



A flute maker at work

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Hooser honors heritage

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Veteran's honor flight

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A potter's passion

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BISKINIK

The Official Publication of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

August 2010 Issue

Serving 202,205 Choctaws Worldwide

Choctaws ... growing with pride, hope and success

BISKINIK – The Choctaw news bird

On July 10 the Choctaw Nation Tribal Council approved a bill that corrected the spelling of the tribal newspaper, BISKINIK. Named after the little news bird of Choctaw legend, the BISKINIK has always been a free service to all tribal members and will continue to be a link among Choctaws wherever they live in the world.



The Legend

According to Choctaw legend, two birds – Biskinik (a small, speckled species of woodpecker) and Folichik (the scissortail fly catcher) were the only two birds to escape drowning during the “returning waters” (the Choctaw term for the Great Flood). In the Choctaw legend, when the great waters came crashing, there was a lone man, on a raft, who survived. Biskinik and Folichik accompanied this lone man, who floated on his raft for many moons. The birds became tired and perched upside down on the sky to rest. The waters became rough and the waves were so high that the waves reached the birds and actually split the tailfeathers!

After many days and nights, Biskinik finally brought the man a leaf from a tree and led him

to land. When the raft was safely on ground, Folichik, turned into a beautiful woman. Biskinik remained a bird and always stayed near the camp, warning of danger and also bringing good news.

To the Choctaw, Biskinik, the friendliest of birds, was accorded special treatment and became known as “the little Chahta news bird.” Biskinik would live around Choctaw homes and let them know whenever someone was approaching. The friendly little woodpecker was also believed to accompany hunting parties or war parties when they went into the field.

Biskinik would warn the warriors of the approach of an enemy, or would indicate to them when game was near and in which direction they should travel to find this game. Should an enemy force approach an encampment of Choctaw

warriors during the night, Biskinik would warn them by tapping out messages on trees around the camp.

Not only is the tribal newspaper changing its name, but it is also stepping into the 21st Century with the development of an online version. The BISKINIK E-News will be available as a newsletter for anyone, members and non-members alike, to be received via email. Keep watching for an announcement for the kick-off of the BISKINIK E-News!

Chief Gregory E. Pyle and the staff of the tribal newspaper strive to bring news to each Choctaw about what other Choctaws are doing. Please welcome BISKINIK into your homes as your monthly “news bird” from other Choctaws.

Tribal Council holds July session

The Choctaw Nation Tribal Council met in regular session on July 10.

New business included presentation of a language certificate to Bonnie Horn who will be teaching at the Choctaw Community Center in Durant on Wednesdays. See photo on Page 7.

A Council Bill was approved correcting the spelling of the tribal newspaper to BISKINIK.

Other Council Bills on the agenda that were addressed and approved included:

- Applications to the U.S. Department of Transportation for Surface Transportation Infrastructure; the U.S. Administration for Children and Families for the Affordable Care Act Tribal Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Grant Program; and the Environmental Protection Agency for the Climate Showcase Communities Grant Program.

• Budget and recontracting for the Fiscal Year 2010-11 Choctaw Nation Head Start Program.

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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.



The BISKINIK is printed on recycled paper.



Emergency Response Center opens in McAlester

By **KAREN JACOB**

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

On July 15, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and the City of McAlester in a cooperative effort celebrated the ribbon-cutting of the new McAlester Fire and Emergency Response Complex. The 7,682-sq.-ft. facility is located at 607 Village Blvd. and will station not only fire trucks but also a HazMat

Response Trailer and an ambulance.

“We have two manufacturing plants and our biggest plant is in McAlester. We are trying to create jobs for Oklahomans. We get the best training because you can only be competitive in this world if you have the best,” stated Chief Gregory E. Pyle.

“This building is a joint venture,” Chief Pyle continued. “We are building to last

100 years for our children and grandchildren. We want our children to stay here and have a safe environment.”

Councilman Bob Pate honored Capt. Zappy Ott who died in the line of duty in 1981 while battling the Diamond Hardware blaze. Members of Captain Ott’s family were present and recognized by his daughter, Sharon Evans.

McAlester Mayor Kevin

Priddle stood up and said, “This is a day of celebration,” and then spoke of a memo from representatives of the OSU extension office dated Feb. 14, 1985, that stated the need for a fourth fire station in the southeast quadrant of McAlester. Mayor Priddle said, “With the help of the Choctaw Nation 25 years later, this need is finally being fulfilled. Thanks to the tremendous efforts of our

partner, the Choctaw Nation, the City of McAlester has a state-of-the-art emergency response center which will serve our citizens and our county for years to come.” The \$1.95 million facility was completed by using a \$800,000 Community Development Block Grant obtained by the Choctaw Nation and a little over \$1 million directly from Choctaw Nation businesses.

Wright City honors Oklahombi



State Representative Dennis Bailey, State Senator Jerry Ellis and Chief Gregory E. Pyle.

Choctaw Code Talker Joseph Oklahombi has been honored with a monument unveiled in his home town of Wright City. The granite stone is engraved “Joseph Oklahombi, 1895-1960.”

Oklahombi was born May 1895 near Alikchi, Indian Territory. He moved to Bismark, now known as Wright City in 1910. He enlisted in the Army during World War I and was one of the original Choctaw Code Talkers.

On Oct. 8, 1918, at St. Etienne, France, Oklahombi and 23 fellow soldiers attacked an enemy position and captured 171 prisoners. They held the position for four days. For his bravery he was awarded the Silver Star from the French Marshal Petain. The Croix De Guerre after the war he returned to Wright City. On April 13, 1960, he was killed in an accident near his home. He was buried with military honors in the Yasho Cemetery northwest of Broken Bow.

After the war, he returned to Wright City. On April 13, 1960, he was killed in an accident near his home. He was buried with military honors in the Yasho Cemetery northwest of Broken Bow.



Choctaw youth camps promote cultural enrichment, active lifestyles

By **CHRIS DILL**

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

The Choctaw Nation has many organizations to promote the growth of their youth. Whether it is teaching them the Choctaw language or aiding them in furthering their education, it’s evident that the Choctaw Nation cares about its youth excelling. The Summer Youth Activity Camps provide Choctaw children with opportunities to participate in various sports and activities, promoting an active lifestyle and productivity in the young population.

There are several Choctaw Cultural Events employees who are in charge of the camps. Kevin Gwin is the Youth Camp Coordinator, and he has been helping with the camps for the past six years. “I have always enjoyed working with kids,” said Kevin, “so it was an easy choice when my executive director offered me this job.”

See CAMPS on Page 15

Quinton area residents gather for a fish fry on July 15 and some great food and fun



Jane Howell, Ersie Coblenz and Darrel Kimyon.



Jean Cameron and Beverly Bice.



Councilman Joe Coley, Chief Gregory E. Pyle and Marvin Ginn.



City Councilman Marvin Ginn, Assistant Chief Gary Batton and Mayor Bonita Pearce.



Randy Work donated a historic photo of Quinton to Chief Pyle.



Vonzil Kimyon and Yvonne Miller.

King, Betsey, Frazier, Jones and Dailey Reunion

A family reunion for family and friends of Issac King, Lena Mae Betsey King, Nannie Betsey Barcus, Wilson Frazier and Ella Jones Frazier Dailey will be held on Aug. 7 at the Choctaw Nation Community Center at 707 Bond St. in Crowder. Gathering will start at 10:30 a.m. and dinner will be served at 11:30. Family recognition will be at 1 p.m. and gospel singing at 2 p.m.

Those attending are asked to bring a meat dish, dessert and soft drinks. Door prizes will be given and anyone wishing to donate items is welcome to do so. The lake is close by so those wishing to swim and fish can do so as well. Bring pictures and mementos of your family to share.

For more information contact Bryan Frazier at 918-420-0295, Janice Frazier Bitsoi at 918-470-1481 or Leroy Sealy at 405-474-8657. No alcoholic beverages are allowed.

Jones Academy Male Alumni Reunion

The Jones Academy Male Alumni Reunion is coming up on Oct. 16. Supper will be at 5 p.m. Remember to tell the other Jones boys about the reunion and the gospel singing after supper in the gym at 7 p.m. They are welcome to sing, listen or play their instruments.

For more information contact James "Jimmy" Bruner at 580-298-3136. If anyone has any information on any of the alumni who has passed away, please let Jimmy know so they can be added to the "Honor Roll of Taps."

Santa Fe Days on the Square

The Sante Fe Days on the Square in Old Downtown Carrollton, Texas, will be held on Oct. 9 and 10, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. This is a free family event that celebrates Native American culture and is open to the public. Special Seminole/Choctaw guest artist Brian Larney will be in attendance.

Choctaw artists are wanted for the event! Contact James Box for more information - 469-471-1241 or visit the website, www.santafedays.com.

Southeastern Oklahoma Indian Credit Association

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.

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

Gregory E. Pyle
Chief

Gary Batton
Assistant Chief

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

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

BISKINIK® 2010

NOTES

Thank you

Dear Chief Pyle and the Choctaw Nation,

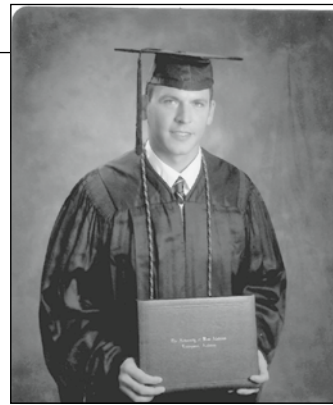
I recently graduated from the University of West Alabama in Livingston with a Bachelor's Degree in Athletic Training and I have passed the BOC (Board of Certification).

I would like to take this opportunity to say a "Thank You" to the Choctaw Nation for providing me with financial aid as I pursued my education.

A special thank you to Chief Pyle as he diligently works to move the Choctaw Nation to an upper-level of education which is the basis that any nation grows upon. I say thank you to Mr. Larry Wade, director of the Higher Education Department, and all of his staff who are always so kind, prompt and helpful.

I am the grandson of the late Sam Cook Palmer, the great-grandson of the late Ruby Cook Palmer, both of Preston, Miss., and the great-great-grandson of the late Peggy Garland Cook, an original enrollee from Stigler. My plans are to continue my education as I pursue my doctorate degree in Physical Therapy. Thank you and may God continue to bless the Choctaw Nation.

David Wesley Haggard, ATC, Philadelphia, Miss.



Thank you for certificate

A special thanks to the Choctaw Nation for giving my son, Robert Samuel, a gift certificate for making all A's and B's. He is the great-grandson of the late Julia Tims of Smithville and the grandson of Dora Wilson. Robert attends Beggs High School and Green Country/OSU Okmulgee. He is currently studying machinist and plans to go to the Navy upon graduation.



Thank you, Career Development

Janica Williams finished her CNA class and passed her board exam third in her class. She received her little CAN pin and will get her card showing her accomplishment in a few days. I am so proud of her.

Thanks to Career Development and Higher Education for the past couple of years and the future for your help and support.

Donna Williams

Searching for relatives

I am searching for relatives of John Hammons and Elizabeth Heskett of Crowder, W.D. Eckelman or Lotte Gresham. Contact Donna Eckelman-Winfree at michelle1665@aol.com, 530-547-5541 or P.O. Box 312 Palo Cedro, CA 96073 if you can help.

Donna Eckelman-Winfree



Red Earth Parade a success

June 18 was a significant time for the Choctaw People at the 2010 Red Earth Festival Parade. On that sunny and hot day in the midst of tall skyscrapers and the hustle and bustle of city life, the sounds of Choctaw songs came to life on the streets of downtown Oklahoma City. A delegation of Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians filled the air with traditional songs. The Mississippi women led the men carrying their stickball sticks as they walked behind the OK Choctaw Tribal Alliance float. The Choctaws of Oklahoma and the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indian united on one path to share the exhilaration!

Searching for information on Austin Jim family

My name is Tommy Thompson and I am trying to reconnect with my family heritage. My great-grandfather, Austin Jim, relocated to Oklahoma from Mississippi. I was told some settled in the Bentley, Okla., area. If there are any people in this family, please contact Tommy Thompson at P.O. Box 131, Connerville, OK 74836. Thank you.

A visit with Chief

While on vacation in May, we were passing through Oklahoma and stopped by Durant. Chief Pyle was in the office and was gracious enough to take time from his busy day to talk with us. We thought this was very gracious of him and I wanted to let him know how much we appreciated that fact.

The Parsons Family from Merced, Calif.



Lil' Choctaws say thank you

Team Lil' Choctaws competed in the Creek Nation Jr. Olympics during the Creek Nation Festival. Sixteen kids participated in the heat of the day. Six kids placed first, two kids placed second, and three kids placed third in individual competition. The team would like to say thank you to District 3 Councilman Kenny Bryant for the donation to help purchase shirts for the kids. We would also like to thank Mr. Kimball of Kimball's Store of Tahihina and thanks to Choctaw Travel Plaza of Wilburton for donating drinks for the kids. Again, thank you for all the donations and support.

Coaches Melissa Impson, Cindy Watson, Cheryl Billy and The Lil Choctaws

Little Miss Bokchito says thank you

We want to thank all of you who purchased candles, bought tickets, or made donations to help our Little Mattie win the Little Miss Bokchito title and have her special day. She is so proud of her little crown. Her float won second place. She also raised more money than any of the contestants.



The Williams and Jordan families.

Blanche-Bray reunion

The Blanche-Bray reunion was held May 1 at the home of Opal Bray. Those attending were her sister, Chillie Stouff, of San Diego; brother Dalton Blanche and his wife, Ginger, of Oklahoma City; Paul and Cheryl Stouff of Denver, Colo.; Matt Reiser of Dallas; Mitchell and Anne Blanche of Lexington, Ky., and Fred and Doris Bray of Broken Bow. The Trail of Tears shirts were selected as our shirt this year.





Players chant, yell and tap their sticks together as they enter the field.



Leading the team on the field.

Oklahoma competes in World Series Stickball

Enthusiastic team members are true Choctaw sportsmen



Chief Gregory E. Pyle greets the Oklahoma team.

From the desk of
Chief Gregory E. Pyle

Oklahoma Choctaws made history this July with a team entered in the World Series Stickball Game at Mississippi. We were made welcome by our brethren in our ancestral homeland, as were Choctaws from all over the United States, as teams gathered at the football field at the Choctaw High School in Choctaw, Miss. Gaming Commissioner Henry Williams said that 30 teams would compete before the week was over in the single elimination tournament.

The Oklahoma team competed early in the week against "Unified," a diverse team of great players who ended the game in the double digits, while we cheered our team for their two points.

The enthusiastic and professional attitude of the men on the Oklahoma team lifted my spirits for the entire

week! As they prepared for the game, I could hear them singing, chanting, yelling and tapping their sticks from over a block away! They ceremoniously marched up the street to the stadium, led by two young men with drums. All in bright turquoise shirts, many with matching bandanas and headbands, our team looked great, too.

This was my first time at the games, so when the Assistant Chief and I were asked to lead the team onto the field, we were honored and thrilled to participate. Still tapping their sticks, still led by the drummers, and still chanting and being loudly cheered on from the bleachers, our team marched three times from one end of the field to the other, continuing in a single file, then we were joined by our opponents who also snaked alongside our team on our journey from goalpost to goalpost.

This was quite a sight, as both teams had abundant athletes – some teams have more than 100 players so that the 30 who are on the field can continually be refreshed with less-fatigued team mates from the sidelines.

I was proud to have prayer asked for the team and the game. We always begin meetings at Choctaw Nation with prayer and I am thankful when we are at public events hosted by others and they have the same traditions.

Although we did not win the game, we were blessed to have no injuries. All that was broken was a pair of sticks.

After congratulating the Unified team, the Oklahoma men left the field, talking about all they had learned and how excited they would be to come back next year and compete again! These guys are true Choctaw sportsmen! I appreciate each and every one of them!

Imminent return of our Lord Jesus Christ

Our message for this month is on the "imminent return of our Lord Jesus Christ." First, let me share with you these words from the book of Hebrews 9 verse 27, "... it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."

It is true that "it is appointed upon men once to die." We have seen this happen throughout human history. Death goes on. It plays no favorites. It claims both young and old, rich and poor, small and great, the wicked and righteous.

The Bible indicates that there is going to be one generation of believers who will never die. I am thinking of those who are living when Jesus comes, who in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, in glorified bodies, rise to meet the Lord in the air.

Paul, in writing to the church at Corinth, in his first letter, First Corinthians in chapter 15 and verse 51, wrote, "Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed."

Then Paul assured us in his first letter to the Thessalonians that when the Lord Jesus returns, and we read in First Thessalonians 4:16-17 these words:

"For the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first.

"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

These words not only indicate that some believers will never die but also suggest the imminence of our Lord's return and the translation of believers into His presence without ever dying.

Chaplain's Corner



Rev. Bertram Bobb
Tribal Chaplain

Since the days of the Apostle Paul, he and all born-again believers have shared in that wonderful prospect that they might well be a part of that number who are living when Jesus comes, and who will never taste of death.

Paul wrote, "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them ..." Can it be that the "we" in that verse refers to us today?

Are we that special body of believers who will hear the shout and be raptured into the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ without ever passing through the valley of the shadow of death? The answer is YES. It could be and may well be.

When we speak of the imminence of our Lord's return we mean that it could take place at any time. There is nothing at all standing in the way. This does not imply that He must come today, this week, this month, or even this year, but He may. He

could return at any moment.

God so ordered His Revelation that believers in every age could live with the expectation of the coming of His Son. The promises are so worded that every age may view the coming again of Christ as imminent, and receive the blessing and comfort of such a hope.

In view of all that is transpiring in the world today our generation has more cause to be excited about, and to look with more expectancy, the fulfillment of the promise of His coming than any other generation. Even though Christians in every century since the ascension of Jesus Christ have lived in the expectation of His return, we have three distinct advantages over those who have already lived and died – advantages which should make us more knowledgeable, and expectant of our Lord's return than ever before.

First of all we know that we are nearer the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ than any other generation.

Secondly, we can enjoy, learn, and profit from the studies of outstanding Christian leaders dealing with the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. The prophetic Scriptures can be clearly understood from men like, John F. Walvoord, J. Dwight Pentecost and Charles C. Ryrie.

Then thirdly, we have seen things in our own day which bear a striking resemblance to the signs Jesus said would happen before His coming again when He personally returns to reign over the earth.

Those who lived in centuries past knew that certain events had to take place in connection with the Lord's

return. Even though they could not explain just how or with what speed they might be fulfilled to fit into the program of the Lord's imminent coming. They just knew and had the faith to believe that somehow, some way, God's word would be fulfilled.

Today, we can actually witness certain developments and understand in the light of them how Jesus' coming could well be even at the door.

In our present generation, we can see a line-up of nations which could, almost overnight, develop in the revived Roman Empire. We no longer need to wonder how a man could become a world dictator.

The "signs of the times" as given by the Lord in Matthew 24, Luke 13, and Luke 21 relate to His glorious return. Not the rapture. They will mark the period between His calling out of the Church and His coming to rule. Some of the developments we see today suggest that the time Christ spoke about may be very near.

To the student of prophecy, the recent activity in Israel and surrounding Israel is of special interest.

Jesus Christ is coming again. It may be soon. Are ready? Do you know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior?

If you do not know Him, will you realize who you are, a sinner, realize Who God is and what He has done. He sent His only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to die on the cross in your place. He was buried and rose again on the third day. Will you trust Him as your Savior? You do this by faith.

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



Working together to improve lives

From the desk of Assistant Chief Gary Batton

It is great to work for an entity and a leader who are always so positive about partnering to improve lives of tribal members, other citizens and communities around us. Just recently, the Choctaw Nation celebrated a partnership with McAlester for a new fire department. The tribe combined an \$800,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and \$1,150,000 in tribal funds to build a \$1.95 million, 7,682-square-foot Fire and Emergency Response Complex on the southeast side of town.

We are extremely proud to be able to collaborate on this project that provides residents of the city and our tribal business enterprises in McAlester a safe environment. Although the Choctaw Nation constructed this much-needed facility, the City of McAlester will staff and maintain it.

Being toured through the fire station by Fire Chief Harold Stewart and the other firefighters was a great experience – they are all excited and appreciative of both the beauty and efficiency of the building. While on duty, the station is "home" to the firefighters. The dorm rooms and kitchen area are extremely comfortable, and the conference room doubles as a safe room in case of a tornado. In addition to the fire trucks, a Hazmat Response Trailer and ambulance will be housed in the new station.

McAlester is the second town in Choctaw Nation boundaries to benefit from a fire station built with CDBG and tribal funds. Durant opened a new station near the casino and travel plazas last year thanks to a partnership with that town.

Other big projects the tribe has completed in local towns to improve the community and the lives of people living there include health clinics, senior citizen housing, jobs through economic development (mainly casino and travel plazas), new tribal community centers and roads and bridges improvements. As Mayor Kevin Priddle said at McAlester, "It is amazing what you can do when you work together!"



OUTREACH AT THE BEACH SARDIS LAKE 2010



PEOPLE YOU KNOW



District 7 crowns princesses

Councilman Jack Austin is pictured with District 7's 2010-11 Princesses – Little Miss Makala Battiest and Jr. Miss Melissa Gueli.

Happy 90th birthday

Imogene Welch celebrated her 90th birthday June 26 at Western Sizzlin' in Poteau. Helping her to celebrate were many family members and friends. Those attending were daughters, Shirley and Bill Ward, Edith and Johnny Ward, Claudette Hamner, and Brenda and Jackie Sweeten.



Also in attendance were her grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren, James, Susan, Michael, Matthew, and Adrianna Cantwell, Keith, Deann, and Taylor O'Neal and Travis Cox, Kendall, Vanessa, Kenda, Carson, Radley, and Hollan O'Neal, Aaron and Isaiah Lawson, Larinda Sweeten, Justin McKinney, Tammy and Spencer Ward, Christie, Kinley Belle, and Kieran Jarman, T.J. and Jaelan Holt; friends and relatives, Linda Owens, Lanell McGehee, Nicki Craig, Benny Owens, Ruben Owens, Betty Morse, Candi and Allee Baggs, Tim and Susan Cannon, Kim, Kelly, and Tommy Robertson, Josephine, Marty, Dora, Cody, and Emily Cooper, DelDean and Monty Billinger and James Dighton.

Imogene is an active member of the Choctaw Nation District 4.

Congratulations, Walter

Mary Gates would like to congratulate her cousin, Walter Murillo. Walter is the son of Vedis Murillo and grandson of Siney Noah.

Walter has recently been designated as the Interim CEO for Native Health. Walter says he is "honored to fill the CEO position during the period in which a permanent Director will be recruited and hired." He has been with Native Health for over 13 years.



Shelbie takes mission trip to Honduras

Shelbie Smith, daughter of Kristel and Layman Clay of Buffalo Valley, recently returned from a mission trip to Mision Caribe in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. Shelbie traveled with J.D. Miller, nationally known musician from Kentucky, from Houston to Tegucigalpa. The purpose of their visit was to conduct "Talento Cristiano Hondureno," a talent competition for the young people of the country. From the 90 contestants, a 12-year-old girl won with a song she had written.



Shelbie said, "The country is beautiful and the people are friendly. There are a lot of needs in this country, like clean water and reliable electricity. I had taken clean water, electricity and especially air conditioning for granted. We are really blessed here in the United States to have these things that are needed so badly in other areas of the world. I would like to thank my home church, Valley Christian of Talihina, Mark and Janet Layman, missionaries for Global Witness, J.D. Miller of Kentucky and the prayers and support of my family and friends for making this trip possible. I can't wait until I can go back again!"

Shelbie is a 2010 graduate of Buffalo Valley and has enrolled in Connors State College for the fall semester. She plans on furthering her education to become a doctor.

Thomas earns college diploma

Thomas E. Davis, 61, was presented an Associate's Degree in Applied Science in Human Services on June 18 from Grays Harbor College in Aberdeen, Wash.



Davis hopes to earn a family wage income by being of service to his community as a Domestic Violence Advocate, Sexual Assault Advocate and employ the humanistic counseling approach to Emergency Disaster situations. Moreover, Davis is a registered counselor in the state of Washington with intentions of becoming a Chemical Dependency Professional at some future date.

While earning his degree, Davis was Native American Student Association President for three terms; a member of the President's Scholars, which requires a grade point average of 3.5 or above; standing in Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Membership; AutoCAD Certification; and voted the Teddy Bear Award by his constituent Human Service Club Membership. The graduating class consisted of 260 students and approximately 545 guests, faculty and family members were in attendance.

The ceremonies were conducted by President Edward J. Brewster; the Honorable Christine Gregoire, Governor of Washington; and Fawn Sharp, President of the Quinault Indian Nation and member of the Grays Harbor College Board of Trustees.

Davis was deeply humbled and honored when he received a card of congratulations postmarked in the state of West Virginia signed by Bettye Bolen, Career Counselor for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Career Development Educational Assistance Program which stated: "The success of one inspires the dreams of many."

Congrats, Lyndsi

Former Okla Chahta Head Princess Lyndsi Riley graduated May 21 with honors from San Diego State University with a Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Arts & Sciences in Classics with an emphasis in Classical Languages. Her grandparents Chuck and Barbara Ishcomer and Aunt Tami joined with her mother in attending the commencement ceremonies and in wishing Lyndsi a very prosperous future. While earning such a prestigious degree, translating Latin and Greek text and participating as a member of Sigma Alpha Lambda, Lyndsi also competed for the San Diego State Aztecs as a member of the NCAA Division I Cross Country and Track and Field teams where she won Scholar-Athlete Honors.



Currently Lyndsi is in Greece, fulfilling the study abroad component of her degree. When she returns in the fall, she will begin studying for her teaching credential at Sonoma State University where she will also be competing once again as a distance runner on the Cross Country and Track teams for the Sonoma State Seawolves. An avid athlete and sports fan, Lyndsi's heart is to encourage young people to lead a healthy lifestyle and would someday hope to help implement a fun run at the Annual Okla Chahta Gathering in California as a way to encourage children of her own tribe. Lyndsi and her family are extremely grateful and appreciative to Larry Wade and the Choctaw Nation for their very generous support of her education.

Lily turns two

Lillian Jade Wahkinney celebrates her second birthday Aug. 4. Her parents are Gena and Joey Wahkinney; grandparents are Kevin and Vera Wahkinney, Patricia Roberts and the late Harold Isom. Lily's sisters are Sapphire and Raven.



Happy birthday, Kylee

Kylee Sellers of Hugo competed in the 2010 MLB Pitch, Hit and Run local competition held in Hugo and tied for first place. She then advanced to the State Sectional Competition in Tahlequah. Kylee won first place in the pitching and running part of the competition and finished second overall. She received a second place medal.



Kylee plays for two fastpitch softball teams where she is a catcher, centerfielder and relief pitcher. She is the daughter of Khristy Sellers (Wallace) and Roger Sellers of Hugo. She has two sisters, Lauren and Kamryn.

Kylee turned 11 on June 7 and celebrated her birthday with her family at Texas Ranger stadium, where she had her name up in lights during the game and received a gift bag from the Texas Rangers.

Happy birthday, Capri and Joey

Happy first birthday to Joseph Rodriguez and happy second birthday to Capri Rodriguez, both of Oklahoma City.



Joey was born on Aug. 20, 2009, six days before big sister Capri's first birthday on Aug. 26.

Celebrating are their parents Kimberly and Leonardo Rodriguez-Grados; grandparents,

Bob and Cheryl Farrar, Luisa and Atillo Rodriguez; and aunts and uncle Kristal, Madeline and Philip Ginn. Their grandfather is the late Ricky Ginn, great-grandmother Virginia Bond Grider and Charles Rikli, great-great-grandparents are LeRoy and Alma Leona Bond, great-great-great grandparents are Henry Jesse Bond and Elizabeth Anderson Bond. The family is proud of their Choctaw heritage.

Happy birthday, Maleck

Maleck Ginn celebrated his seventh birthday on Aug. 7. Maleck has one brother, Elijah, and sisters, Eralee and Izzie. Mac's parents are Lauren Horn and Philip and Madeline Ginn. His favorite aunts and uncle are Kristal Ginn-Farrar and Kimberly and Leonardo Rodriguez. Cousins helping him to celebrate are Joey and Capri.



Grandparents are Cheryl and Robert Farrar, the late Ricky Ginn, Brenda Horn, John and Neysa Horn. Also, great grandparents Virginia Bond Grider and Charles Rikli, great-great-grandparents Alma Leona and LeRoy Bond, great-great-great-grandparents Henry Jesse Bond and Elizabeth Anderson Bond.

Tamara graduates

The family of Tamara Haslip is proud to announce her graduation with her Bachelor's in Nursing from California State University, Palm Desert Campus. Tamara graduated with departmental honors and received a special award for her scholastic abilities. She is the daughter of Susan Wilson Bullock, stepdaughter of Daris Bullock, and granddaughter of Thomas and Gladys Wilson. They are thankful to the Choctaw Nation for its assistance with Tamara's education.



Great job, Rory, Rily and Rayce

At the end of the spring semester, Rory Sanders completed requirements for an associate degree in radiology technology from Oklahoma State University, Oklahoma City campus. Presently he is employed by Bone and Joint Hospital in Oklahoma City. Rory's future plans include competing his bachelor's degree and to become a physician's assistant. A special thanks goes to Robin Counce for her help as Rory pursues his education.



Rily Sanders, also a graduate of OSU-OKC, is currently attending the University of Central Oklahoma in Edmond. He is studying general business.

Rayce, the youngest brother, is currently enrolled at OSU-OKC and will continue his education at UCO in Edmond to complete a degree of technology in industry education, to be a certified welding instructor.

Rory, Rily, Rayce, along with their parents, Rick and Pamela Sanders of Piedmont, are very appreciative of the Choctaw tribe's support in their pursuit of post-high-school education.

The brothers are the great-grandsons of the late Charlotte Hampton, an original enrollee. Their grandparents are Richard and Bennie Edmonds of Mustang, Cecil and Mac Sanders of Yukon, and Vic and Eva Daniels of Enid.

Wesley attends Wright City events

Williston Wesley attended the 100-year Wright City Centennial Ceremony. He is pictured at the gravesite of Joseph Oklahombi. He also rode a horse in the annual American Legion Rodeo parade and attends the Wright City Choctaw Community Center regularly.



Wrestling champ, Phillip Reitz Jr.

Congratulations to Phillip Reitz Jr. of Joplin, Mo., for wrestling in the Missouri State Wrestling Tournament in Columbia. He wrestled in age group 12 and under, 175 pounds, taking second place. Phillip also became a national champion when he wrestled in the Liberty National Tournament, 12 and under, 175 pounds. He is proud of his Choctaw heritage and his singlet proudly states "Native American." He is the son Phillip Sr. and Tina Reitz of Joplin and the grandson of Lena Karen Sexton, Caney, and the nephew of Victoria Maturino, Joplin.



Happy birthday, Khloe and Kendon

Sister and brother, Khloe Gonzalez and Kendon, recently celebrated their birthdays together. Khloe turned two on May 30 and Kendon celebrated his 12th birthday on June 2. Sending them birthday wishes are their mother and Ambree.



Lil' Choctaw cutie

This little "darling" is Meredith Riley Scott, great-granddaughter of Mary Lynn.



John Anderson wins truck driving competition

John Anderson, son of original enrollee James Ralph Anderson and Margaret Louise Andrews-Anderson, and grandson of original enrollees James D. Anderson and Millie Carnes-Anderson-Fitzgerald, took first place in the California Trucking Association's Truck Driving Championship Competition held June 6 in Arcadia, Calif. As state finalist in the four-axle semi-trailer division, John will compete with other states' winners at the American Trucking Association's National Truck Driving Championships being held in Columbus, Ohio, Aug. 3-7, 2010.



John has been a professional truck driver with FedEx National LTL for almost four years and began his 34-year driving tenure in the oil fields of Oklahoma. He has received numerous "Driver of the Year," "Driver of the Month," and safe driving awards throughout his driving career.

John lives with his wife, Cinde, in Millbrae, Calif. He has four children and five grandchildren. His sons, Robbie and Josh, and their families live in Wilburton, and his daughters, Jessica Flores and Sheridan Trailer, and their families live in the Millbrae area.

John's family and friends wish him much success in Columbus.

Sisters celebrate August birthdays

The family of Alondra Janette Perez and Maria Isabela Perez would like to wish them both a happy August birthday. Bela is turning six and Alondra is turning 15. They are the great-granddaughters of Nelson Holman, Gladys Durant, and Marie Lamey. The girls are descended from a blending of Choctaw, Seminole and Creek tribes. They have one sister, Alexandra. Their family is very grateful for blessings received this year after a terrible accident happened in which both of these children were injured, and hope that they are blessed with many more years to come.



Hooser honors his Oklahoma Choctaw heritage

By **CHRIS DILL**

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Ernest has a passion for teaching people about his Choctaw heritage. He shows an outstanding amount of honor for his history and he is proud of how his past has made him into the man he is today.

Ernest was born Oct. 8, 1917, in Tuskahoma. His father is the late Newton Hickman Hooser, coming from Missouri, and his mother is Helen Amanda Hooser. Ernest's mother is 3/4 degree Choctaw, which gives him 3/8 degree of Choctaw blood. Ernest grew up with his mother, father, two sisters and three brothers in Tuskahoma and attended elementary and high school there.

After graduating high school in 1936, Ernest headed for the Murray State School of Agriculture in Tishomingo and graduated two years later. He went on to Oklahoma A&M College (now Oklahoma State University) in Stillwater. He earned his bachelor's degree in math and science and started teaching in 1940 at Stigler.

On Sept. 21, 1940, Ernest married his college sweetheart, Helen Woolard, in Tishomingo. Helen was an artist and the years she was alive, they traveled across the United States and some foreign countries. Throughout their travels, she completed 2,600 beautiful paintings of our nation's landscape. Helen gave Ernest his two children.

Ernest's Choctaw family goes back to the Trail of Tears with his great-great-grandmother. On her journey on the Trail, she walked to Memphis where she had to share four boats with 2,500 other Indians. She walked up the Arkansas River where she encountered a winter storm. There were less than 20 tents for the 2,500 Indians. Most of the people were barely clothed



Ernest Hooser reads to a group of boys and girls at the Robert Lee Williams Library in Durant. The book he has chosen for the day is "Choctaw Little Folk" by Novella Goodman Martin. The first four stories are attributed to his grandfather.

and some were barefoot in the less-than-12-degree weather. According to Ernest, "Trail of Tears" earned its name during this time from a Choctaw chief being interviewed at the Arkansas post. The chief said, "The way things look, it looks like a trail of tears." While Ernest's great-great-grandmother passed away on the Trail, her three sons survived to pass on the story.

Ernest still owns land in Tuskahoma, where he spent his days as a young boy with his brothers and sisters. His mother would send them on adventures to climb the trees that were near their home to retrieve the bark at the top. His mother would use the inside scrapings of this bark to make medicine. They would also dig up "snake root" to be used for medicine. "My parents didn't own a car until I was a junior in college," said Ernest, so they walked or rode their horses wherever they needed to go. They were a blessed family during The Depression because they had plenty of farm animals to keep them well-nourished.

Something important Ernest

remembers his mother telling him and his brothers and sisters is, "You are going to college!" It was very important to her that they gain a good education, and that's just what Ernest did. He had earned his bachelor's degree in math and science from Oklahoma A&M College and went from teaching school in Stigler to becoming the high school principal in Tuskahoma in 1943. He became principal of Antlers High School in 1944 and earned his master's degree from Oklahoma A&M College in 1949. He was working towards his doctorate, but decided to focus more on his current career in education and administration. "I don't regret quitting pursuing my doctorate," Ernest said, and he soon became the superintendent of Eagletown Public Schools.

Four years after serving as superintendent for Eagletown, Ernest began teaching at Durant Jr. High School and made Durant his home. He still resides there today. He taught many math and science classes and eventually was put in charge of and directed an educational

television station coming out of Durant Public Schools. "I really enjoyed the TV," Ernest said. "I enjoyed all of it." It was a television station for the students, by the students. Ernest enjoyed working with television production and attended some television teaching studios in east Texas for a time. He also worked at KXII Studios one summer.

Not only has Ernest been involved with television, he's been a photographer as well. He developed his first roll of film in 1937. He has taught a night-

photography class at Southeastern Oklahoma State University. He wanted to earn his living by doing things he loved, not working at something he didn't enjoy. With his work in teaching children, school administration, directing students in television program production and photography, Ernest is living his life doing the things he loves most.

Something that Ernest thinks is important to do is to read to children. "I have made an effort," he said, to read to all of his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. It brings him great pride for his children and grandchildren to say to him, "I remember you reading us stories." He now reads to his six great-grandchildren as much as he can. They say to him, "Big Papa, tell us stories!" According to Ernest, this fills him with pride.

Ernest loves reading to his great-grandchildren, but he shares his stories with as many people as he can. Since Ernest came to Durant in 1959, he has been close with the Choctaw Nation. "I tried to be involved in everything I could with the Choctaws," he said. Ernest has traveled to various schools and read Choctaw stories to students. "It's good for children to have people read to them," said Ernest. He has read both to elementary and high school

students and enjoys teaching people about the Choctaw heritage. Recently, Ernest has been reading Choctaw stories to children in the Robert E. Lee Public Library in Durant.

Ernest encourages young people to go out and get an education because it will be very helpful to them later in life when they are searching for the right career. They should choose a career field they will love and enjoy so they will live a happy life. Ernest advises the youth of today to "study and know more about your people" by studying the native language and heritage. "I like for people to be proud of whatever they are," he said, even if they're not Choctaw.

Ernest Hooser is an honorable Choctaw elder who is admired by many. Ernest Hooser was named an outstanding elder of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma in 2004. Ernest's brother, John Hooser, has also been named an outstanding elder.

He is an incredibly kind man who lives to love, learn and pass his wisdom to those around him. He has recently closed a speech, receiving a well-earned standing ovation by over 100 listeners, by stating, "I am a proud Oklahoma Choctaw Indian. I am a proud American Indian." Ernest shows pride for his Choctaw heritage in a way that deserves the utmost respect.

Horn to teach language classes in Durant



Bonnie Horn was presented her teaching certification during the July 10 Council Meeting. Pictured are Council Speaker Delton Cox, Councilman Ted Dosh, Horn, Community Language Director Richard Adams, and Assistant Chief Gary Batton.

Durant High School alumni is baseball stand-out at OU

By **BRET MOSS**

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Oklahomans take pride in many things, and near the top of that list would be baseball and their University of Oklahoma Sooners. Max White, who just finished his freshman year at OU is an embodiment of this pride.

White, a 2009 graduate of Durant High School and member, plays left field for the Sooners and just returned from an impressive display of talent in the College World Series. Though the Sooners did not take the series, much hype has been generated in their favor and White has been recognized as an athlete with great potential.



"It is surreal," stated White as he described his first year and the media spotlight. "I remember the first game I started, I was named the OG&E Player of the Game... I was interviewed live on TV and radio."

All this attention has not hit White just yet and he describes it as still not feeling real. "It will probably hit me when I get older," White said when describing the experience.

Given his exceptional play

over the season, there is now speculation that he could be considered for professional baseball. White commented, "There is a great chance for pro ball... I don't care what team I would play for, getting to the show is everybody's dream." White's dreams of pro ball might just come true if he keeps up his success on the field.

Max is not the only White experienced with recent success. His mother, Kim White, says, "It has been an amazing ride... we never dreamed he would do so well so fast." As Sooners fans, the White family was very excited to see their son make the team and obtain a starting position. "Everything you wish for when you are a kid, he is living that," asserted Kim.

White works as hard in the classroom as he does on the field during games and practices. A lot of practice, hard work and hours on the road filled White's freshman year at one of Oklahoma's top universities, but he still managed to do well in his studies and pulled off 30 credit hours over the year while excelling in athletics.

White looks back on his experience on the team with fondness. "Its like we grew up together, nobody thought they were better than anybody," commented White as he described the Sooner baseball team. "We were a close team and that is what got us that far."

White is back in his hometown of Durant for the summer. "I was supposed to go to Cape

Cod to play summer ball, but we went so far in the series that I couldn't," commented White. His plans for the summer have changed to "hitting the weights pretty hard" and getting some rest for next season.

Remembering the road to his success, White looks back on high school and remembers Coach Zach Crabtree as an inspiration to become the player he is. "He made me a better person before a player," said White regarding his former coach.

His advice to high school athletes looking to venture into collegiate athletics is, "Don't take the time you have in high school for granted. Work hard with that time and you will be taken by surprise with what you can do."

Choctaw Nation Distance Learning Technology GED Classes

Beginning:

August 16, 2010

**Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays
9 a.m. - 12 p.m. at the Choctaw Nation Community Centers in Bethel, Smithville and Wright City**

**Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays
1 - 4 p.m. at the Choctaw Nation Community Centers in Atoka, Coalgate and Tali hina**

Distance learning GED classes are now available at the above locations to students in the Choctaw Nation. An experienced GED teacher will instruct you, using the One-Net Distance Learning Technology. Distance Learning allows students and teacher to see and hear each other on large monitors. You will be able to interact with the teacher as she helps you prepare to take the GED test. Books, supplies and testing fees are provided. The class will meet 3 days each week for approximately 9 weeks. A CDIB is required. For more information please contact Neal Hawkins or Kathy Springfield, Choctaw Nation Adult Education, 800-522-6170 or 580-924-8280, ext. 2319 or 2122.

College Prep Coordinator Stephanie Hodge Gardner is named Oklahoma's Rising Star

Stephanie Hodge Gardner, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Scholarship Advisement Program's College Prep Coordinator, has been named Oklahoma's Rising Star for 2010 by the Great Plains Association of College Admissions Counselors (GPACAC). GPACAC is a three-state (Nebraska, Kansas and Oklahoma) regional organization that is an affiliate of the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) a 10,000-member international organization.

GPACAC's Rising Star Award honors top individuals and/or programs in each of its states that exemplify excellence and dedication to serving the needs of students who are in the transition from high school to college.

The Rising Star award recognizes a young professional who has been in college admission counseling for less than five years and has shown leadership and commitment to the profession and to helping students with the college transition process, according to Barbara Adkins, Associate Dean of Admissions for the University of Tulsa and past president of GPACAC. Adkins nominated Stephanie for the Rising Star Award from Oklahoma.

"As a new member, Stephanie embraced our organization," says Adkins. "She went to our national conference, and also attended Guiding the Way to Inclusion (GWI) Workshop." GWI is a NACAC workshop that helps counselors assist underrepresented students and their families in the transition from secondary to postsecondary education. GWI is tailored to address current multicultural and diversity issues in higher education.

"Stephanie is a real go-getter and very dependable," says Adkins. "She jumps into any project that will help students and gives



Barbara Adkins, left, Associate Dean of Admissions for the University of Tulsa, presents the Great Plains Association of College Admissions Counselors (GPACAC) Rising Star Award to Stephanie Hodge Gardner (right), Choctaw Scholarship Advisement Program's College Prep Coordinator and GPACAC's Oklahoma 2010 Rising Star.

it her all. She, in our opinion, is someone who will bring new ideas and leadership to our organization."

For more information about the Scholarship Advisement Program and its staff, visit the SAP website at www.choctawnation-sap.com.

Youth Advisory Board takes action around the Choctaw Nation



Stigler YAB presents the Freddie Falvmichi posters during training. Falvmichi is a domestic abuse prevention program geared toward 2nd graders, where the YAB mentor these students and teach them that, "It's not cool to hit."



Passing out flyers for the annual, "Howe Trash-off Day" that would take place the following weekend. Heavener and Howe YAB took time off on a Saturday to pick up their community.



Heavener YAB members, Shelly Herrin, Jessie Blackwell, and Sierra Janway hand out Valentines to their local senior citizens.



Howe YAB members and cheerleaders announcing that February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month.



Alysia Pemberton, Erica Monks, and Kolton Bryant passing out popcorn at the Stigler Health Fair.



Howe YAB performing a skit for the residents of The Oaks Nursing Home.

Workforce Investment Act working hard at Jones Academy



Martina Delaware paints mural freestyle.



Lucinda Roberts strips and waxes floors.

Jones Academy hired 25 students to work through the WIA summer work program sponsored by the Choctaw Nation. The students did a remarkable job mowing, cleaning, painting and refurbishing the facilities on the Jones Academy campus. Besides being paid for their labor, the students enjoyed the experience of knowing a job was well done.



Part of the work crew group with social worker Mary Canham. From left: David Gordon, Shaylin WhiteBuffalo, Richard Pedro, Mary Canham, Jarn Richards, Francis Brown, Courtney Wallace, Bennie Simpson and Alan Harjo.



The boys cleaning up the playgrounds. From left: Lee Scott, Austin Stevens, Alan Harjo, and Alex Chatkhoodle.

Come join us this fall!

Enroll now at Jones Academy!

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma's Jones Academy is accepting applications for the 2010 Fall Semester. There are openings in specific grades 1-12.

Tour the elementary school facilities and dorms.

Come join us! Be a part of the future! Take advantage of the residential program benefits!

- Tutorial assistance for all grades
- Rewards for academic achievement
- High school graduation expenses paid/scholarships
- Career counseling/college and post-secondary preparation
- Voc-Tech training
- Summer Youth Work Program
- Medical and counseling services provided

- Alternative education program
- Traditional/cultural activities
- Recreational activities and educational trips
- Agriculture program

Please call for a tour or an application at toll-free 888-767-2518, access www.choctawnation.com or write to:
Jones Academy
HCR 74 Box 102-5
Hartshome OK 74547

CHOCTAW NATION VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

SEPTEMBER 2009

Phone: 1-877-285-6893 • Fax: 580-326-2410
Email: ddavenport@choctawnation.com

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

Youth Advisory Board Scholarship winners

CDIB Membership 1st place



Kacie Orzol

Kacie Orzol's future goals are to graduate college and become a kindergarten teacher. I plan to attend Carl Albert State College in Poteau, then transfer to either Northeastern State University or University of Arkansas-Fort Smith. This scholarship will help me receive the education I need in order to achieve my goals. I would like to thank the Choctaw Nation Youth Advisory Board for selecting me to receive this scholarship. I greatly appreciate it.

CDIB Membership 2nd place



Kassi Baughman

I would like to thank the Choctaw Nation Youth Advisory Board for educational opportunities such as this one. I am so grateful for winning this scholarship. This will be a vital role toward helping me advance one step closer to achieving my academic goals. I plan on attending Southeastern University for basic education, then transferring to Southwestern in Weatherford, Okla., to pursue a Pharmacy degree. – Kassi Baughman

CDIB Membership 3rd place



McKenzi Baldwin

I would like to thank Chief Pyle and the Choctaw Nation for awarding me the Choctaw Nation Youth Advisory Board Scholarship. I greatly appreciate the Choctaw Nation for everything it has done for me in high school and entering into college. I will be attending NSU in the fall where I will earn my degree in Speech Language Pathology. Thank you again. – McKenzie Baldwin

Choctaw Scholarship Advisement Program sets date for third annual Ivy League & Friends

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma (CNO) Scholarship Advisement Program (SAP) has set Saturday, Nov. 6 as the date for its third annual Ivy League & Friends Choctaw Student Recruitment. The praise and feedback SAP received from past Ivy League & Friends sessions ensure the 2010 gathering of students, parents and the nation's top colleges will be an occasion CNO scholars from across the country will not want to miss.

Ivy League and Friends began in 2008 when Harvard University visited Durant to meet with nearly 200 Choctaw students and parents. The interest and response to the Harvard session prompted SAP to expand its 2009 event to include not only Harvard, but Yale, Dartmouth, Columbia, Penn, Johns Hopkins, Cal/Berkeley and Phillips Academy as well. More than 300 CNO scholars and parents from nine different states attended Ivy League and Friends 2009, proving beyond a doubt that the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma's college-bound students and parents are eager for information about, and the chance to meet, America's top schools.

In 2009's post event survey more than 95 percent of respondents said they would be extremely likely to recommend attending Ivy League and Friends to a fellow CNO scholar. The highly positive feedback from last year also provided constructive recommendations that will make this year's Ivy League and Friends even better. Additions and improvements for 2010 include an impressive list:

- **More Schools** – It's anticipated this year's Ivy League and Friends will more than double the number of the 2009 attending colleges. SAP expects 20 or more of the nation's top colleges will attend. Schools and programs already scheduled to participate include Columbia, Johns Hopkins, Cal/Berkeley, Purdue and College Horizons. Harvard, Yale,



**Saturday, Nov. 6
at
Choctaw Casino Resort**

and Princeton are among the group of selective institutions that have also been invited.

- **More Time and More Break-out Sessions** – Ivy League and Friends 2010 will be a full day, not just an evening affair. Students and parents will have time to learn more about each school and attend their choice of numerous special breakout sessions scheduled throughout the day. Sessions are planned for each college and university and much more time for one-on-one question and answer opportunities will be provided.

- **Special Presentations** – Breakout sessions will also highlight special presentations on a variety of college preparation topics. Look for sessions covering Financial Aid, College Test Preparation, Resume Building and more.

- **Added Graduate Student Emphasis** – Ivy League and Friends 2010 has more information and emphasis for graduate students. The event will include graduate student breakout sessions and many colleges will bring graduate student recruiters.

- **Held at the Choctaw Casino Resort** – Ivy League and Friends 2010 will be held at the new Choctaw Casino Resort in Durant, Oklahoma. The new Resort Hotel features over 300 well-appointed rooms and luxury suites complete with exclusive amenities. The Resort Hotel offers a business center, fitness center, retail outlets, shuttle service and, of course, access to Oklahoma's finest casino and entertainment experience.

Save the Date - Get Ivy League and Friends 2010 Updates. CNO students and parents are urged to save the date – Saturday, Nov. 6 – for the 2010 Ivy League & Friends. On SAP's Web site browse to www.choctawnation-sap.com/ivy for more information and updates. Also, be sure to check out SAP's Facebook, Twitter, online newsletter, and blog for the latest Ivy League & Friends news.



Koby Cross, First Place

I would like to thank the Choctaw Nation for the last four years of my high school career. Without the Youth Advisory Board, I would not have been able to experience the things I have. From compliance checks to New York City, I have enjoyed everything you have given me. I greatly appreciate the generosity which allowed us to participate in all the activities and trips in the last four years. The Choctaw Nation will only continue to grow because of the great leadership and willingness to make the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma a better place to live. This scholarship will help further my education and the ability to give back to my community. The opportunities are endless because of this scholarship. I will forever be grateful for the financial support and endless life lessons I have learned because of the Youth Advisory Board. Again, thank you so much for the experience I would have never experienced on my own and for believing and investing in today's youth.

Amy Wallace, Second Place

Amy Wallace is the daughter of Gary and Nikki Wallace and the sister of Reed Wallace of Hugo. She is also the sister of Blake, currently deployed to Afghanistan.

Amy has been a graduate of Hugo and an active member of YAB for two years. She also encourages young people, such as her younger brother to become participants in YAB. Amy was most impressed with the healthy lifestyle goals of YAB. She says, "Membership has enabled me with the techniques that will sustain me throughout my college tenure and as an adult. Regarding violence, society offers many challenges to children and adults. Yet with this basic knowledge I can encourage healthy choices for me, my peers, and my family."

Amy is currently working at Falls Creek, a Christian youth camp, for the summer. In the fall she will attend OSU majoring in interior design. She is also considering entering law school.

She is greatly appreciative of the scholarship, and it will be a great benefit to her as she enters OSU in August.



LeFlore County YAB hosts Senior Citizen Dance



The YAB of LeFlore County hosted the second annual "Dancing with the Seniors Under the Stars" at the Oaks Nursing Home in Poteau. This was an evening full of fun, music and laughter for the YAB and Seniors alike. At the end of the dance, a dancing queen and king were crowned.



Brett Porter, Third Place

I am attending Southeastern Oklahoma State University in the fall, where I am majoring in biology. I will be a member of the honors program. After graduating I plan to attend pharmacy school. Upon completing pharmacy school I hope to have the opportunity to work for the Choctaw Nation. This scholarship will help me get out of college debt-free. I am very thankful that the Choctaw Nation YAB has the scholarship program.



Youth Advisory Board supports breast cancer awareness

The Youth Advisory Board members of Cameron High School planned and hosted a week devoted to Breast Cancer Awareness. This event, PinkZone, was held Feb. 1-5. Events that took place during the week were a poster contest, Support the Banks, where grades competed against each other to see who could raise the most money, and Tickle Me Pink Challenge, where students put money in faculty members' jars and the one with the most had to be completely decked out in Pink. On Friday the YAB hosted a reception for breast cancer fighters, had a pep rally in the gym, and encouraged all the fans to wear pink to that evening's basketball game. All proceeds made from events and T-shirt sales were donated to the Susan G. Komen foundation. The amount raised was \$1,266.07.



2010 District Choctaw Princesses



Whitney Griffith
District 1 Little Miss



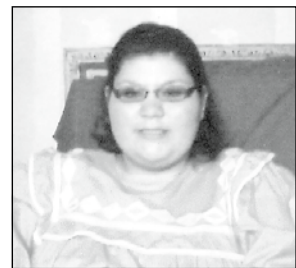
Kalli Battiest
District 2 Little Miss



Nikki Amos
District 2 Junior Miss



Ashlyn Choate
District 2 Senior Miss



Joyce Cummings
District 3 Junior Miss



Brianna Battiest
District 4 Little Miss



Callie Curnutt
District 4 Junior Miss



Andrea Ford
District 4 Senior Miss



Kristie McGuire
District 5 Senior Miss



Mahala Battiest
District 7 Little Miss



Melissa Gueli
District 7 Junior Miss



Summer Moffitt
District 8 Little Miss



Sarah James
District 8 Junior Miss



Rebeckah Boykin
District 8 Senior Miss



Heaven Williams
District 9 Little Miss



Kayleigh Powell
District 9 Junior Miss



Ataiya Jim
District 10 Little Miss



December Pittman
District 10 Junior Miss

The Choctaw Princess Pageants are a way to let the beautiful girls of the Choctaw Nation represent their tribe in a fun, exciting and competitive way. They show their pride for their Choctaw heritage through their traditional Choctaw talents, dress and speech. The women responsible for keeping these young ladies organized are Choctaw Nation Director of Tribal Events and Wheelock Academy, Faye Self, and her assistant director, Elaine Thompson.

Elaine has been working with Faye for about 4 1/2 years. Faye became the pageant director about two months ago. "She has got such great organizational skills," said Elaine concerning Faye. It has been a quick learning experience for Faye and Elaine and they have really enjoyed it. They're always up for a challenge. "We're just motivated to make it better," commented Elaine. They work to make sure the pageants are right and fair to everyone, and put a lot of effort into increasing pageant participation.

These Choctaw Princess Pageants are held in all 12 districts in the 10 1/2 counties of the Choctaw Nation. They are split up into three divisions; Little Miss, between the ages of 8 and 12; Junior Miss, between the ages of 13 and 17; and Senior Miss, between the ages of 18 and 23. All participants must have at least 1/16 degree of Choctaw blood or more, and they must be a resident of the Choctaw Nation.

The Little Miss competition consists of judgments based on beauty and personality, traditional Choctaw talent, their goals as princess and traditional Choctaw dress. The Junior and Senior Miss pageant consists of personality, goals as princess, beauty and poise, traditional dress and accessories and traditional talent. The winners of the district pageants will go on to compete for the title of Little, Junior and Senior Miss Choctaw Nation. This pageant is held at Tuskahoma on Thursday, Sept. 2, just in time for the Labor Day festivities.

Elaine and Faye are responsible for the behind-the-scenes action that happens while the girls are performing on stage. "My favorite part about the pageants is the girls' excitement and enthusiasm," said Elaine. "They show the culture of the tribe and the represent the Choctaw Nation." The toughest part, according to Elaine, is keeping up with all of the participants' paperwork.

Faye and Elaine have several duties as the pageant coordinators. They are responsible for meeting with the girls and getting everything set up for them. They get their rooms, food and other accommodations ready for the participants. They are there for the girls and their families when the phones are ringing off the hook with questions about the pageant. "We take care of their needs," said Elaine.

Currently, the 12 district pageants are all wrapped up and the princesses have been crowned. They are now busy preparing themselves for the Miss Choctaw Nation Pageant in September. Watching these young ladies perform their Choctaw talents and showing off their colorful Choctaw dresses will give you pride for your Choctaw heritage. These girls are the youth of the Choctaw Nation and they display the Choctaw culture in a great way. If you're interested in participating in the Choctaw princess pageants, call Faye Self at 580-924-8280, ext. 2192, and be sure to come watch the Miss Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Princess Pageant at Tuskahoma on Sept. 2. Here is a list of this year's winners:

District 1 Little Miss - Whitney Griffith Whitney is the daughter of Jimmy and Paula Griffith. She is from Millerton and attends school at Lukfata Elementary. Whitney likes to play softball and is the first-baseman for the Lady Dawgs. She enjoys playing at her friend Hannah's house, talking on the phone, playing Nintendo and Wii and watching TV.

District 1 Junior Miss - Mona Jones (not pictured) Mona is the daughter of Kimberly Holt. She is from Idabel and attends school at Idabel Middle School. Mona likes participating in show choir, reading, texting and talking on the phone, hanging out with friends and family, singing, doing chores and going to church.

District 2 Little Miss - Kalli Battiest Kalli is the daughter of Kenneth and Kimberly Battiest. She is from Broken Bow and attends school at Bennett Elementary. Kalli likes to play softball, do Choctaw social dance and talk on the phone.

District 2 Junior Miss - Nikki Amos Nikki is the daughter of Michael and Vicky Amos. She is from Broken Bow and attends school at Lukfata Elementary. Nikki likes spending time with her family and friends, playing basketball, softball and soccer, reading, riding four-wheelers, hunting and fishing, attending church, singing Choctaw hymns and Choctaw social dancing with the McKinney Dancers.

District 2 Senior Miss - Ashlyn Choate Ashlyn is the daughter of Russell and Annette Choate. She is from Broken Bow and attends school at Broken Bow High School. Ashlyn enjoys Choctaw Nation Youth Advisory Board activities including alcohol compliance checks, SWAT, nursing home visits and tutoring; Choctaw social dancing, watching sporting events, including stickball; and being a member of the Myrtlewood Baptist Church



Anna Kenietubbe
District 11 Little Miss



Cherish Wilkerson
District 11 Junior Miss



Rachelle Hatcher
District 12 Little Miss



Cameron Hardy
District 12 Junior Miss



Sara Morgan
District 12 Senior Miss

Miss Choctaw Nation Pageant Tushka Homma Thursday, Sept. 2, 2010

Drama Team.

District 3 Little Miss - Jessica Schoon (not pictured) Jessica is the daughter of Angel and Angela Delao. She is from Talihina and attends school there. Jessica likes animals, cooking, softball, beadwork, crocheting, singing and church activities.

District 3 Junior Miss - Joyce Cummings Joyce is the daughter of Greg Cummings and Angela Delao. She is from Whitesboro and attends Whitesboro Public Schools. Joyce likes participating in 5K runs, playing softball and spending time with friends and family.

District 4 Little Miss - Brianna Battiest Brianna is the daughter of Christina Battiest. She is from Poteau and attends school at Poteau Upper Elementary. Brianna enjoys running 5Ks, playing soccer, basketball and softball, going to church with Nana, brothers and cousins.

District 4 Junior Miss - Callie Curnutt Callie is the daughter of Bruce and Francine Curnutt. She is from Wister and attends school at Wister Public Schools. Callie likes to hunt and ride horses. She is very involved in 4-H and shows goats. She is also involved in several community service projects throughout the year through 4-H.

District 4 Senior Miss - Andrea Ford Andrea is the daughter of Jimmy and Sherry Ford. She is from Howe and attends school at Carl Albert State College with a major in Sports Medicine. Andrea enjoys attending sporting events at Carl Albert, fishing, playing with her dogs and attending church.

District 5 Senior Miss - Kristie McGuire Kristie is the daughter of Harold McGuire. She is from Keota and attends school at the University of Central Oklahoma with a major in Biology. Kristie likes to read and spend time with her family.

District 6 Little Miss - Hailey Scott (not pictured) Hailey is the daughter of Wayne Scott, Sr. and Nora Scott. She is from Wilburton and attends school at Jones Academy. Hailey likes horses, watching TV, caring for her animals and going to movies with her cousins.

District 7 Little Miss - Mahala Battiest Mahala is the daughter of Jeremy Scott Battiest and Rachel Battiest. She is from Wright City and attends school and Wright City Elementary. Mahala enjoys playing sports. She is active in coach-pitch baseball, soccer, she enjoys reading and spending time with her dogs. She likes riding her horse "Princess" and helping her mom with her baby brother and sister.

District 7 Junior Miss - Melissa Gueli Melissa is the daughter of Clifford and Cathy Ludlow. She is from Tuskahoma and

attends school at Clayton High School. Melissa enjoys attending various Choctaw Bible Camps, singing in a Choctaw choir, learning traditional beadwork, cooking traditional Choctaw foods, playing sports, learning Choctaw dancing, shopping, learning bow shooting and spending time with friends and family.

District 8 Little Miss - Summer Moffitt Summer is the daughter of Johnny and Barbara Moffitt. She is from Hugo and attends school at Hugo Intermediate School. Summer enjoys singing and performing the Lord's Prayer in sign language, drawing and artwork. She also donates items to the Court Appointed Special Advocates for children.

District 8 Junior Miss - Sarah James Sarah is the daughter of Tony and Brenda James. She is from Hugo and attends school at Hugo High School. Sarah likes to play sports and learn more about her heritage. When she's not helping out with the cleaning and cooking, she's doing her homework, studying and reading.

District 8 Senior Miss - Rebeckah Boykin Rebeckah is the daughter of Robert (Sam) Boykin and Jana Pisachubbee Boykin. She is from Hugo and attends school at Soper High School. Rebeckah enjoys playing soccer, basketball, golf, getting to travel with the Choctaw Social Dancers and performing dances, learning about her heritage, doing beadwork with her mom, playing the piano for her dad, spending time with her family, shopping with her friends and having play time with her niece. She also enjoys going to livestock shows with her goats and her show heifer.

District 9 Little Miss - Heaven Williams Heaven is the daughter of John and Shelley Williams. She is from Durant and goes to school at North West Heights. Heaven's interests include playing soccer, basketball and softball. She has a 100% batting average in softball. She enjoys hunting and fishing with her dad and cooking with her mom. She is a great artist and loves to do beadwork and make bracelets for her teachers and friends.

District 9 Junior Miss - Kayleigh Powell Kayleigh is the daughter of Monica Blaine. She is from Durant and attends school at Durant Middle School. Kayleigh likes shopping, texting, spending time with friends, mudding, riding four-wheelers, swimming, basketball, golfing, babysitting and going to the lake tanning.

District 9 Senior Miss - Autumn Cooper (not pictured) Autumn is the daughter of George E. and Janette Allen. She is from Calera and attends school at Southeastern Oklahoma State University. Autumn likes attending the Choctaw Language community class. She is a member of SE's Native American Council and SE's President Leadership Class. She enjoys beading and learning.

District 10 Little Miss - Ataiya Jim Ataiya is the daughter of Raymond Mantano and Jana Jim. She is from Stringtown and goes to Stringtown Elementary. Ataiya enjoys riding her bike, swimming, caring for her three dogs and hamster, playing basketball and soccer.

District 10 Junior Miss - December Pittman December is the daughter of Bradley Shawn Pittman and Julie Marie Lamber. She is from Atoka and attends school at Atoka McCall Middle School. December likes to go swimming, play with her cousins, play with her four sisters and hang out with her friends. She loves to sing and dance and she likes to try to help people achieve their goals.

District 11 Little Miss - Anna Kenieutubbe Anna is the daughter of Brian Hamilton and Teresa Kenieutubbe-Hamilton. She is from McAlester and attends school at Edmond Doyle-McAlester. Anna likes to play basketball, softball and spend time with friends and Grandpa Kenieutubbe. She attends First Indian Baptist Church. She also participates with 2nd Saturday at the community center.

District 11 Junior Miss - Cherish Wilkerson Cherish is the daughter of Dennis and Dena Cantrell. She is from McAlester and attends school at Crowder Public Schools. Cherish enjoys cheerleading, riding horses, showing goats in FFA, hanging out with friends, dancing, going for walks and going to the movies.

District 12 Little Miss - Rachelle Hatcher Rachelle is the daughter of Kris and Sandra Hatcher. She is from McAlester and attends school at Indianola. Rachelle likes baseball, basketball, soccer, playing with her little sister and riding four-wheelers with her dad.

District 12 Junior Miss - Cameron Hardy Cameron is the daughter of Paula Carney. She is from Coalgate and attends school at Wallace Byrd Middle School. Cameron enjoys sports and practice, the Choctaw language, culture and traditions, preserving our heritage, spending time with friends and church youth activities.

District 12 Senior Miss - Sara Morgan Sara is the daughter of Tommy and Shirley Morgan. She is from Centrahoma and attends school at East Central University with a major in Vocal Music Education. Sara likes spending time reading, going to the movies, spending time with her family and she loves singing all the time.

Connecting generations through flute-making

By LARISSA COPELAND

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Almost all the tales from the different tribes about the origins of the flute say it was an instrument of love. The stories reference men playing the flute while courting a young maiden. "They played from the heart," says flute maker Presley Byington of Idabel.

Presley, one of only a handful of Choctaw flute makers, has been crafting flutes from cane for about 20 years. While visiting Cherokee, S.C., as a kid, he saw and heard one played, and the seed of admiration was planted, continuing to grow ever since.

Presley has worked for the Oklahoma Forestry Department since 1992, but years earlier, when he went out on his own at 16 years old, he didn't have a real plan for what he wanted to do. Later, his mother asked if he wanted to apprentice Floyd Peters, a silversmith she knew. She offered to pay for his training and he agreed.

It was during his silversmith training with Floyd that Presley learned to make the flute. Floyd was taught the flute-making trade by a man who wanted to learn to be a silversmith. The two made a deal to teach each other their trades. So, as Floyd taught Presley the ways of a silversmith, he also showed him the art of flute-making as well. In the end, though Presley started out learning to be a silversmith, he became a flute maker instead.

When it comes to how he makes the flute, Presley takes the "think smarter, not harder" approach. Though he knows how to make a flute the way his ancestors did he chooses to take advantage of the tools of today when he creates one. "Choctaws are smart people. They use what tools are available to them," he explained. "If they'd had power tools back then I'm certain they would have used them. My process is different but it's the same result."

Original Choctaw flutes



were made of switch cane or river cane and they were made with only two holes. In earlier Choctaw tales, this type of flute was usually played by the medicine men, or holy men, of the tribe during the game of stickball. Presley makes only a few of these flutes. More often, he makes the six-hole, Plains-style flute and typically uses bamboo instead. Over time, the Plains-style flute has been the style many flute-makers have adapted to, but the principles of both flutes are the same – to create beautiful music. He just prefers the sound that a bamboo flute makes over that of switch cane.

He cuts his own bamboo from a local patch in Broken Bow, owned by a man he knows. The man made a deal with Presley that if would make him flutes to give to his grandchildren Presley could use all the bamboo he wanted from the patch in exchange. Presley eagerly agreed and has used his bamboo ever since.

Presley says he wasn't able to play a note of music for the first three or four years that he made them until he ran into fellow Choctaw flute maker, Paul Hackard. Paul gave him a book of flute music and from it he learned to play "Amazing Grace." He later learned that is the song most players first learn to play.

He tunes each flute by ear during the creation process, making fine, minor adjustments as he goes. The smaller in diameter the flute, the harder it is to tune. "If I can get it to play 'Amazing Grace' I'm happy with it," he says.

He makes approximately 25 flutes a year to give away or sell. He keeps about six to eight completed flutes on hand to give or sell to individuals and museums, also making them on order as well. He creates a variety of styles; some big, some small, some plain, some fancy with beadwork and a nice bag. He usually donates the more elaborate ones to be

auctioned for various fundraisers. When he does sell one it is usually by word of mouth.

The Forest Heritage Center in Broken Bow has two of his flutes on display. When visitors ask how they can get one, they direct them to Presley.

Sometimes he is asked to set up a booth at festivals; however, he doesn't do this often. "I don't do it to make a living. I do it for fun and because I just like making them."

Presley also does numerous demonstrations for children throughout the year at various camps and school programs. Most recently, on July 14, he gave a presentation for kids at a summer camp at Beaver's Bend in Broken Bow. When he does visits like this he usually brings along two flutes to be given in a drawing – one for a girl and one for a boy. He gives away 10 to 12 flutes a year to kids in this way.

Presley is passionate about the Choctaw culture and does much to pass it on and educate the next generation. Not only does he make and play the Choctaw flute, he also does tribal beadwork, is a Powwow dancer, does acting portrayals, is a storyteller, and does demonstrations on other aspects of Choctaw culture.

He has even been asked to give blowgun demonstrations to classes at the University of Oklahoma.

He does all this because he feels like it's what he's supposed to be doing. "It just all fell into place. I'm supposed to be, well, I am an educator of our culture. I'm always willing to tell our stories," he explained. "It's so important that we don't lose our identity. You've got to know where you've been to know where you're going."

"Who we are, our blood, it's important," he said. "You have to have a want deep inside and hold on to it. We're a piece of the puzzle to connect the past and present culture," he continued, "and it's important that we keep passing it on."

THE PROCESS: Transforming raw bamboo into an instrument

Presley cuts the bamboo and lets it dry out for about two weeks before it's ready to be used. Not counting this cutting and drying out process, it usually takes him about four to six hours to craft a flute.

Native American flutes have two air chambers, however, the piece of bamboo has three sections separated by two dividers. It's important to pop out the divider between the lower bamboo joints while it's still green; otherwise, if it's dried out the piece is likely to crack. If he doesn't get it out while it's green he burns it out when it dries by heating a long metal pick and burning through the divider. The divider in the top is left in place.

Next he rough sands the piece to remove the outer skin.

He uses a pencil and marks a line down the front and back of the bamboo, and in front and behind the node (joint) that still has the divider intact. He makes six pencil marks along the top, measuring from the node, at 2-3/4 inches, 1-1/8, 1-1/8, 1-1/4, 1-1/8, 1-1/8. This is the only part of the flute that is measured; the rest is done by eye or feel.



Next, he draws the "duck bill" on the end of the flute then uses a hand saw to remove the sides. He says the duck or crane bill is in the stories of many tribes and is symbolic as a prayer for rain.

He then burns the holes into it by heating a metal rod and poking it through at the marks he measured off, saying drilling would cause it to splinter. The flute has eight holes burned into it – the six going down the body and two near the top on each side of the node.

The node "is where the music is made; it has to be just right," he says. He scrapes out a hollow area between the two holes to create the "saddle." This allows the air to flow out the top hole, under the birdie, or tuner, through the saddle and out through the bottom holes, where he manipulates the sound with his fingertips.

He holds on a test tuner to try out the flute. He blows in to test the sound. If it's not quite right he'll make a few adjustments, deepening the saddle by whittling out a little more. He'll test it again, continuing his fine-tuning. He can't say how he knows what tweaks to make; it's just something he can hear and feel.

He then hand sands the rough edges and rounds off the ends.



Using a propane-fueled flame, he "cures" the flute, starting at the ends. He scorches the bamboo to a chocolate brown color, which helps to crystallize the sap, making it harder, stronger and last longer. The sap pops out when heated and makes a crackling sound. He has to be careful about the amount of heat he applies so it doesn't crack.

He lets it cool for about 10 minutes, and then sands the flute by hand to remove the excess burned areas, giving it a better color and smoother appearance.

He takes a small, square piece of cedar and marks where he wants to cut the birdie, then uses a band saw to cut it out. He sands the birdie by hand, rounding off the edges. He then places the birdie over the two top holes already burned into the flute and sands it down to make a perfect fit. Each birdie is unique to the flute for which it was created.



He buffs each piece to shine and to smooth it out. He then burns his "mark," into the backside of the piece. His mark consists of his initials and the year on the outside of two crossed arrows. He started putting his mark on his flutes in 1998. A lady wanted a flute for her husband but wanted Presley to put his mark on it, identifying him as the artist who made it. Since then, every flute he creates carries his mark.

Last, he takes a long, thin strip of leather and wraps it several times around the birdie and the flute, tying it in a tight double knot over the node and saddle.



He does one final test. He puts his mouth to the top and out of the flute comes the smooth, unique sound that only bamboo can make. "Amazing Grace" is his song of choice. He sets it down, satisfied with the result. Smiling, he says, "Sounds pretty good, I reckon."

Preserving the past with photographs

By BRET MOSS

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Throughout history, many men have left their mark on the world and are remembered through photographs. In the case of Chester Cowen, his mark is photographs.

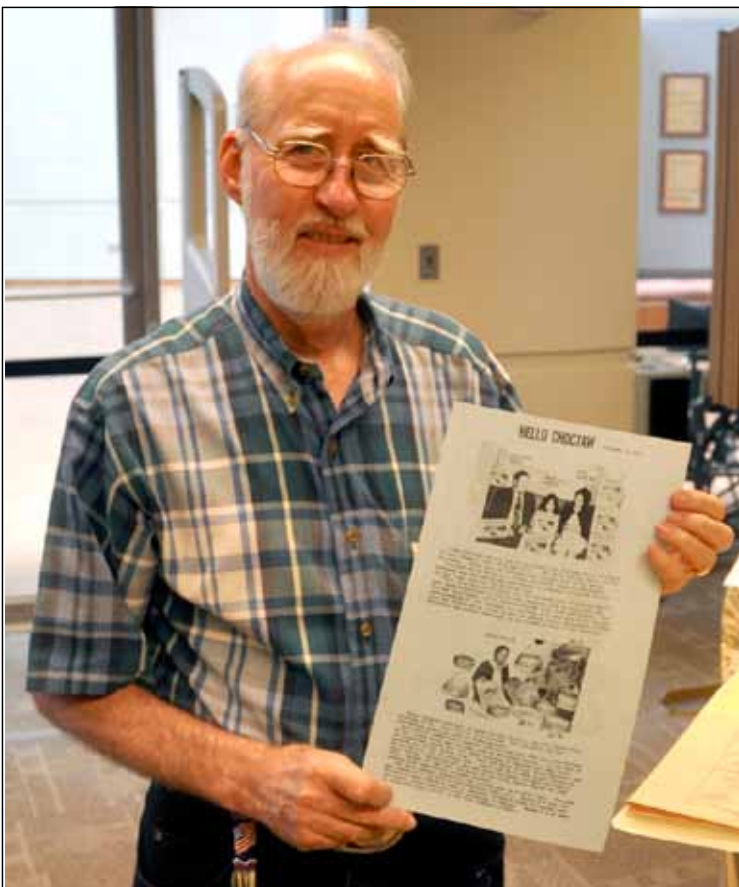
Cowen is the recently retired curator of the Oklahoma Historical Society's photo archives, a sizable collection of photographs that number in upwards of nine million. He has aided in the growth, organization and storage of these historical artifacts since 1990.

Born in Chickasha in 1939, Cowen is the son of Chester M. and Hazel Cowen. He attended the University of Oklahoma, where he obtained two baccalaureate degrees and a master's degree. He went on to Indiana University, where he completed the coursework toward a Ph.D.

Cowen is a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and a member of the Choctaw Veteran's Association for his service in the U.S. Army.

After serving his country, Cowen traveled back to Oklahoma to study traveling photographers of territorial Oklahoma. He indexed photos and was able to date them by examining the type of print that was used, the clothes the subjects wore and the material on which the photo was printed.

Taking a trip by Oklahoma's capital building might lead you near the site of Cowen's life work. The Oklahoma Historical Society's new building called the Oklahoma Historical Center houses the photo archives, along with numerous other state artifacts.



When Cowen arrived to his job in 1990 at the Historical Society, there were about 64,000 images that he had to work with. Within the 20-year span, he has built the collection to over nine million, with an average of 475,000 new images per year.

With all these photographs under his supervision, Cowen has a sizable job to do in keeping up with valuable pieces of Oklahoma's history. The duties of Cowen's, and the rest of the Historical Society is to date, sort, archive, preserve, and make available to the people all of the images in the archive. "It's a lot of work, but it's what we do," said Cowen as he joyfully described his career.

When dating the incoming photographs, Cowen and his team use a wide knowledge of history and photograph ex-

pertise to determine the year it was taken. Some images can be dated without even seeing the picture, said Cowen. He went on to tell how one can greatly narrow the timeframe of the photo by just the texture of the photo.

When it comes to archiving and sorting the documents, Cowen and his colleagues use a very detailed system to keep the photos organized and categorized. They are copied and referenced by year and subject matter. Along with the new building, came the ability for large scale scanning. All the images are in the process of being scanned and made available for the public.

All the images that have been scanned into digital format are available to the public to use for research purposes and are free on the website in

72 dpi. Higher quality images can be purchased for other use, and are available upon request in 300 dpi.

To keep the photos preserved, the photos are carefully cleaned, put into sleeves that contain certain chemical qualities best suited for preserving the particular image and then stored in a dark room to prevent light determination. "These images will stay preserved for a very long time and we hope to have better methods in the future that will keep them even longer," says Cowen.

Cowen has had the pleasure of working with valuable pieces of Native American history during his career. He has archived the Will T. Nelson collection, whose "work was widely used for Choctaw purposes," said Cowen.

Nelson was a photographer who sent out a small publication titled "Hello Choctaw." This publication was admired by the chief at the time, David Garner, and was made permanent. "Hello Choctaw" later took a name change and is now the "Biskinik."

Cowen is now retired from his position at the Historical Society, but his work is far from over. In his retirement Cowen plans to publish a monograph on how to date family photos. He plans on having this work completed within two years.

Cowen also plans to keep studying images for the society in order to better preserve the history of the state. He has left his mark in history by preserving the image of Oklahoma. If the phrase "a picture is worth a thousand words" holds true, then Cowen has helped Oklahoma tell a nine billion-word story.

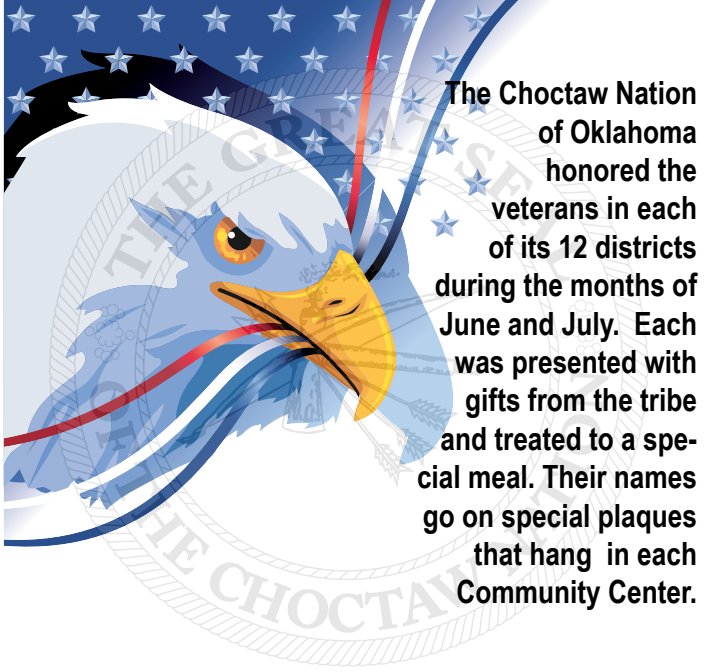
Choctaw Nation honors veterans in its districts



Antlers



Broken Bow



The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma honored the veterans in each of its 12 districts during the months of June and July. Each was presented with gifts from the tribe and treated to a special meal. Their names go on special plaques that hang in each Community Center.



Coalgate



Crowder



Spiro



Atoka



McAlester



Atoka



Poteau



Smithville



Stigler



**Thank you
to all
of our
veterans!**



Idabel



Talihina



Talihina



Wilburton



Wright City



Hugo

Five Tribes Story Conference planned for September

The Five Tribes Story Conference, hosted by the Five Civilized Tribes Museum in Muskogee, will be Sept. 24 and 25 at the historic Bacone College.

The purpose of the Five Tribes Story Conference is to create an annual event unprecedented in Indian Country. It will provide an enriching southeastern tribal environment; a joining of academic, interpretive, literary, and performance disciplines. Cultural performances and literary readings will be followed by academic-focused panels, featuring leaders in the four disciplines.

Stories, whether written, enacted, or illustrated, instill deep cultural connections. Intended to preserve, protect, and perpetuate culture. Stories build multi-cultural and multi-generational bridges and engage involvement.

Crucial to the effective impacts of stories are context, audience, performance, and intent. The conference will bring together tribal participants in the fields of history, ethnology, performance, and literature to discuss how each discipline informs the other. Sessions and panels dedicated to specific topics will engage participants in an open and interactive format.

Tim Tingle (Choctaw) will help co-host the conference and is the keynote speaker for Friday morning's opening. He is an award-winning author, storyteller, and folklorist. Tim travels the nation to schools, libraries, universities, museums, and tribal events presenting stories and cultural lessons gleaned from a lifetime of deep involvement in Choctaw oral history.

In addition to Tim Tingle, 15 well known authors, anthropologists, historians and storytellers will take part in the conference. The list includes: Choogie Kingfisher, (a Kituwah Cherokee), Ryan Mackey (Cherokee), Stella Long (Choctaw), Lorie Robins (Chickasaw), Greg Rodgers (Choctaw/Chickasaw), Phillip Harjo (Seminole), Richard Adams (Choctaw), Diane Glancy (Cherokee), Dr. Les Hannah (Cherokee), Linda Hogan (Chickasaw), LeAnne Howe (Choctaw), Dr. Phillip Carroll Moargan (Chickasaw/Choctaw), Dr. Daniel Littlefield (Cherokee), Joyce Bear (Muscogee), and Dr. Pete Coser (Muscogee).

The conference has a limited enrollment so plan to enroll early. Evening performances will held at the Five Civilized Tribes Museum and are open to the public free of charge.

For more information about the Five Tribes Story Conference visit fivetribestory.org, call 918-683-1701, or e-mail 5civilizedtribes@sbcglobal.net.

The Five Tribes Story Conference is made possible in part the Oklahoma Humanities Council and We the People initiative through the National Endowment of the Humanities.

OK Choctaws list August activities

The OK Choctaw Tribal Alliance (OCTA) in Oklahoma City is having its August taco sale on Saturday, Aug. 14, from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.. This will also include storytelling from about 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. by Greg Rodgers, a professional Native American storyteller, and a longtime OCTA member and former board member of the Alliance. The taco sales are held the second Saturday each month.

The Alliance is also planning to have a breakfast fundraiser the following Saturday, Aug. 21, from 8-11 a.m. The menu will include pancakes, scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage, biscuits and gravy, etc. In addition to the breakfast there will be homemade fruit pies for sale. Greg Rodgers will also be there with his storytelling again.

Also, the Alliance will have its taco trailer at Tushka Homma this year from Sept. 2-6 selling their Indian Tacos. The secret is in the soft bread and meat sauce. This will be followed by their monthly Taco Sale on Saturday, Sept. 11, from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

They just finished up a busy month in July with their parade float being in the Libertyfest Parade in Edmond on July 3, their monthly taco sale on July 10, serving Indian Tacos for the Synod of the Sun held at the First Presbyterian Church in Oklahoma on July 17, and having their taco wagon at the Indian Hills Powwow from the 23rd to the 25th of July in north Oklahoma City.

The Alliance is located at 5320 S. Youngs Blvd., in Oklahoma City, about five blocks north of Southwest 59th Street between May and Pennsylvania Avenues. For information about membership, contact Phyllis Been at 405-535-8418 (cell), or Judith Bryant at 405-755-6983.

Veterans Advocacy of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

To assure that Choctaw veterans receive benefits and services on par with other veterans

**Choctaw Nation
Veterans Advocates
Brent Oakes and John Lance
P.O. Box 1210, Durant, OK 74702-1210
1-800-522-6170, ext. 2163 or 2160
Fax: 580-920-3155**

OBITUARIES

Dale Allen 'Chuckie' Williams

Dale Allen Williams 58, passed away March 26, 2010, at his home in Peoria, Ariz. He was born August 13, 1951, at the old Indian hospital in Phoenix.

He owned and operated Choctaw Trucking for many years. He sold his trucks when diabetes got the best of him but it didn't slow him down.

He loved to fish, hunt and boat the Colorado River and area lakes. Chuckie was a great cook. He loved to grill and acted as camp cook on many hunting trips with his family and friends. He loved the mountains, especially those in Montana, Wyoming and Colorado.

He was proud of his Choctaw heritage. He took his Pops to visit Oklahoma during his last years and visited all the important places in the Scott/Williams history. While there they dropped by to visit with Chief Pyle at his office.

Chuckie carried on the gift given to him by his father as a storyteller. His stories will be repeated by all who loved him. He was a lifelong resident of Peoria. He graduated from Peoria High School, played football and was on the wrestling team. Chuckie was a family man and he loved "his people." Those people included his family and many, many friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Frank Williams Jr. and Udell Scott Williams. He is a great-grandson of original enrollee Frank Williams Sr.

Chuckie is survived by his wife of five years, Susan; daughter Shannel Wells; granddaughters, Manaia and Nohea; son Billy; grandson Wyatt; brothers, Gerald, Floyd and Dan; sisters, Ruby Wilson and husband Del, Rachel Minor and husband Doug, Norma Gregg and husband Donny, and Sandra Howard; Jimmie and nieces and nephews.

His ashes were scattered over the mountains of the Smith River area of Montana.



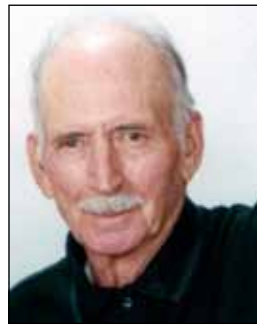
Don Eckelman

Don Eckelman, 83 of Anderson, Calif., passed away May 31, 2010. He was born in Ringling on March 18, 1927, to W.D. and Relma Eckelman. He was the grandson of John Hammons and Elizabeth Heskett of Crowder.

He was founder of Eckelman Painting & Drywall in Salinas, Calif. He was a Sergeant in the Army during World War II. He was an Elder with the New Life Christian Center in Redding and prior to moving to Anderson, he belonged to the Church of God in Salinas. Don loved the Lord and often shared he "has had a wonderful life." His children and grandchildren feel he has truly blessed each of them with an amazing legacy.

He is survived by brother Harry and wife Joyce Eckelman of Redding; sister Gerry and brother-in-law Roy Harper of Yuma, Ariz.; son-in-law Elmer; daughter Donna (Eckelman) Winfree of Palo Cedro; son Larry Eckelman of Cottonwood; nine grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents; sister Joyce; daughter Sharon; grandson Danny; and great-grandson Christopher.



Cameron Wilson Hardy

Cameron Wilson Hardy was born April 29, 1974, to proud parents Aaron Hardy Sr. of Hugo and Bertha Amos. He passed away May 12, 2010, after a six-month battle with leukemia. He wanted more Native Americans to learn about this disease.

Cameron was a son, father, husband, uncle, nephew and best friend to many. He graduated from Guthrie Job Corps in December 1991. He was a certified carpenter and enjoyed his work very much. He gave his life to the Lord and was saved in 2005. He attended church at Central Baptist in Oklahoma City. He enjoyed being in choir and attending events with his children. He was very proud of his Choctaw heritage.

He had six children, Mekyla, Neiatha, Nathaniel, Mia, Erin and Lorna. He loved his children very much and thought the world of each of them. He married Chauncine Hardy on July 17, 1997, and loved his wife dearly.

He was preceded in death by his grandparents, Semion and Maxine Jacobs; sisters, Gwendolyn and Morgan Lee Postoak.



James Finis Garland

James Finis Garland, born December of 1932, died April 17, 2010, at the age 77. He was born in Garland to Jim and Jewell Garland and in August of 1939 the family moved to Wasco, Calif. Finis attended local schools and graduated from Wasco High School in 1952 where he is remembered for his athletic ability in all sports. He married his high school friend and soul mate, Lilly Ferne Mears on Jan. 24, 1953.

He joined the Army in May of 1953 and served 19 months in Germany. He was honorably discharged in May 1955. In October of 1955, Finis began his career with Monolith Portland Cement Company in Tehachapi and retired in December of 1985. In 1987, he and Lilly moved to Santa Maria to enjoy retirement, where they lived until his death.

So many things can be said about Finis. He was a hard worker, always put his family first, and always gave a helping hand to others. He was a quiet man and no one knows all the things he did for others. His greatest pleasure was walking on the beach, feeding the squirrels and enjoying nature. He loved God, respected others for their beliefs and he also had a sense of humor.

His great-grandfather, Joseph G. Garland Sr., was Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Choctaw Nation from 1891-1905.

Finis will be greatly missed by his loving wife of 57 years, Lilly Ferne; grandson Rodney Garland and wife Kristy of Bakersfield; great-grandchildren, Chyann and Joshua Garland; sister Ina Kay and husband Jim Bark of Pocola; and so many other relatives and special friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents; three sons, Randy, Rodney and a baby boy; and his brother, Harold Garland.

Lisa Y. Johnson

Lisa Y. Johnson, 52, passed away April 11, 2010, in Albuquerque, N.M. She was the beloved daughter of William and Wanda Lewis Urabazo and the great-great-granddaughter of the late Nicholas Araspar, Wichita allottee and Susie Araspar, Wichita allottee, and the great-granddaughter of the late Adolphus (Arispi) Araspar, Wichita allottee and Edna Rios (Arispi) Araspar, and the late Jessie and Bettie Martin Lewis, both original enrollees, and the granddaughter of the late Joe and Lucy Urabazo, Anadarko, and Sina Lewis of Atoka.

Formerly LaWanda Yvonne Urabazo of Anadarko, she graduated from Anadarko High School where she was a band member and a baton twirler. She later attended Highlands University, Las Vegas, N.M., where she met her husband, Robert T. Johnson II. Air Force life took them to Honolulu, Hawaii and there their son, Robert Johnson III, was born. They settled in Albuquerque, and she became a Registered Nurse. She was diagnosed a diabetic when she was six, and her kidneys began to fail in her 40s. She chose not to undergo dialysis.

She was preceded in death by a younger sister, Karen Sue Urabazo.

She is survived by her husband, Robert Johnson, of the home; son Robert T. Johnson III and wife Maria; a granddaughter, Madison Johnson; two sisters and their spouses, Marsha and James Scott of Atoka and Billie "Lee" Urabazo and James Hall of Albuquerque; parents William and Wanda Urabazo of Lawton; and many uncles, aunts, nieces and nephews and other relatives.



Ruth Ludlow

Ruth Ludlow, 97, of Hugo passed away June 28, 2010. Ruth was born April 5, 1913, in Nashoba, to Thomas Hardy and Little (Noah) Hardy. She lived most of her life in the Hugo area and enjoyed gardening, fishing, making quilts and reading her Bible.

Ruth was preceded in death by her parents; sons, Johnny Ray Ludlow and Billy Joe Ludlow; daughter Lettie Jean Ingram; brothers, Kinley Hardy, Cameron Hardy, Manning Hardy, Victor Hardy, Harvey Hardy and Osborn Hardy and sisters, Sissie Hardy and Hester Hardy.

She is survived by sons, Bobby Ludlow and wife Ruby of Honobia, Roy Ludlow and wife Margaret of Antlers, and Gaylon Ludlow and wife Rose of San Antonio, Texas; daughters, Lucille Ludlow of Talihina and Sarah Hardy of Hugo; and numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren, along with many other family and friends.



Sarah 'Lucille' Blackard

Sarah "Lucille" Blackard, 93, of Valliant, passed away June 26, 2010. Lucille was born April 16, 1917, in Wister, the daughter of Sam and Florence (McAlvain) Thomas and had lived in the Valliant area most of her life.

She married Odell Blackard on Feb. 26, 1954, in Hugo. She was a graduate of Valliant High School and had a Bachelor of Science in Education from Southeastern Oklahoma State University. She was a retired school teacher, serving for over 30 years. She loved her church home, First Baptist Church in Valliant. She enjoyed spending time with her friends and former students in the Valliant area, and was devoted to her grandchildren and family. She was an accomplished artist, vocalist and athlete in her youth.

Lucille was preceded in death by her parents; brother Denver Thomas; and sister Doris Loftin.

She is survived by her husband of 56 years, Odell Blackard; son and daughter-in-law, Joe Thomas Blackard and Tammy Blackard of Idabel; grandsons, Collin Blackard of New York, N.Y., and Garrett Blackard of Norman; many cousins, nieces and nephews, along with numerous other relatives, friends and former students.



Wilma LaTrelle (Layman) Boudreau

Wilma LaTrelle (Layman) Boudreau passed away on June 23, 2010, after a long battle with diabetes. She was born Dec 28, 1933, in Bennington to Charlie J. Layman and Thelma Beames Layman. She was the grandchild of original enrollee Josiah Beames and Minnie Sauls Beames. She grew up in the Bennington/Bokchito area where she attended Beames School in Bennington and graduated from Bokchito High School. She later moved to Denver, Colo., where she met and married Merrill Russell Boudreau on July 9, 1963. He was manager of the Bootery and they lived and traveled in many states finally settling in Durant after he retired. He preceded her in death in 1986.

Throughout her life, Wilma worked hard and enjoyed a variety of interests including being a den mother for the cub scouts, playing bingo, doing craft projects, gardening, fishing and enjoyed participating in the Choctaw senior citizens program. She was very proud of her Choctaw heritage. Wilma worked as a domestic engineer at Tuftes Manor Retirement Home in Grand Forks, N.D., for 14 years before moving to Durant where she worked for Four Seasons Nursing Center. She was a member of the VFW Women's Auxiliary and the DAV.

Wilma's greatest enjoyment in life was her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren.

Left to cherish her memory is daughter Wilma Claudine Allison-Feest and Albert of Racine, Wis.; sons, George Boudreau and Candi of Tampa, Fla.; Michael Layman and Stacia of Halstad, Minn.; Robert Laymon and Joslyn of Pearly, Minn.; step-daughter Yvonne Christensen and David of Weslaco, Texas.; and stepson Terrance Boudreau and Ruth of California; three sisters, Phyllis Goar of Oklahoma City, Jackie Heinz and Duane of Bismarck, N.D.; Shirley Wallace and Rickey Dean of Durant; Kenneth Layman of Durant and Gary Laymon of Silo; many nieces, nephews, cousins, friends; and special friend Naomi Hamil.

She is also survived by 10 grandchildren, Tyson Allison, Shadae Feest; Brittany Feest, Steven Burgess, Bobby Joe Burgess, Reed Boudreau, Crystal Laymon, Brandy Laymon, Cassandra Laymon, and Dori Laymon; step-grandchildren, Jason Boudreau, Derek Boudreau, and Tamara Boudreau; 16 great-grandchildren, Eli Allison, Hannah Burgess, Haydn Burgess, Amira Laymon-Mesna, Bailey Mesna, Payton Mesna, Taylor Mesna, Ethan Mesna, Dominick Laymon, Izak Rocha, Austin Laymon, Jasmine Rocha, Anthony Laymon, Skylar Laymon, Ricky Gonzalas Jr., Christian and Kingston Alexander, Candice King, Christine King; great-great-grandchildren Skyler and Blaine Jantzen; and other great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband, in-laws George and Elvira Boudreau; brothers, David, James and Michael Leroy; sister Jo Ann Wallace; brothers-in-law, Johnnie Goar and Chester Wallace; stepson Timothy Boudreau; son-in-law Duane Allison; nieces, Stephanie Layman and Stacy Wallace; and nephew Tracy Wallace.

Jimmy Charles Pushmataha

Jimmy Charles Pushmataha, 83, died in Okmulgee on Feb. 8, 2010. He was born on May 3, 1926, to Lee Roy and Eunise Cecelia Greenhaw in Miami, Fla. He was very proud of his Indian heritage.

Jim graduated from high school in Los Angeles, Calif., where he earned all-city honors as a running back and soon thereafter enlisted in the Navy during World War II. After his service, he played college football for Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles and ultimately received his B.A. from the University of Southern California. Jim began a career playing professional football as a fullback for the Baltimore Colts, but that path was cut short by injury. An avid athlete, he also played minor league baseball and tried professional bowling.

Following his career in sports he went into advertising in Los Angeles. Jim wrote and produced television ads for several large corporations including Honda. In 1980, he retired and moved to Okmulgee to care for his mother.

Jim resided at Creek Nation Housing for 30 years. In 2002, he was elected president of the Creek Nation Elderly Housing Tenant Association. He remained president and was a faithful and loyal supporter of all residential activities until his death.

He was preceded in death by his parents; brothers, Roy and Gary Greenhaw; and sons Rory Elder and Jimmy Greenhaw.

He is survived by daughter Teresa Weiby and husband Clayton of Edina, Minn.; sons, Paul Greenhaw and wife Patricia of Scarsdale, N.Y., and Scott Greenhaw of New York City; daughter-in-law Vicki Elder of Monterey, Calif.; grandchildren Brianna Leavitt-Alcantara and husband Salvador, Travis and Kyle Elder, Jack and Matthew Weiby, and Tess, Emily, Tommy, and Cody Greenhaw; and great-grandchild, Mateo Alcantara.



Mary Eslie Adams Hansgen

Mary Eslie Adams Hansgen, 92, passed away June 24, 2010 in Keene, N.H. She was the daughter of an original enrollee. She is survived by daughters, Judy Wilmeth of Keene, and Jean Hansgen of Macon, Ga.; son Fredric Hansgen of Lenoir, N.C.; three grandchildren and one great-granddaughter; and two sisters, Helen Callahan and Emily "Beth" Graham, both of Oklahoma.

Pamela Ann Porter-Roberts

Pamela Ann Porter-Roberts of Deer River, Minn., passed away April 3, 2010. She was born May 19, 1962, at Camp Pendleton Naval Hospital, Oceanside, Calif. Pam was a great-granddaughter of Albert Pike Harkins and Cena Bessie Davis and a granddaughter of Rod Anderson and Geneva Harkins.

Pam had been a resident of Deer River for 10 years. She was very proud of her Choctaw heritage. She was a volunteer at Deer River Health Care Center.

Survivors include parents B. B. and Helen Porter of Olathe, Kan.; brother Rod Porter of Stillwell, Kan.; grandmother Geneva Anderson of Amarillo, Texas; aunt Janice Hughes of Amarillo; two cousins of Amarillo and one of Midland, Texas.





DARE car wins award

By **BRET MOSS**

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

"We've actually had a truck driver call and ask if we could pull him over," stated Executive Director John Hobbs of the Choctaw Tribal Police Department. This truck driver was not looking for an encounter with the police, but for a picture of their squad car. The 2010 Chevy Camaro SS is definitely an eye-catcher, but this particular vehicle is a must-see.

In February, the Tribal Police Department of the Choctaw Nation invested in the visually appealing demonstration of American muscle. "I wanted something that was going to be different," stated Hobbs.

The vehicle is not just for looks and upholding the law, but is also used as an aid in teaching elementary children the harmful effects of drugs and how to avoid them. The Camaro is the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) car for Durant and the surrounding area.

The police departments that host DARE programs all have their own DARE cars, and they take a trip to Oklahoma City to compete in an annual event titled "Oklahoma DARE Officer Association Car Show," to see who has the best of the year. This year, Officer Nathan Calloway of the Choctaw Tribal Police Department took home the trophy for best car of the year with his Camaro.

DARE is a program that began in 1983 Los Angeles, as a result of the efforts of the late LAPD Police Chief Daryl Gates who wanted to prevent the youth from getting involved with drugs and other destructive habits.

Now DARE is a functioning program in all 50 states of the United States as well as in 43 countries worldwide. In elementary schools, the fifth grade classes are privileged with partaking in the DARE program and taught how to avoid substance abuse and the peer pressure that leads to it.

The DARE car is used to inspire dialogue among the DARE students. "It gets the kids talking," said Officer Calloway. "The ones that don't usually like to talk will begin to get involved," continued Calloway.

The DARE car is not just for show, it is very capable of getting the job done. The V8, 6.2-liter engine, 426 horsepower and 20-inch wheels enable this vehicle to reach destinations quickly when needed.

The looks of the car are almost as impressive as the machinery under the hood. Blue racing stripes down the center and tribal graphics and text on the side have turned many heads. "It gets attention everywhere it goes," stated Hobbs as he described the look of the car. One Stop Graphics of Durant handled the graphics, and Shipman Communication installed the patrol lights.

It's not just the kids of the DARE program that get excited to see the exceptional automobile, but just about every one who sees it can't help but want to see more. Officer Calloway tells of many occasions when the neighborhood kids will come to his door asking to take a look and a light display.

Whether catching the bad guy, winning the award, or helping spark interest in the classroom, the DARE car is something in which the officers and the community can take pride.

Choctaw Code Talkers documentary comes to public television in Fall 2010

Native American Public Telecommunications, Inc. (NAPT) proudly announces the release of a new documentary that examines the pivotal role that Choctaw soldiers played in helping shape an earlier end of World War I.

In 1918, not yet citizens of the United States, Choctaw members of the American Expeditionary Forces were asked by the government to use their Native language as a powerful tool against the German Forces in World War I, setting a precedent for code talking as an effective military weapon and establishing them as America's Original Code Talkers.

Co-produced by Red-Horse Native Productions, Inc., Valhalla Motion Pictures and Native American Public Telecommunications, Inc. (NAPT), "Choctaw Code Talkers" will transport viewers back to World War I for an intimate and engaging look into the lives of these brave men, their families, their dreams and their patriotism to a country who would remember them as heroes, but not until after their death.

"The government had sworn them to secrecy about what they did," said Evangeline Wilson, relative of Code Talkers Mitchell Bobb and James Edwards, Sr.

Choctaw Code Talkers is a follow-up to the award-winning documentary "True Whispers: The Story of the Navajo Code Talkers," a PBS nationally broadcast documentary produced by Valerie Red-Horse, President, of Red-Horse Native Productions, Inc. with Gale Anne Hurd, CEO, of Valhalla Motion Pictures.

"By launching the original concept of code talking for secure military communications, these brave Choctaw men laid the foundation for all other battlefield code talkers, including the Navajo, who were so instrumental in World War II. Even though it is overdue, nearly 100 years since their service, I am honored to be a part of bringing this important American story to the screen," Red-Horse said.

In World War I, by 1918, the German Forces had deciphered the Allied Forces' radio codes, tapped into their phone lines and captured messenger runners in order to anticipate the Allied strategies. The Allied Forces were desperate to attain secure communications and requested Choctaw soldiers to use their language to transmit messages in the field and from the trenches.

"This is an important story of heroic men whose wartime contributions helped to change the course of world history. Their Code was created while the men risked their lives fighting in Northern France during the fiercest and bloodiest battles of World War I. The Choctaw American Indian soldiers outwitted their German opponents, turning the tide of the War and ensuring the Allied victory," said Hurd.

Choctaw veteran chosen for Oklahoma Honor Flight

By **LARISSA COPELAND**

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

At an age when boys are usually preoccupied with things like impressing girls, doing homework and following their favorite sports teams, 15-year-old Isaac "Ike" Simpson of Hugo was making a decision that would change his life — joining the military during a time of war. In 1939, just out of the eighth grade, Ike enlisted in the Oklahoma Army National Guard and would soon be on his way overseas to fight for his country in World War II.

Following in his older brother, Edgar's, footsteps, Ike joined Company F, 180th Infantry, 45th Infantry Division. "The recruiter knew (that I was too young) but asked 'can you carry a rifle?' I said I could and he enlisted me right then," he said, setting in motion a journey of a lifetime.

Now, fast-forward 70 years. Ike was once again asked to take a trip because of his service to his country so long ago, only this time it included no bullets being shot at him, no danger of enemies, no weapon in hand. This trip was to honor him. Ike and 98 other World War II veterans from Oklahoma were selected to go on an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., on May 17 on the inaugural Oklahoma Honor Flight to visit the monuments and memorials dedicated to them, and all the men and women who served during the war.

Oklahoma Honor Flights, an organization made up of volunteers who raise money to charter the flights and cover all expenses for these World War II veterans, flew the group from Will Rogers World Airport in Oklahoma City to Washington for a rainy, but full day touring the sites. They visited the World War II, Korean War and Vietnam memorials, the statue of Iwo Jima, Arlington Cemetery, and while there, they witnessed the Changing of the Guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Buses carried the veterans and their "guardians," persons tagging along to assist the group, to the memorials. Ike's guardian was Gary Banz, Oklahoma State Representative, District 101.

The visit, the first for Ike to the nation's capitol since traveling through on a troop train so many years ago on his way to prepare for the war and, ultimately, to the ship that would carry him to battle, was an emotional experience for him. "It brought back a lot of feelings that I haven't felt in a long time," he said. "It was very sad. It all comes back to you and takes you back to what you were doing during the war. I wouldn't have missed it for anything."

Six summer camps are offered annually to Choctaw youth

Continued from Page 1

With the help of his assistants, Kevin is responsible for setting up the dates, locations and times for all the camps. He's also in charge of ordering the sports equipment that is given to the campers and responsible for finding and hiring coaches.

"Over the years I meet lots of coaches," said Kevin. The Summer Youth Camps have responsible coaches and staff who are motivated to give the kids a good time while teaching them about the sport or activity of their choice. "When I tell the coaches what I do, and ask if they would like to help in the summers, they jump at the opportunity."

There are six camps offered to the kids. The camp that shows kids different aspects of the Choctaw heritage and culture, the cultural enrichment camp, gives them some exciting opportunities. The campers take part in stickball, archery, arts and crafts, storytelling and the Choctaw language.

Though the cultural enrichment camp gives campers the chance to shoot a bow and arrow and play some stickball, it's the golf camp that usually has the most participants. It's the staff and instructors' priority to teach each participant, whether it be a first-time golfer or an advanced golfer, the rules and game of golf.

"My personal favorite [camp] is golf," Kevin said, "because I love to play golf myself." The golf camp is also Kevin's favorite sport to put his coaching skills to work. "Because I play so much, I feel I can help all skill levels with something in their golf games."

The baseball and softball camps were conducted by former Division I players from the Big XII and ACC Conference in softball and top Oklahoma high school coaches. The players were coached in areas of hitting, pitching and fielding. Each camper was given the proper instruction that will help improve his or her level of play.



The 45th Infantry Division marches down Fifth Avenue in New York City before deploying overseas in World War II. Ike and his brother, Edgar, were part of the Color Guard leading the formation.



Ike Simpson

anything."

"I wondered if any of my buddies that were killed were buried there (in Arlington.) I never knew what happened to the ones that died," he said.

Ike, a private first class at the time the 45th was called up for mobilization in 1940, served as an infantry/rifleman. The Division deployed in 1943 to the European theater of operations, spending 23 days traveling across the Atlantic on a combat-loaded ship to reach their destination. After landing in northern Africa, they continued to train for a week in preparations for their first combat mission, many of them not realizing the magnitude of it until after it was over — the invasion of Sicily.

Ike and his oldest brother, Edgar, were in the first wave of soldiers to come ashore during the amphibious assault. They fought bravely during the six-week land battle throughout Sicily, where Edgar was injured and sent back to the United States to recuperate. (After healing, he returned back to combat to fight in Germany.)

"There was so little comms (communication) over there. We didn't have radios like they do today but we did our best to know what everyone else was doing," he said.

"Going in on the beach, I wasn't scared, not until the bullets whizzed by me or until I experienced the barrage of fire," he said, explaining the atmosphere. "It's scary but it's over with really quick and we'd be ready to go again."

On his next major mission, Ike was also in the first wave of the troops in the invasion at Salerno, Italy. He saw many of his brothers-in-arms fall in combat.

"It was bad. I lost a lot of friends, a few of them right beside me. I was just one of the lucky ones," he said, recalling many instances of "close calls" including once making it through an artillery barrage that took the life of his close friend and fox-hole buddy. "That one is still with me."

Truly an experience unforgettable, with emotion in his voice, he recalled some of the more intense moments he faced during combat, "It was scary but we just faced it. I had many close calls. We all did what we were trained to do in order to stay alive."

"I carried a BAR (Browning Automatic Rifle) for most of my time over there," he said, explaining one of his more vivid memories. "One night, I was supposed to go on a mounted

patrol but a buddy who had a hurt foot asked if he could go on my patrol in the Jeep and I take his foot patrol. I traded weapons with him; I took his smaller M1 rifle and he took my BAR. On his way back to camp on that patrol, a German tank blew up all three vehicles in that entire patrol, killing them all," he continued. "God didn't want me to die that day. I carried his rifle for the rest of my tour."

"You don't forget those moments," he said, still affected by it all these years later.

"We didn't pay attention to the day or the time. We walked everywhere. We walked all across Sicily and Italy. I spent a year on my feet," he said. "But I made it home alive, both of us did, me and my brother."

Upon returning from the war, Ike stayed in the Oklahoma National Guard for two more years, being honorably discharged as a Sergeant. He got his GED and later attended Southeastern State College in Durant. He went on to play semi-professional baseball in Texas and Louisiana.

It was during that time that he met his future wife, Bobbie, a farm girl from Soper.

"When we met, he'd been all around the world and I'd never even left Choctaw County at that time," said Bobbie, thinking back of their chance meeting at a café in Hugo.

Shortly after their wedding Ike went to work for Choctaw Electric Co-Op, where he retired after 43 years of service.

Ike and Bobbie have been married for 54 years now and reside on a portion of his parents' original Indian land allotment in Hugo. They have two sons, Mike and Alan, seven grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren. With the exception of his time spent in service to his country, Ike has spent all his life in Hugo.

"I was glad to come home. I was glad when the war ended," he said. "There are a lot of stories from my time over there... a lot of stories."

They were also shown how setting goals and self-discipline will not only help their playing ability, but help them in their everyday lives off of the field.

During the basketball camp, the campers learned fundamental skills of basketball to use throughout his or her school career with the ultimate goal of playing college-level basketball. They picked up tips from high school head coaches and former university players.

The football camp this summer featured the University of Oklahoma's Assistant Coach and Quarterback Coach, Josh Heupel, former Big XII players and former NFL coaches. The boys received instruction in areas of offensive drills, defensive drills and Sooner ball.

The Summer Youth Camps have about 2,500 kids participate each summer. The selection of activities, from learning the Choctaw language to hitting a homerun, give Choctaw children opportunities to have a fun summer learning more about the sport they love to play.

"I feel very fortunate to work for great employees at the Choctaw Nation," said Kevin. "Without everyone's help from my department and all other departments that volunteer their time, these camps would not be possible."

If you are interested in getting your child active next summer, the application deadlines for each camp are in April. Applications have to include copies of the child's Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood card and Choctaw Nation membership card. Saying, "I can't wait to see the kids again next year," Kevin is already anxious to get started for the summer of 2011. Whichever of the six camps your child chooses to attend, the coaches, along with the Cultural Events and Summer Camps employees, promise them a fun, active and educational time.

The process of making Choctaw traditional pottery

By DR. IAN THOMPSON
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

The main raw material in Choctaw pottery is clay, dug straight from the ground. When looking for a new clay source, areas where multiple layers of soil are exposed, such as construction sites, or the steep banks of streams are ideal. Clay can be nearly any color, but is recognized from a distance by its slightly shiny luster.

Good pottery clay is sticky workable, like Playdough®. English-speaking potters refer to clays that have this tight, sticky texture as being "fat." Interestingly, in the Choctaw language, the term for clay is "lukfi nia," or literally "fat dirt." In addition to having the appropriate texture, the clay must also have a low shrinkage rate as it dries, and the ability to withstand high heat without cracking or spalling. If a potter hasn't used particular clay before, the best way to evaluate these latter two properties is to simply make a small test pot out of the clay and see how the clay responds during the following production steps:

Once a clay has been located it is dug out of the earth by hand, and is then carefully cleaned of any roots, sticks, or rocks that may be inside it. This is often done by breaking the clay into small pieces and fishing out the foreign objects.

After cleaning is complete, the pottery-making potential of most clays can be improved by mixing them with amounts of clean, sifted non-plastic material, called temper. Tempering materials used by ancestral Choctaw potters through time include finely chopped organic material, such as pine needles, sand, burned and crushed limestone, crushed up pieces of old pottery, burned and crushed mussel shell, and burned and crushed animal bone. The addition of these materials opens up the structure of the clay, helping it to dry evenly. Temper particles also help to physically block any cracks that may begin to form in the clay itself. The amount of temper that is added depends on the type of material being used and the quality of the clay itself. In general terms, the more temper that is added to the clay, the less likely a pot made from it will crack. Sandy, organic clays may require very little temper, while some of the very sticky clays from the Red

Clay creations a passion for McMahon

By LISA REED
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Brown eyes crinkle as Mary McMahon laughs and says that the old adage, "Idle hands are the devil's playground," will never apply to her.

She sits at her dining room table which is covered with traditional Choctaw pottery and describes the pleasure she derives from the creations, beginning with the hunt for the perfect clay.

"Everyone calls us clay hounds," she says. Her husband, Dan, nods in agreement.

The two travel all over southeastern Oklahoma with shovels and buckets. They bring home black clay from Talihina, yellow clay from Atoka, red clay from Yanush, and were excited to find a whole ribbon of white clay near McAlester.

"The white is hard to find," Mary said, describing the way it ran – a ribbon of red, a ribbon of white, another ribbon of red. "We found it by the lake and asked the people who lived there if we could get some of it."

Bags of clay are labeled with where the McMahaons found it and are stored in a back room of their home. Some were brought to them by their instructor, Ian Thompson, and are marked with "Louisiana," "Mississippi," "Alabama," and "Tom, Okla." The McMahaons in turn share their clay with other class members.

"We think the clay from Mississippi will fire pink," Mary says, holding up the bag full of a definitely pink-tinted clay. She can't wait to get started on it.

The McMahaons began taking traditional

River are able to take as much as 50 percent temper. For pots that are to be used for eating or serving food, the temper material is usually ground into a powder. Pots that are to be used for cooking usually have larger temper particles.

The clay and temper are thoroughly mixed to form a clay body. For hundreds of years, our Choctaw ancestors used several techniques to shape a clay body into a pot. The most basic method was to form the clay body into a ball, stick a thumb into the ball, and then begin pinching and turning the clay to make a "pinch pot." Our ancestors also made "coil pots" by rolling the clay body into thin coils, or snakes, and then layering them on top of each other to make the pot's basic shape. The coils were then pinched together and often beaten with a small paddle to compress them. Our ancestors also made pottery using a mold technique. For this, the clay body was simply pushed

into a shallow dish, taking on the shape of that dish. The walls of the new pot could be shaped by pinching or adding coils to this base. At some times and places, our ancestors made pottery by rolling the clay body out thin like cookie dough, cutting it into the desired shape, and then rolling or folding it up to form a pot.

After a pot is made, it is allowed to dry, slowly and evenly in a dark, cool place. This usually takes a couple of weeks for an eating bowl-sized piece. When an eating or serving bowl is halfway dried, it can be burnished, by rubbing a smooth, round stone quickly over its surface. This aligns the tiny clay particles and can make the pot shiny enough to give a reflection. Cooking pots were left with rough textures. Designs are often scratched into eating and serving bowls with sharp objects. At the Trail of Tears time period, Choctaw potters made distinctive designs by scratching broken sec-

tions of combs across the clay, making intricate parallel lines.

Firing is done on a dry, calm evening, on a piece of ground that is sheltered from any unexpected wind gusts that may come up. The method we use in Choctaw traditional pottery class has been reconstructed from the best available information about how our ancestors fired their pottery. First, the sod is carefully scraped from the ground. Then, the soil is turned over with a shovel, just like in a garden. A large fire is then built on top of the churned soil. When the fire burns down to coals, these coals are churned down into the soil, and another fire built on top. The heat on top of and inside of the soil dries it out, and makes it look like cinnamon or cocoa powder. If this is not done before firing, the heat from the fire will cause the ground to give off water vapor, which will enter the pots and make them crack.

After the ground is dried,



pot and think, 'I used a piece of clay and made that'."

The class meets every other Monday night at the Choctaw Nation Community Center in Poteau. Each class lasts 4-1/2 hours. The McMahaons enjoy meeting new people and have made a lot of new friends. They share home-cooked food and stories while learning a time-honored tradition. They often stay past the scheduled time to just visit.

Mary looks forward to moving on from bowls to pots and pans in pottery class. And she would like to learn to make baskets ... and beadwork.... There are so many fun ways to keep her hands busy.

broken pieces of pottery are laid over the surface of the hot, dry dirt, creating an isolative layer. The pottery to be fired is placed on top, and slowly begins to heat. Slow heating helps minimize the chance of cracks. After some time, a ring of fire is kindled around the heating pots, causing their temperature to slowly and evenly raise higher and higher. Over the course of an evening, the ring of fire is slowly scooted closer to the pottery, until it begins to touch it. Finally, using thin pieces of wood, the fire is built right over the pottery. As this wood burns, it turns to coals that fall down around the pots, heating them still higher.

Our ancestors used the changing colors of the pottery to gage its temperate. During the firing process, the pottery will first turn a dark color as the clay absorbs the smoke from the fire. Next, it turns a light color as the pot gets hot enough to burn the smoke out of it.

At a still higher temperature, the pot will begin to glow a red color. At this stage, the edges of the clay particles have fused together, functionally firing the pot and making it useable. Clay bodies that have shell, bone, or limestone temper must be heated no hotter than glowing red. Clay bodies tempered with sand can be heated hotter, to glowing orange.

If the fire is allowed to die down naturally around the pots, they will end up with light and dark fire clouds on them. If the pots are removed from the fire while still glowing, they will end up a solid light color. The pots can also be smudged a solid black color by allowing the fire to burn down until it is nearly out, then piling it with dry corn cobs or some other smoky material, and allowing it to smoke, putting out any flames that may rekindle.

The next morning, the pots can be taken from the firing area, inspected for cracks, carefully washed, and then used.

Wedding to honor native culture

Couple plans special day during this year's Labor Day Festival

By BRET MOSS
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma



"It's important to be proud of who you are," stated Debra Belt as she reflected on her Choctaw heritage. She will display this pride on one of the most anticipated days in a person's life – her wedding day.

Debra Ann Belt, 26, of Oklahoma City, will marry her fiancé, Erik Estrada Garcia, in a traditional Choctaw wedding ceremony on Sept. 2, 2010, at the Choctaw village in Tushka Homma. She believes that in having a traditional Choctaw wedding, she and her future husband will be honoring their native culture in a meaningful manner.

Erik, age 24 and a Mississippi Choctaw, met Debra in Tushka Homma during the Labor Day festivities of 2006, where they began their journey toward wedding bells. After Erik met Debra, he fell in love, which led him to proposing in 2009, during the social dancing of the Labor Day festivities.

The wedding will consist of many Choctaw traditions, the first being, "The Choctaw Wedding Chase." In this event, the bride will run towards a pole as the groom chases her. If he can catch her, there will be a wedding, but if she reaches it before he catches her, everyone goes home. Other events at the wedding consist of: Choctaw gift giving, Choctaw social dancing and a piñata to celebrate Erik's Mexican heritage.

"Erik and I notice that many young people are not interested in learning their Choctaw traditions or culture, so by having a wedding that will consist of Choctaw traditions, we hope to in-

spire young and old alike to learn more about their Choctaw culture, and hopefully other couples who are planning to marry will want to include some of these Choctaw wedding ceremonies in their wedding," stated Debra.

This will not be the first occasion in which Erik and Debra display their Choctaw heritage. Both are avid traditional Choctaw dancers. As they dance in pow wows and many other social occasions, it is easy to

see that Choctaw runs through their blood.

Erik has been dancing in social dances since he was five. His family also has a dance troupe in Mississippi. Erik also enjoys the longtime favored Choctaw sport of stickball, and he plays on many occasions, including the Labor Day games and Mississippi games.

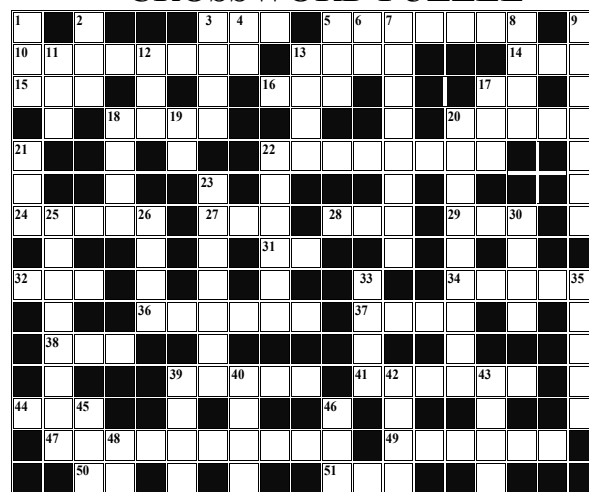
Debra has been dancing in pow wows for about seven years. She was the Oklahoma City Pow Wow Club Princess in '07 and '08. She also teaches beadwork at the Oklahoma Choctaw Alliance.

The couple's future plans consist of starting a photography business. Debra is certified in photography and Erik plans to attend Oklahoma City Community College to obtain his associate's degree in photography as well.

Erik is the son of Robert and Madie Garcia and the descendant of Lilly Mae Billy, an original Mississippi Choctaw. Debra is the daughter of Laura Belt and the late Elvis Belt. She is also the great-granddaughter of Elizabeth Cole Bully-Pistubbee, an original enrollee of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

The wedding will begin at 2 p.m. starting with the Wedding Chase. The ceremony will follow, with Olin Williams ministering. There will be a reception shortly after the ceremony.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS

3. Lusachikchiki
5. Auah Talapi
10. Abechakali
13. Hatak haksi atapa
14. Atalao
15. Taha
16. Hannali
17. Yohmi
18. Ushita
20. Anaksholi
22. Auah Tuchia
24. Untuklo
27. Nukoa
28. Holabi
29. Haksobish
31. Yaki
32. Kasheho, sipokni
34. Tuchia
36. Auah Achafa
37. Foha
38. Pokoli
39. Bashpo
41. Pokoli Tuklo
44. A'h
47. Pokoli Chakali Akucha Talhapi
49. Ala
50. A, pila
51. Tiak nia

DOWN

1. Achafa
2. Amba, anoti
3. Isi, issi
4. O", on
5. Kallochit hilechi
6. Anu"ka
7. Auah Ushita
8. Tabokoli
9. Yoshobli
11. Isht Holissochi
12. Tuklo
13. Banna
17. Na yoshoba
18. Talapi
19. Pi
20. Auah Untuklo
21. Imi, immi
22. Auah Tuklo
23. Auah Hannali
25. Auah Untuchia
26. Chakali
30. Keyuchohmi
33. Nipi
35. Lukfi
39. Iti'kanomi
40. Inoa, ikhana (short English version of word)
42. Foka
43. Haiyup
45. Binili
46. Afama tok
48. Keyu

Translate the Choctaw words into English and fill in the crossword puzzle in English. Also, see the "I" above for the aspirated I.

Answer in September BISKINIK

Thank you, Chief Aufaumatauba's daughter

For this month's edition of Iti Fabvssa, we are diverging slightly from our usual format. Rather than responding to a written-in question, we are taking this opportunity to make our readership aware of the positive things that a very special Choctaw woman has been doing for the Tribe over the last month and also to thank her.

We can't give you this woman's name, but she is the daughter of Choctaw Chief Aufaumatauba. She was born in what is now southwestern Alabama, in the Oklahannali or "Sixtowns" District of the Choctaw tribe, sometime around the year 1800. She grew up and lived there with her community until her untimely death in her mid-20s. Her loved ones laid her remains to rest in a small earth mound, intending for them to slowly return to the earth in peace.

Around that time, Choctaw leaders at the tribal level ceded this land to the United States in the Treaty of Hoe Buckintoopa (or "Hobvk Ito-pa"). As a result, this woman's community had to leave her burial behind, and in time, many of those who knew her were probably forced to emigrate to Oklahoma on the Trail of Tears. A United States arsenal was soon built near her burial spot.

As happens much, much too often to our Choctaw ancestors, without family or friends in the area to actively watch and protect her grave, this woman's bones were dug up by a collector as a kind of morbid trophy. They were then shipped to the eastern United States, and spent 140 years in collections, eventually ending up at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History. From the traditional Choctaw perspective held by this woman when she was alive, a perspective that is still held by many tribal members today, such grave desecration is one of the most despicable and hurtful offenses that can be done to a person or a community.

For a long time, tribal people had no recourse for righting such wrongs. However, beginning in the late 1980s, Native American organizers and lawmakers helped bring about legislation that makes it possible for tribes to reclaim and repatriate the remains of their ancestors from among the tens of thousands of Native American human remains held in the collections of federally funded institutions. In 2004, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and the repatriation staff at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History (one of whom is herself Choctaw) began cooperatively working on the long documentation process that would make it legally possible for the museum to return Aufaumatauba's

daughter's remains back into Choctaw control.

This summer, after six years of hard work by both parties, the remains were ready to be transferred to the joint custody of the three federally recognized Choctaw tribes, which include the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, and the Jena Band of Choctaw Indians. In July, representatives from each made the journey to Washington, D.C., for the formal repatriation. We came with a variety of emotions, but one expectation likely shared between all of us was that a wrong was about to be righted. Specifically, after the mistreatment of Aufaumatauba's daughter's remains, something good was going to be done for her and for the tribe in bringing her back to her home. However, we were soon humbled to realize that rather than us helping to do anything noteworthy while we were in D.C.; it was really this ancestor herself who began bringing about a lot of positive things for Choctaw people. It happened in ways no one could have conceived at the beginning of the trip:

The three federally recognized Choctaw tribes have been separated since the Trail of Tears. However, Aufaumatauba's daughter lived before this imposed separation and is potentially ancestral to all three groups. Because of this, representatives from each of these Choctaw tribes came to D.C. working together as one. During this contact, a recurring topic of discussion concerned the ways that the historic preservation departments from the three tribes can work to help each other on a variety of issues. Joint cultural activities were planned that will continue to bring members from each of these tribes together in the future.

Over the week, the Choctaw representatives were allowed to view the Choctaw collections in the National Museum of Natural History and National Museum of the American Indian. We saw and handled hundreds of non-burial Choctaw items made by our ancestors more than a century ago including blowguns, moccasins, bows, arrows, pottery, baskets, beadwork, drums, stickball sticks, baskets and much more. These objects represent the traditional knowledge developed by our ancestors, and were an important part of their Choctaw identity. In viewing these collections, a great deal of information



Iti Fabvssa

on Choctaw history and traditional lifeways was shared between the three Choctaw tribes and the Smithsonian staff, with everyone learning a tremendous amount about the lives of our ancestors. Representatives from Choctaw Nation formally documented many of the pieces in these collections, making it possible for representatives from each of the Choctaw tribes to have hundreds of photographs and other information to share with tribal members back home.

During the visit, the Smithsonian staff informed the Choctaw representatives about the programs and funding that could potentially help our tribes to set up education programs to strengthen our traditional culture and arts. They also told us about the possibility of the Smithsonian loaning some of its Choctaw collections to tribal museums such as at the Tushka Homma Capitol, so that more Choctaw people can see these Choctaw national treasures. We were additionally made aware of potential opportunities for other tribal representatives to one day come to D.C. to study the Choctaw collections, and of programs to assist budding Choctaw artists. Each of these has the potential to bring the Smithsonian and the Choctaw tribes in mutually beneficial partnerships that could help both well into the foreseeable future.

As we left Washington, D.C., we were humbled and amazed by all that Chief Aufaumatauba's daughter had brought about for Choctaw people living today ... She wasn't done yet. The reburial brought Choctaw Nation staff to Alabama, and into cooperation with the MOWA Band of Choctaw Indians, who still reside in the state. Again, relationships were created there that will help to bring Choctaws together into the future.

Moreover, on our way to meet the MOWAs, we had the opportunity to visit the Alabama State Archives, in Montgomery, Ala. This collection houses the unpublished manuscripts of Henry S. Halbert. In the late 1800s, Halbert lived with the Mississippi Choctaw. He had a strong interest in the Choctaw people, and spoke Choctaw fluently. His manuscripts represent a vast wealth of information for today's Choctaw people about our ancestors. This information, given from the mouths of Choctaw elders a

century ago, includes in-depth descriptions of making and firing Choctaw pottery, Choctaw bows and arrows, Choctaw baskets, a detailed account of the way our ancestors used to plant their different types of gardens and the plants they put in each of them, recipes for many traditional Choctaw foods written in Choctaw and in English, funny stories, war stories, and funny war stories that go back into the 1700s, a complete muster role of the Choctaw soldiers who fought under Chief Pushmataha in the War of 1812, descriptions of ancient Choctaw dances no-longer remembered in today's communities, details on Choctaw house-building, name-giving, time-keeping, child-rearing, and much, much more. These unpublished manuscripts are arguably the best written source on Choctaw traditional life in existence, and there they sat in the Alabama State Archives! We would not have seen these if it was not for Chief Aufaumatauba's daughter bringing us through Montgomery.

Chief Aufaumatauba's daughter passed from this life at an early age, during one of the darkest points in Choctaw history. Her home was overrun, her grave was desecrated, and her remains shipped nearly 1,000 miles away and put in storage for 140 years. In the summer of 2010, through her repatriation, this woman has brought back a tremendous amount of information about Choctaw life to today's Choctaw communities, and has made the cultural departments of Choctaw tribes more aware of the many opportunities for cooperation we have with each other, and with other groups like the Smithsonian staff. Her remains are back at rest in a place that will be protected, but all of the good things that her repatriation has brought to light for Choctaw people will live on in upcoming generations.

Aufaumatauba invllatek, nana moyoma ish-michi-tuka, eho-chi-yakoke. Chi-foni -yvt fohachi akinli!

Note – The Choctaw Nation Historic Preservation Department is already working on ways of making the information on Choctaw history and traditional life obtained at the Smithsonian and at the Alabama Archives available and accessible to tribal people in Oklahoma, including possible publication. However, the sheer volume and detail of this "new" information will require quite some time to completely process. For more information, please call 1-800-522-6170 ext. 2216.

Chief Pyle's Physical Fitness Challenge encourages healthy and active lifestyles

By **CHRIS DILL**

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

The annual Labor Day Festival held at the Choctaw Nation capitol grounds in Tushka Homma is the site of many exciting activities for all ages. There is the promise of entertainment every year, and everyone who attends has a great time. The Chief Gregory E. Pyle Physical Fitness Challenge gives kids from the ages 8 to 18 the opportunity to get active and show off their physical abilities.

Jason Campbell created this event four years ago, and each year an average of 50-60 kids participate. "We hope to increase that number this year," commented Jason. Jason is the deputy director of the STAR (Success Through Academic Recognition) Program for the Choctaw Nation, which is an educational incentive program for the Choctaw youth. With the help of his fellow STAR Program employees, Jason organizes the Chief Pyle Physical Fitness Challenge each year.

The purpose behind the physical fitness challenge is to promote Chief Pyle's mission of encouraging healthy and active lifestyles for everyone, especially children.

"There's so many activities for the adults at Labor Day. The physical fitness challenge is another activity for the kids," explained Jason. The challenge consists of sports-oriented activities, but is open to everyone, not just sports-lovers.

There are several activities that make up the challenge. The "most fun" event according to Jason is the 40-yard dash. "Everyone seems to talk about the 40-yard dash and looks forward to it," said Jason. The kids are separated into age groups and the boys and girls are not separated. Their 40-yard sprint is timed

and a winner is determined. "There's really an emphasis put on your time," said Jason.

The popular 40-yard dash is there to stay, but there are some activities that are improving this year. In the past, the kids competed in a vertical jump contest, a long jump and a 20-yard shuttle. These will be replaced with plyometric boxes that measure jumping distance and height. The kids will also pull a "sled" to strengthen their legs, and there will be hurdles for them to leap.

"Plyometric exercises are to improve the kids' potential to excel in sports, but we're not promoting just athletics," said Jason. "We are promoting physical fitness."

The Chief Pyle Physical Fitness Challenge is another

effort by Chief Pyle and the Choctaw Nation to promote physical fitness. The Choctaw Nation continues to encourage the fight against obesity, diabetes and heart disease. "We'd like to thank Chief Pyle and the Choctaw Nation for their support in this cause," said Jason.

Registration for Chief Pyle's Physical Fitness Challenge is 5 p.m. Sept. 3 on the Council Chambers Lawn at Tushka Homma. The fitness challenge begins at 6 p.m.

Jason and his friends in the STAR Program encourage the youth to participate in this exciting event on Labor Day. Each child that participates and finishes the challenge will receive a free T-shirt and jump rope.



Labor Day Festival T-Shirts & Souvenirs Order Form

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number _____

	Item	Quantity	Total Price
<input type="checkbox"/>	A - Waterproof drawstring backpack with Seal - can be worn as a backpack or carried - \$10.00		
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow	_____
		<input type="checkbox"/> Blue	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	B - Labor Day Shirt - White - \$15.00	Size _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	C - Labor Day Shirt - Black - \$15.00	Size _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	D - Labor Day Cap - White - \$12.00	N/A	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	E - Labor Day Cap - Black - \$12.00	N/A	_____
	T-shirt sizes available are: Children - (2-4), (6-8), (10-12), and (14-16) Adult - Small, Medium, Large, X-Large, XX-Large and XXX-Large	(Price includes postage and handling)	
		Order Total	

To order, send payment (No Personal Checks) with completed form to:
Labor Day T-Shirts
PO Box 1210
Durant OK 74702

13TH ANNUAL LABOR DAY POW WOW

SEPTEMBER 3RD
THE CHOCTAW NATION
CAPITOL GROUNDS
TUSHKA HOMMA

THE LINE UP

MC- TIM TALLCHIEF
ARENA DIRECTOR- BILL TAKESHORSE
HEAD MAN- CECIL GRAY
HEAD WOMAN- REBECCA ROBERTS
HEAD GOURD- DARRELL WILDCAT
SOUTHERN DRUM- THUNDER HILL
NORTHERN DRUM- DRY CREEK
COLOR GAURD- CHOCTAW NATION

THE SCHEDULE

2 P.M. GOURD DANCE
5 P.M. BREAK
6 P.M. GOURD DANCE
7 P.M. GRAND ENTRY
REGISTRATION CLOSES

FEATURING

ADULT CONTEST YOUTH CONTEST
TINY TOTS CONTEST

**All Contestants must be in Grand Entry and participate in Inter-Tribal dances.
Must be in regalia to receive prize money.**

For information: Willard Polk 580-924-8280
or Sue Folsom - Cultural Events 580-924-8280
Public welcome, free admission, bring your pow wow chairs.
All drums, princesses are invited.
Call Willard for booth information. Booth fee is \$20.
NO ALCOHOL OR DRUGS WILL BE TOLERATED

LABOR DAY FESTIVAL

Concerts

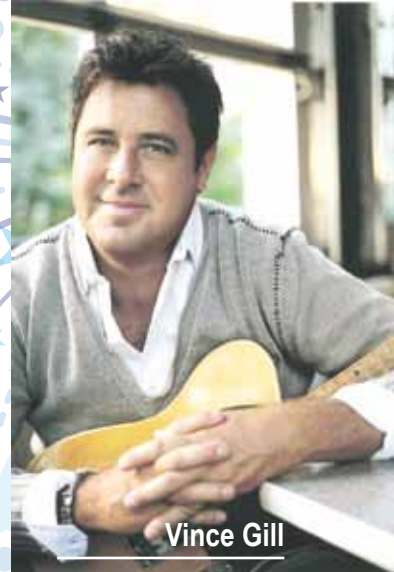
September 3 through September 5



Jimmy Wayne



Travis Tritt



Vince Gill

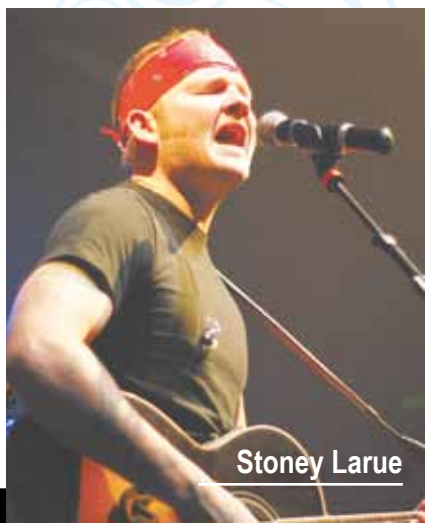


Neal McCoy

Bring your quilts and lawn chairs and enjoy the Choctaw Nation's exciting lineup this year!!!!

Concerts are free

Don't miss any of the great activities beginning September 2 and running through September 6 on the Choctaw Nation Capitol Grounds near Tuskahoma, Oklahoma.



Stoney Larue



Casting Crowns



Crabb Revival

Friday, Sept. 3

5.30 p.m. Jimmy Wayne
7:00 p.m. Stoney Larue
9:00 p.m. Travis Tritt

Saturday, Sept. 4

7:00 p.m. Neal McCoy
9:00 p.m. Vince Gill

Sunday, Sept. 5

7.30 p.m. Jason Crabb
Crabb Revival
Aaron & Amanda Crabb
Mike & Jan Bowling
9:00 p.m. Casting Crowns

800-522-6170 • www.choctawnation.com

2010 CHOCTAW NATION LABOR DAY SCHEDULE

Thursday, September 2

7 p.m. Choctaw Nation Princess Pageant, Amphitheater
Entertainer: Joni Morris before and during the pageant

Friday, September 3

9 a.m.-4 p.m. Choctaw Nation Museum open
Noon- 8 p.m. Photo ID booth open
10 a.m. Arts & Crafts exhibits open
Noon-8 p.m. Health Expo, next to Council Chambers
Noon-5 p.m. Quilt entries @ Information Center
2 p.m. Gourd Dancing on Capitol lawn
5 p.m. Registration for Chief Pyle Physical Fitness Challenge, Council Chambers Lawn
6 p.m. Chief Pyle Physical Fitness Challenge, Council Chambers Lawn, youth ages 8 -18
6 p.m. Concerts @ Amphitheater
7 p.m. Inter-Tribal Pow Wow Grand Entry, Capitol lawn
7 p.m. Fast Pitch Tournament at Red Warrior Park



Saturday, September 4

6:30 -7:45 a.m. 5k Registration at Hwy. 271
8 a.m. 5k Race begins at Hwy. 271
8 a.m. Fast Pitch Tournament continues
8 a.m. 3 on 3 Choctaw War Hoops Basketball Registration
8 a.m. Horseshoe Tournament Registration
8 a.m.-8 p.m. Health Expo
9 a.m.-5 p.m. Youth Advisory Board Offers Crafts for youth, Playground
9 a.m. Playground supervised
9 a.m. Horseshoe Tournament
9 a.m. Co-Ed Volleyball Tournament
9 a.m. Quilt Show @ Information Center
9 a.m. War Hoops 3-on-3 Basketball at Basketball Courts
10 a.m.-12 noon Buffalo Tours, load bus @ Museum
10 a.m.-6 p.m. Choctaw Nation Museum open
10 a.m. 7th Annual Choctaw Art Show, 2nd floor of Museum
10 a.m. -8 p.m. Photo ID Booth open
2 p.m. Terrapin Races, Playground
2-4 p.m. Buffalo Tours, load bus @ Museum
5 p.m. Children's Drama, Choctaw Village Amphitheater (bring lawn chairs)
4 p.m. Free-Throw Contest @ Basketball Courts
4:30 p.m. Tough, Tough Choctaw Registration, Council Chambers
5 p.m. 3-Point Contest @ Basketball Courts
5:30 p.m. Tough, Tough Contest, Council Chambers lawn
6 p.m. Concerts @ Amphitheater

Sunday, September 5

8 a.m. Fast Pitch Tournament continues
9 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Youth Advisory Board Offers Crafts for youth, playground
10 a.m. Worship Services, tent behind amphitheater
Noon-5 p.m. Choctaw Nation Museum open
Noon Gospel Singing @ Amphitheater
Noon Domino and Checker Tournament Registration, Cafeteria
Noon-7 p.m. Photo ID Booth open
1 p.m. Domino and Checker Tournament in Cafeteria
1-3 p.m. Education and Screening @ Health Expo
1:30-3:30 p.m. Choctaw Code Talker Association Board Meeting, Council Chambers
2-4 p.m. Buffalo Tours, load bus @ Museum
4 p.m. Choctaw Dancers, Capitol Lawn
5 p.m. Stickball Exhibition, Capitol Lawn
7:30 p.m. Crabb Revival @ Amphitheater
9 p.m. Casting Crowns @ Amphitheater

Monday, September 6

9 a.m.-1 p.m. Photo ID Booth open
Choctaw Nation Museum open
10 a.m. Labor Day Official Ceremonies, Amphitheater
Posting of Flags - Choctaw Color Guard
The Lord's Prayer in Sign Language
Storyteller Tim Tingle
Introduction of Tribal Council and Judges
State of the Nation Address by Chief Gregory E. Pyle
Door Prize Drawings
11:30 a.m. Free Meal for Everyone, Cafeteria
Noon Pick up Quilts from Quilt Show

No tent setups or roping of areas on grounds until August 27

No dogs allowed on Capitol Grounds except service animals

No drugs or alcohol allowed on Capitol Grounds

Events throughout the Festival

Carnival Rides Free, courtesy of Chief and Tribal Council; Specialty Acts

Choctaw Village Schedule

Saturday, September 4

10 a.m. Choctaw Dancing
10:30 a.m. Stickball Skills
11 a.m. Banaha Making
11:30 a.m. Storytelling
Children's Activities
1 p.m. Stickball
1:30 p.m. Language
1:45 p.m. Arts & Crafts
2:15 p.m. Choctaw Dancing

Sunday, September 5

1 p.m. Flint Napping
1:15 p.m. Silver Smithing
1:30 p.m. Primitive Weapons
1:45 p.m. Storytelling
Children's Activities
2:15 p.m. Corn Game
2:40 p.m. Pottery