected as one of the 2015 Top Ten Freshman at Southeastern Oklahoma State University.

The Top Ten Freshman have a collective 3.85 GPA.

Kelsi, a graduate of Marietta High School is a special education major. A member of the 2014-2015 Presidents Leadership Class, Kelsi completed more than 50 hours of community service and participated in planning Parents Day.

During her second semester, she was one of 20 students selected as a Savage Storm Leader and led three Camp SE groups of incoming freshmen. Kelsi was involved with Alumni Legacy Leaders and assisted with tailgating and homecoming. She is an active member of the Southeastern Friends of the Green Dot, a group that educates fellow student about domestic violence. Kelsi also serves as a math tutor for the Learning Center and teaches a developmental math course.



Sophomore TeQuanna Poor Bear was inducted into the Oklahoma Honor Society on March 3.

Dakota. She is in the tenth grade and holds a GPA. of 3.93.

Jordan hails from Kansas City, Missouri, and is of Wyandotte descent. He is a seventh grader and has a GPA. of 4.00.

In a combined banquet honoring Oklahoma Honor Society and National Honor Society students, Middle School Principal Jason Lindley and High School Principal Mike Reddick spoke highly of the students being inducted. Both principals made remarks about the students’ character, work ethic, and diligence. The administrators also praised the parents and guardians attending the celebration acknowledging the families’ efforts and involvement in the students’ success.

Serrano Top Ten Percent of Class At Broken Bow

Jose Serrano was recently recognized as being in the top ten percent of his class at the Broken Bow Public Schools 2016 Academic Honors Program.

Jose is 11 years old, and a fifth grader at at Bennett Elementary.

He is the son of Jose and Andrea Serrano of Broken Bow. Jose is the grandson of Greg and Rebecca Cheshire of Star City, Arkansas and Ramon and Francisca Serrano of Idabel.



Wylie Hunter Successful in Show Choir

Wylie Hunter, a freshman at McAlester High School, has been successful since beginning his show choir journey in the fourth grade.

Wylie participated in Circle The State With Song during his fourth through sixth grade years. He has continued his success in high school. Wylie has participated in both All-District and All-State Honors Choir. He also advanced to the state competition with his solo, as well as two ensembles. Wylie also preformed in the Oklahoma Youth Ministries Fine Arts Competition on April 8-9.

Wylie is thankful for the help and support of every choir teacher and director that has guided him in his show choir journey.



Tamplen Excels at NEO A&M College

Justice Tamplen is a sophomore at Northeastern Oklahoma A&M, in Miami. Justice was crowned Homecoming Queen on Sept. 26, 2015.

Justice was also awarded Freshman Top Ten Award at NEO. She maintains a 3.75 GPA. Justice is active in Phi Theta Kappa and attends school on a full theater scholarship.

Justice was recently honored at the Oklahoma All Academic Team Awards Ceremony and Luncheon.

Justice is the daughter of Matt and Susan Tamplen of McKinney, Texas. She granddaughter of James and Nancy Kanzenbach are in Navarre, Florida.



Janway Pages at State House of Representatives

Choctaw Youth Ambassador, Kelsey Janway, paged for the Oklahoma House of Representatives during the week of Feb. 29 through March 3.

She was elected by her peers as Outstanding Page of the Week, which is a great honor. Kelsey was able to attend committee meetings, session and participated in the mock legislation.

Kelsey Janway even got the chance to visit and take a picture with Rep. Lisa J. Billy, Floor leader for the Oklahoma House of Representatives.



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2016 EDUCATION CLASSES	
Choctaw Nation Adult Education High School Equivalency(HSE) Class sessions will meet twice weekly for three hours each day for 12 weeks. Students can enroll only during the first two weeks of class. Please bring Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB), Social Security card, and state-issued ID (driver's license, permit, or ID). The class will meet each week for approximately 12 weeks. Books, supplies, and testing fees are provided. In addition, a \$10 per day attendance stipend will be paid to those who attend classes on a regular basis and attempt the HSE/GED test. Please contact Kathy Bench at the Durant office, (800) 522-6170 ext. 2122 for more information. A CDIB is required.	
July - September	October - December
Tuesday, July 5, 5 - 8 p.m. Durant, Headquarters South Building	Monday, Oct. 3, 9 a.m. - noon Stigler, Choctaw Nation Community Cntr.
Tuesday, July 5, 1 - 4 p.m. Hugo, Choctaw Nation Community Cntr.	Tuesday, Oct. 4, 1 - 4 p.m. Broken Bow, Choctaw Nation Community Cntr.
Tuesday, July 5, 9 a.m. - noon McAlester, Eastern Oklahoma State College, McAlester Campus	Tuesday, Oct. 4, 9 a.m. - noon Durant, Headquarters South Building
Monday, July 6, 9 a.m. - noon Poteau, Carl Albert State College	Tuesday, Oct. 4, 9 a.m. - noon Wilburton, Choctaw Nation Community Cntr.

PEOPLE YOU KNOW



Photo by Krysten Kellum

Bronze Star Shines Bright in a Choctaw’s Hands

Wayne Queen is a Choctaw resident in Placerville, California, however, he grew up in Heavener. Queen received his Bronze Star for his service in the Army 70 years after he was awarded with the honor. According to AmericanWarLibrary.com, “the Bronze Star Medal is awarded to any person who, after Dec. 6, 1941, while serving in any capacity with the Armed Forces of the United States, distinguishes himself or herself by heroic or meritorious achievement or service, not involving participation in aerial flight.” The Bronze Star is the fourth-highest individual medal awarded. Queen was drafted into the Army at age 18 during World War II and fought in the Battle of the Bulge. After basic training, Queen was sent to England in the Ardennes region. Only days later, the German offensive attempted to cut off several of the Allied armies under the command of Adolf Hitler. According to Queen, early in the morning at his post, the Germans attacked with everything they had including young and old men. Queen admitted that the Battle of the Bulge was just like hell.

It took Queen and his comrades several days to be out of immediate danger. Queen said it was Gen. Patton’s actions that brought the regiment to safety. Queen stayed in England until the war was over and acted as a platoon leader for part of the time. The records of Queen’s service were burned in a fire at the National Personnel Records Center in Missouri, which led to his information having to be reconstructed. With some help, Queen was able to submit his paper work and receive his hard-earned Bronze Star, June 15, 2015. After leaving England and returning home, he visited his parents in Eloy, Arizona and married his dear Ruth. The Queens have been married for 70 years and enjoy their days together. Queen lived through what he thought was hell and now he helps his loving wife who is living with Alzheimer’s disease. Some thought their marriage wouldn’t last, but it has been 70 years and they are still keeping it all together. *Originally reported in the Mountain Democrat, Placerville, California.*



Schmidt Receives Lineman Scholarship

MeeShann JF Schmidt recently attended the International Lineman Association Rodeo in Kansas City, Kansas. MeeShane was awarded the Bob Rengal scholarship for individuals who are pursuing careers in becoming a journeyman lineman. Only five students were awarded the scholarships. MeeShann is a third generation journeyman lineman in his family. He is a graduate of Charlevoix High School, in Charlevoix, Michigan. He is now attending Alpena Community College studying utility technology. MeeShann will begin his apprenticeship this summer at Consumer Energy. Pictured with MeeShann Schmidt are (left) Dennis Kerr, scholarship committee chair for the International Lineman’s Rodeo, and Cindy Curry representative of Solomon Corporation, the scholarship sponsor.

McLaughlin Graduates Army Advanced Training

Private Emily McLaughlin of McAlester, graduated Army Advanced Individual Training on Jan. 28, in Fort Lee, Virginia. She is now home as a member of the Oklahoma Army National Guard, specializing in her MOS of 92Y. She plans to attend the University of Oklahoma in the fall. Emily is the daughter of Greg and Fawn McLaughlin of McAlester.



Tala Bohanan Celebrates Quinceanera

Tala Lynn Bohanan celebrated her 15th birthday on Oct. 4, 2015. Tala is the daughter of David and Beatrice Bohanan. She has two older brothers, Robert and Joseph. Tala is the granddaughter of Haskell “Hack” Earl and Ella Bohanan of Bethel.

Broken Bow Seniors Crowned King and Queen

Dwayne Hicks and Sue Dwight were crowned king and queen of the Broken Bow Distinct 2 February fundraiser. Chairman Ivan Battiest would like to thank everyone who helped with the event.



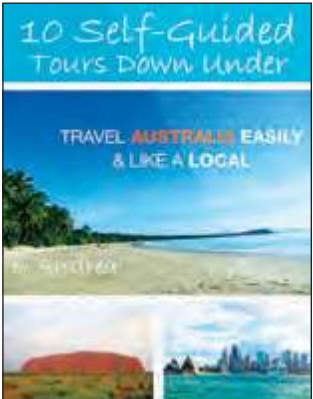
CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA
WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Amos’ Celebrate 67th Anniversary

Bill and Louise Amos celebrated 67 years of marriage on March 26, 2016. Bill and Louise were married on March 26, 1949. They have two children, Mike Amos of Broken Bow and Nancy Williams of Edmond. Bill and Louise have six grandchildren, Justin, Derric and Zachary, Dayla, Nikki and Andrew. The couple also has one great-granddaughter, Milena.

McCarley Releases First Travel eBook

Andrea McCarley recently published her first travel eBook, 10 Self-Guided Tours Down Under-Travel Australia Easy & Like a Local. Described as a book for travelers who do not want to be constrained by a formal tour, but still want guidance in where to go and what to see in such a large country. The eBook shows 10 trips that are organized into manageable 10 to 14 day itineraries, designed to minimize the amount of time spent in transit and maximize time spent vacationing. Andrea traveled the world as a Foreign Service officer with the State Department and private sector I.T. professional. She spent 16 years in Australia. Andrea grew up in Brentwood, California, and currently resides in Hawaii. She is the daughter of Tracey H. McCarley Jr. of McAlester. She is the granddaughter of Dr. Tracey H. McCarley and Agnes Ainsworth of McAlester. For more information about Andrea’s eBook, visit 10selfguidedtours.com.



Elliana Fox Shares Culture with Class

Elliana Fox gave a presentation on the Choctaw Nation to Mrs. Eakin’s second grade class on Dec. 8, 2015. Elliana attends the Openenheim Ephratah Saint Johnsville Elementary school in Saint Johnsville, New York.



Thunder Lee Reese McKinney Turns 15

Thunder Lee Reese “Big Bubba” McKinney celebrated his 15th birthday on April 25, 2016. Thunder’s family, mom, dad, Kendon, Kelsey Kylan, Thruman and Katalina would like to wish him a happy birthday.



Coalgate Seniors Crowned Royalty

Gladys and Louis Daniel were crowned the 2016 Coalgate Senior Citizens King and Queen, during the annual Valentine’s fundraiser and celebration.

EARTH DAY

FRIDAY, APRIL 22

Choctaw Nation Recycling will take your “trash” and give it new life

Recyclables accepted: Aluminum
Paper Tin
Cardboard Steel
Clear Plastic Bottles Printer Cartridges
Opaque Plastic Containers Styrofoam
Solid Plastic Containers E-Waste

LUKSI SAYS, HAVE A HEART AND DO YOUR PART

For Roll off locations, call (580) 920-0488.

BUSINESS

Choctaw Winemaker Turns Pastime into Success

By KENDRA GERMANY
Choctaw Nation

Hillary and Diane Dean opened their business Blue River Valley Winery in December of 2015. What started as a hobby has turned into a successful business venture for the husband and wife duo.

Hillary is a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. He started out making beer in his spare time.

“I started making beer a little over 20 years ago as a hobby. It turned into a passion,” said Hillary. “It progressed when my wife asked me to give wine a try and the wine just took over. It really is a passion for us to make the best wines that we can.”

According to Diane, it took a lot of hard work and labor to get the land their building sits on ready for business.

“This time last year, this was a mule pasture. We purchased this property and worked very hard getting it cleaned up,” said Diane. “It was hard work, but it was worth it.”

According to the Deans, the local community has been very supportive of the business since its December opening.

“The response from the community has been phenomenal. We’ve had a lot of wonderful customers,” said Diane.

Located two miles east of Durant, Blue River Valley Winery is nestled in what is known as the Blue River Bottom.

When choosing a name for their business, Hillary and Diane wanted to pay tribute to their scenic surroundings.

“We were sitting on the front porch. We have a beautiful view of the Blue River Bottom. We were trying to think of a name for the winery, and Diane said Blue River Bottom. That just didn’t sound right, so we

just came up with Blue River Valley,” said Hillary.

According to the couple, operating the winery has been a rewarding experience.

For Hillary, the wine making process is one of his favorite parts of the job.

“There’s a lot of science to it. There’s a lot of skill and just trying to make a product that is as good as I can make it.”

Diane finds interaction with customers to be the most rewarding.

“We have a big variety of customers that come in. You never know who will walk in the door next. It’s always a great pleasure to serve them and watch their faces as they try new wines,” said Diane.

Blue River Valley Winery offers a variety of 10 different wines. From the Texoma Red cabernet sauvignon, to their signature Rio Rosa blackberry lemon, there is a wine for most any pallet.

Blue River Valley Winery is a listed preferred vendor through the Choctaw Nation Preferred Supplier Program. The company also received support through the Choctaw Nation Business Development Center.

“I’m Choctaw. I’m very proud to be Choctaw,” said Hillary. “I can’t say enough about what the Choctaw Nation has done for us. Therefore I wanted to name some of the wines with the Choctaw name to honor that.”

Hillary and Diane named their elderberry wine Bissa Sipokni, which means old berry in Choctaw.

Along with a wide variety of wines, Blue River Valley offers gift baskets and different seasonal items. Also available for purchase at the winery are sausage and cheeses from Fischer’s Meat Market in Munster, Texas.

Blue River Valley also offers free wine tastings.



Photo by Tina Firquain

Hillary and Diane Dean sit in front of their business Blue River Valley Winery.

“There’s no appointment necessary. Just come and see us, sit down and try our wines,” said Hillary.

Hillary believes that it is important to taste wine before you buy it.

“Very few liquor stores will, once in a while, have a tasting on a new product. You can go into the liquor store and taste the wine before you buy it,” said Hillary.

The wine at Blue River Valley is hand crafted, which according to Hillary gives the wine a different taste than most commercial wines.

Blue River Valley currently uses juices from a third generation wholesaler out of Thousand Palms, California.

“Were getting what I believe to be absolutely the top quality juice,” said Hillary.

Blue River Valley makes their wine on site in what is called the fermentation room.

According to Hillary, they do not filter the wine at Blue River Valley Winery.

“I believe when you filter wine, you strip color, flavor and character from the wine. Also all of the nutritious benefits of the juice that we begin with is still there when the wine is finished.”

Each bottle of wine produced at Blue River Valley is hand bottled, labeled, corked and sealed.

According to Diane, Blue River Valley tries to introduce a new wine every month. In March, they released a green apple Riesling called Pleasant Hill. The next planned feature wine is a muscadine wine.

Blue River Valley Winery is open Tuesday through Thursday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. On Friday and Saturday, the business is open from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. They are closed on Sunday and Monday.

Blue River Valley Winery is located at 3565 Sawmill Road, Caddo, OK 74729.

For more information visit www.bluerivervalleywinery.com, or call (580) 775-4213.

Annual Career Expo a Big Draw for Southeast Oklahoma Job Hunters

By CHARLES CLARK
Choctaw Nation

There seemed to be no shortage of jobs or job applicants Feb. 24 in McAlester, as almost 2,000 people showed up at the Choctaw Nation’s 9th annual Career Expo.



Photo by Charles Clark

The 9th annual Choctaw Nation Career Expo draws job seekers from across southeast Oklahoma.

Kelli Fesperman, Marketing Coordinator with Choctaw Nation’s Career Development office, spearheaded the event held at the Southeast Expo Center. Organizers counted 900 high school students from 29 high schools and

eight Kiamichi Technology Centers who attended, along with 535 job-seeking members of the public, and vendors manning 119 booths.

This year’s event had the theme “Baseball.” With the sport in its décor and a ball diamond design in the floor plan, a festive and familiar atmosphere was created.

Rattan High School was named winner of the Participation Award, they received a new television set for the school. It was one of seven schools with 100 percent attendance at the Expo.

Guest speaker this year was Dr. Rick Rigsby, author and former professor at Texas A&M University, where he also served as character coach and chap-

lain for the Aggies football team.

Afterwards, hundreds of students poured into the main hall where businesses, along with educational and training institutions greeted them with information, and free gifts, from school and office supplies, to T-shirts and candy bars.

Abigail Greer, of Canadian High School, won a new notebook.

At the center of the fun-filled school day, was clearly an important educational component.

Among students from the many area high schools

were Garrett Church, 18, a senior in Kiowa Public Schools, and Joshua Cochran, 18, Atoka. Both were winners of scholarships that morning.

Church, who received a certificate for \$2,000, said, “I’ll be going to OSUIT.” His purpose for attending Oklahoma State University’s Institute of Technology in Okmulgee is to become certified to work on automobile computers. “I like working on computers and I like working on cars, so I put the two together, then I found out OSUIT is one of the best schools for that

anywhere around.”

Cochran, who said, “I have cows, shows pigs and have my own garden,” plans to use his \$1,000 scholarship toward studies at Southeastern Oklahoma State University with hopes of one day becoming “an Ag instructor.”

Jada Pingleton of Harts-horne also won a scholarship.

For news of upcoming events of the Choctaw Nation’s Career Development program, contact Kelli Fesperman (580) 920-2260 or kfesperman@choctawnation.com.

Southeastern Oklahoma Indian Credit Association and Choctaw Revolving Loan Fund


The Southeastern Oklahoma Indian Credit Association offers small business, home, home improvement, and agriculture loans. To be eligible to apply, a person must reside within the 10 1/2-county service area of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and must possess a Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) from a federally recognized tribe.

Micro-loans are available for emergency home improvements and small businesses. The loans are available up to \$2,500 and are to be repaid within 24 months. To be eligible to apply you must be Choctaw, possess a CDIB and you must reside within the 10 1/2 county area of the Choctaw Nation.

For more information, please contact Susan Edwards at 580.924.8280 Extension 2161 or toll-free (800) 522-6170.

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

Coalgate Community Center • April 18, 2016 •9:00–11 a.m.
Idabel Community Center • April 29, 2016 •9:30–11 a.m. & 1 p.m. – 2 p.m.



CHOCTAW NATION AGRICULTURE OUTREACH

The Choctaw Nation Agriculture Outreach assists Choctaw Tribal members with their current and future agriculture ventures to help improve success. From small gardens to large livestock operations we are here to help increase agriculture opportunities through:

WORKSHOPS

FIELD DAYS

DEMONSTRATIONS

SHORT COURSES

TOURS

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

ON-FARM RESEARCH

CONTACT US

JODY HOUSE JODYHOUSE@CHOCTAWNATION.COM
NIKKI SCHUTH NSCHUTH@CHOCTAWNATION.COM



The CSBDS provides business assistance to Choctaw tribal entrepreneurs that want to start or expand their business.

Choctaw Tribal members that utilize the services will receive specialized technical assistance through one-on-one business counseling, training workshops, an extensive network of business assistance programs and educational networking opportunities. Assistance offered includes, but is not limited to:

- Business Planning
- Business Counseling
- Business Registration

- Access to Financing
- 8(a) Certification Assistance
- Minority Business Registration

- Marketing
- Business Taxes
- Bid Assistance

April Events Calendar:
(Please contact CSBDS for more details and to register)

Apr 15 Antlers: Tax Commission Workshop 9:00-12:00

Apr 19 Broken Bow: Small Business Community Day 10:00-12:00

Apr 26 Spiro: Small Business Community Day 10:00-12:00

Apr 28 Durant: Tax Commission Workshop 9:00-12:00

Contact Small Business Development Services today!

bhamilton@choctawnation.com or 580-924-8280 ext.2901

SPORTS

Choctaw All Stars Sweep Madness In March Tournament

The Special Projects division, headed by Kevin Gwin, of Cultural Services recently participated in the 4 Love of The Game's, a non-profit organization, 13th Annual All-Indian Madness in March basketball tournament held from March 17-20 in Henryetta, OK. This tournament hosts a number of Native American high school teams from across the country. Special Projects compiled a team of Choctaw all-stars and then madly

marched on to take home the championship in both the girls and boys divisions while also winning several individual awards as well.

Individual awards went out to Rainey Mauzey (Red Oak) and Alexis Lambert (Stonewall) whom made the All-Star girls team while Rainey Mauzey (Red Oak) also picked up the All-Star West MVP honor. She was also selected for the All-Tournament girls team. Cam Collier (Nimitz) and Brad Davis (Red Oak) were selected for the All-Star boys team. Also selected for the All-Tournament team, boys division, was Alex Steve (Durant). The Hustle Award, for both divisions, went out to Ashton Birchfield (Rattan) and Alex Clay (Rattan). Offensive MVP awards were given to Kess Reeves (Kingston) and Taylor Cox (Durant). While Over-

all MVP honors went to Brittany Ward (Red Oak) and Cam Collier (Nimitz). In the 3-point shooting contest Kess Reeves (Kingston) and Bless Roberts (Kiowa) won 1st and 2nd place respectively.

Along with the tournament a 3-Point Shootout, Slam Dunk Contest and Coaches' Challenge were held over the weekend. A College Prep Day and Fitness & Performance Day were also provided. They're held in hopes of preparing the Native American youth for college by enhancing their overall excellence in both sports and life.

For more information about Choctaw



High School Girls – Champions Team Members (Pictured Left to Right): Kevin Gwin (Coach), Anoli Billy (Purcell), Kess Reeves (Kingston), Rainey Mauzey (Red Oak), Miranda Rainey (Red Oak), Brittany Ward (Red Oak), Ashton Birchfield (Rattan), Gracie Wells (Washington), and Javen Henson (Coach).



High School Boys – Champions Team Members (Picture Left to Right): Chris Valliere (Coach), Alex Clay (Rattan), Taylor Cox (Durant), Cam Collier (Nimitz), Trey Harper (Durant), Adonis Fox (Kingston), Alex Steve (Durant), and Toche Taylor (Rattan).

Nation Cultural Services programs, please contact the Cultural Services Department at 1-800-522-6170, extension 2377, 2577, 2720 or email sgarner@choctawnation.com. To learn more about Choctaw arts and culture, visit the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Cultural Services Division website at <http://www.choctawnationculture.com>.



Gibson Red Angus Takes Home Award

Roger Gibson, owner of Gibson Red Angus and his son Gabriel Gibson both of Blocker, recently traveled to Denver, Colorado to compete in the National Western Livestock Show. On Jan. 10, their Red Angus bull, GF Missionary Man won the Fall Bull Calf Division of the live stock show. GF Missionary man was born and raised at Gibson Red Angus.



Cory Johnson Reels in 20.69 lbs. of Fish

Member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Cory Johnson (left) and his fishing partner David Noltkamper, both of Calera, competed in the Future Bass of America Tournament held at Lake Texoma on March 12. The duo netted 20.69 lbs. of Small Mouth Bass to take first place in the competition. The competition was special day for Cory and his family because the tournament was held on his late father Jay Johnson's birthday. Jay passed away on Dec. 31, 2015.



Kingston Players on to Collegiate Level

Kingston High School recently had three football players commit to playing football for colleges in Oklahoma. Keelan Price (far left) a member of the Cherokee Nation and Tyler Stovall (middle) a member of the Choctaw Nation will be playing for Southeastern Oklahoma State University. Skye Lowe (far right) a member of the Choctaw Nation will be playing for Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College. The head coach of the Kingston football team, John Caraway is also a member of the Nation. "I am so proud of these players, as they pursue their higher education and play football at the collegiate level," said Caraway. "They all are fine young men and are great examples of our proud Choctaw heritage."

Simco Houston Livestock Show Champion

Hunter Simco and her heifer, CCR Tina's Girl, won Grand Champion Shorthorn Female Heifer at the Huston Livestock Show. Hunter also won Grand Champion Shorthorn Heifer at the Texoma Livestock Exposition and won the Senior Heifer Showmanship Award at the same competition.



Hunter is 16 years old and a sophomore at Gunter High School in Gunter, Texas. She has been showing cattle since the fourth grade. She is an officer in the Gunter FFA, and is on the Senior Livestock Judging team for Gunter. She is a Senior Director for the Texas Junior Shorthorn Association and was chosen to be a Texas Lassie Princess. Hunter also raises cattle. She has her own herd of Registered Black Angus Cattle and her own herd of Registered Shorthorn Cattle. Hunter plans to attend Oklahoma State University and major in agribusiness. Her other hobbies include Varsity Cheerleading and Varsity Golf. Hunter is the daughter of Keith and Diana Simco of Van Alstyne, Texas. She is the granddaughter of Jerry and Gayle Coyle of Grove and C.L. and Mary Simco of Van Alstyne.

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Legal Assistance

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

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

Contact the community center to confirm the attorney will be there before traveling. The office does not provide representation in court or assist in criminal matters.

April Community Center Schedule

April 7 Spiro : 10-1 & 1:30- 3

April 12 Wilburton: 10-1 & 1:30- 3

April 21 Poteau : 10-1 & 1:30- 3

April 28 Talihina : 10-1 & 1:30- 3

May Community Center Schedule

May 5 Antlers : 9-1 & 1:30-3

May 12 Idabel : 10-1 & 1:30- 3

May 17 McAlester:9-1 & 1:30-3

June Community Center Schedule

June 2 Broken Bow: 10-1 & 1:30- 3

June 9 Bethel: 10-1 & 1:30- 3

June 14 Hugo: 10-1 & 1:30- 3

June 23 Smithville: 10-1 & 1:30- 3

June 30 Wright City: 10-1 & 1:30- 3

Job Connect 2016

Have you ever wanted to talk to someone about career opportunities? Do you have needs for career planning? What jobs are available at the Choctaw Nation? These questions and more can be answered at the **Job Connect** event. Representatives from educational services, career planning, WIOA and human resources will be ready to talk about your future. Join us at any of the following Community Centers for these **Job Connect** events. Each event is scheduled for 10 AM to 3 PM.

You may contact Human Resources at 580.924.8280, ext. 2911, you can also visit our Careers Site online at <http://careers.choctawnation.com>.

Community	Center Date
Bethel	4.5
Durant	4.7
Smithville	4.12
Antlers	4.14
Poteau	4.19
Talihina	4.21
Idabel	4.26
Stigler	4.28
Crowder	5.3
McAlester	5.5
Wilburton	5.10
Broken Bow	5.12
Wright City	5.17

CHOCTAW NATION ARTS & MUSIC FESTIVAL

Choctaw Nation Arts & Music Festival June 24&25

SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN WASHINGTON D.C.

MEET CHOCTAW ARTISTS JERRY AND SHIRLEY LOWMAN

Jerry and Shirley Lowman have dedicated much of their lives to Choctaw traditional music, dancing and artistry. Some of this happened by chance and some by design. Both were raised in isolated, woodland communities in northern McCurtain County, mostly after World War II. Both spoke only Choctaw until entering nearby grade schools.

They met in high school, married soon thereafter and built a hardscrabble existence in the Smithville area. The isolation kept families – and long-standing traditional life ways – intact in the wooded hills near the Arkansas border. As young adults in the 1970s, they could see some of the activities that made a distinctive Choctaw culture were fading from the Oklahoma landscape. The Lowmans joined a determined group of Choctaws in keeping tribal music and dancing alive. The Lowmans' special contribution to Choctaw chanting and dancing goes back more than 40 years with some trips to learn from our Mississippi kin. These efforts earned them an invitation to lead tribal dances on the capitol grounds at Tvshka Homma this past Labor Day. Jerry grew up in the Watson and Buffalo areas, as well as several years in western Oklahoma before returning home at age 18. Shirley was born into the Ludlow family in the community of the same name.

Both describe an upbringing of hard work, rural isolation and a struggle to adapt to English-speaking classmates and teachers. They speak of three dance styles: Social dancing, animal dances and the War Dance. Over the years, the Lowmans were at the head of a group that took the dances to fairs, festivals and parades across the Choctaw Nation. Jerry said the animal dances honor the contributions that various creatures made to the Choctaws. Dances honor turtles, ducks and of course the rattlesnake are meant to show appreciation to these creatures for providing food or protecting crops from nuisances. Like the language, there are subtle differences between Oklahoma Choctaw dancing and the Mississippi style. But both are flourishing in recent years thanks to a new generation of Choctaws on both sides of the river following in the footsteps of honored elders such as Jerry and Shirley Lowman.

Melissa Bohanan, 82, enjoys being around her big family. Everything that the family does, it evolves around her and she stays very supportive of all family members. Melissa treasures the memory of her late husband Robert Bohanan and the more than 50 years that they were married. It's the compassion and love that the two of them showed that made them unique and kept all of the family close.

Melissa Bohanan is the April elder in the 2016 Choctaw Nation calendar.

(right) Melissa teaches some of her grandchildren the Choctaw language which is her first language.

(left) Melissa has 84 grandchildren, but with family friends it is more like 138 grandchildren and she has 10 children. She tries to teach them about their culture and heritage and more importantly, what it means to be Choctaw.

Community Meetings

Houston



Daniel (middle, gray shirt) and Beverly (dressed in black) Brown sit with their oldest son, Joshua (end, dark gray shirt) and their adopted Choctaw children, (left to right) Cesar, Xander, Lilia, Matilda Rose, and Geronimo. The family made the trip to Houston from their home in Friendswood, Texas.



Elizabeth Tobias and her mom, Vivian Murray, display handcrafted aprons at the Houston event, a talent handed down by their Aunts, Ruth and Agnes. The family is related to Joseph Oklahombi, the Choctaw war hero.



Cultural Services employee Jared Tom gives Kashton Young a stickball lesson before the Houston Community Meeting.



Peggy Stevens-Coleman and Kristen Coleman from Magnolia, Texas, enjoy the jewelry making class at the Houston meeting.



After the Houston meeting, Roy James from the Honor and Remember of Texas organization present Chief Batton and Assistant Chief Austin with their flag. The all-volunteer organization pays tribute and honors fallen veterans by promoting and distributing the Honor and Remember flag.

Photos by Ronni Pierce

Shreveport



Chief Gary Batton leads those in attendance at the Shreveport Community Meeting in prayer at the close of the event.



Les Williston from the Cultural Services department demonstrates early Choctaw hunting methods at the Shreveport meeting.



Rachel Deleon, Desi Alexander, and Leanne Divine check out the vendors at the Shreveport meeting.



Sarah Grace Finklea listens to Chief Gary Batton under the watchful eye of her aunt, Jackie Rachels in Shreveport.

Easter Celebration



Cousins (left to right) Khloe Impson, Kayla Ward, and Aryza Impson pause for a swing.



Arabella Gubanov with her great aunt, Lyda Owens (pink jacket), and her great-grandmother, Catherine Clark.



Easter egg hunts were also held for the more mature members of the Choctaw Nation.



Kids enjoyed the egg hunts and kept their eyes on the golden egg surprise.



Choctaw Royalty pose under the watchful eye of the Easter Bunny.

Interested in becoming a Choctaw foster home and you live in the Tulsa area? Attend the 2016 Tribal Foster & Adoptive Family Recruitment Fair May 7, 2016 10 am - 2 pm The Riverwalk 1000 Riverwalk Terrace Jenks, OK 74037

Choctaw Nation Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program Still Accepting Applications

If you have not returned the application that was mailed in January, it's not too late. You may also go to your nearest Choctaw Community Center and fill out an application. Be sure to take:

- CDIB
- Income verification
- Proof of residency

The program will begin May 1, 2016, and eligible seniors will be mailed checks the last week of April. Requirements are: Native American at least 55 years of age (CDIB), Non-Native American at least 60 years of age residing in a Native American household (ID), Disabled persons under 60 but at least 55 years of age residing in housing for the elderly with congregate nutritional services. For income requirements, you may use a current pay stub, (last 30 days) or a tax return or current eligibility letter to Snap or Indian commodities. For proof of residency, you may use a copy of a utility bill or a copy of something with your address. The **Choctaw Nation WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program** will begin May 1, 2016. WIC participants may ask for an application after May 1 at their WIC appointment or if you do not have a WIC appointment scheduled until later, you may go to your area Choctaw Nation WIC office and ask for an application. You do not have to have a WIC appointment to fill out the application and receive your FMNP checks.

Chahta Anumpa

Aiikhvna

Lesson of the Month

Match the Words

Test your Choctaw Language vocabulary.

Chahta anumpa

1. Haklo!

2. Wakaya!

3. Isht ia!

4. Issa!

5. apela

6. ilefoka

7. chukka

8. alikchi

9. bok

10. sipokni

11. issuba

12. ipeta

13. omba

14. nowa

15. pokni

16. shvpo

17. tvmaha

18. mafo

19. kaa

20. hattak

21. Tushpa!

22. Lohma!

23. aboha

24. kapvssa

25. isht holissochi

26. okhisa

Na Hullo anumpa

a. man

b. help

c. door

d. grandmother

e. doctor

f. pencil; pen

g. Listen!

h. town; city

i. horse

j. Hurry!

k. car

l. Rise; Stand up!

m. room

n. house; home

o. cold

p. river

q. Be quiet!

r. Stop!

s. feed

t. rain

u. Take it!

v. grandfather

w. clothes

x. old

y. walk

z. hat

Answers will be in next month's issue of the Biskinik.

Answers to last month's Word Match: 1.r, 2.u, 3.l, 4.o, 5.s, 6.x, 7.p, 8.v, 9.y, 10.b, 11.j, 12.q, 13.g, 14.a, 15.t, 16.k, 17.c, 18.d, 19.h, 20.e, 21.n, 22.i, 23.z ('ia'), 24.f, 25.m, 26.w

www.choctawschool.com

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Please contact Service Coordinator Shelby Crow

scrow@choctawhousing.com

580-326-7521 ext. 318

580-579-4068

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA

P.O. Box G

Hugo, Oklahoma 74743

CHOCTAW

STAR

New school?

New address?

email

star@choctawnation.com

to update information