



Continuing publication
of recorded interviews of
Choctaw elders from 2007

This month – Bill Amos
Pages 16



Choctaw
Nation
annual
Pow Wow

Page 17



Veterans Day
Ceremony
in Tushka
Homma

Page 18

BISKINIK
P.O. Box 1210
Durant OK 74702

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

PRESORT STD
AUTO
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
CHOCTAW NATION

BISKINIK

The Official Publication of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

December 2011 Issue

Serving 209,895 Choctaws Worldwide

Choctaws ... growing with pride, hope and success



BRENDA SUE HAMPTON

Choctaw Nation loses a champion

Longtime Choctaw Nation Executive Director of Tribal Membership Brenda Sue Hampton, 64, passed away Wednesday, Nov. 30, leaving a void in the hearts of family members, friends and acquaintances from coast to coast.

Brenda began a prominent career with the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma in the work experience program in 1985 and worked the last 26 years with the membership/voter registration department. She became director of the department in 1987 and executive director in 2006. She has helped literally thousands of tribal members obtain their Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) cards and membership with the Choctaw Nation.

“Brenda was a force for good,” Chief Gregory E. Pyle said. “Her energy couldn’t be matched and she gave strength to everyone around her. Her priority was always her family. She loved them with every fiber of her being. Her work and her friends received the same passion.

“Brenda’s dedication to our tribal members was evident every day as she answered numerous phone calls and worked tirelessly, often at night and on weekends, to help individuals with what is needed to obtain membership. She expanded the department to one of the best in all tribal nations.

“The memories of her humor, her laughter and her enthusiasm will remain with us all,” Chief Pyle said. “I count every moment I spent with Brenda as a privilege.”

Brenda was born Feb. 7, 1947, in LaMesa, Calif., to Margie Nadine (Monroe) Lilley and attended schools in Texas but lived most of her life in the Durant area. Before her years with the Choctaw Nation, she worked as a licensed cosmetologist and operated her own hair salon while raising her family.

Beginning a new career at the
See HAMPTON Page 5

◆ What’s inside

Columns	2
Notes to the Nation.....	3
Nursery News	4
Food Distribution	4
People You Know	6
Education.....	7
Iti Favvssa.....	9
Obituaries	14-15

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.

Tribe wins multiple awards for environmental preservation efforts

By **BRET MOSS**
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

In an effort to protect the land and environment dear to its heart, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma (CNO) has taken tremendous strides to increase the amount of recycling occurring in Southeastern Oklahoma.

As a result of these actions, the staff of the recycling center has recently been awarded three notable awards, two by Keep Oklahoma Beautiful, a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to environmental improvement.

At the 21st annual Environmental Excellence Awards Celebration held on Nov. 10, in Oklahoma City, CNO won in the state/tribal category of environmental excellence, which granted consideration for the “Best

of the Environmentally Best” award, which CNO also took home.

On a separate occasion, CNO also was awarded the Recycling Government of the Year at the America Recycles Day event held in Tulsa on Nov. 15, 2011.

These awards are the first awards that CNO recycling has won. According to Director of Project Management, Tracy Horst, the credit for winning these awards can be attributed to the new recycling facility located near the Choctaw Casino and Resort in Durant.

December 2011 marks the first full year of operation for the new recycling facility. The facility and the functions within are the only one of its kind in the Southeastern Oklahoma area.

The large facility boasts the
See AWARDS Page 5



Choctaw Nation: BRET MOSS

Choctaw Nation’s Recycling Center staff shows off the awards won for the tribe’s environmental preservation efforts. The staff includes, back row from left, Lance Clinton, Justin Tillery, Terry Garner, Chris Stover, and kneeling, Cyndi Houser, Tamera Couch and Tracy Horst.

’Tis the season for giving Choctaw Nation distributes toys and food vouchers to Choctaws in need

By **LARISSA COPELAND**
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

‘Tis the season for giving and that’s just what numerous departments and Choctaw Nation entities did by reaching out to members in need this holiday season.

Choctaw Nation Outreach Services distributed 6,226 food vouchers in November and December ensuring no Choctaw family goes without a warm meal for Thanksgiving or Christmas. The Thanksgiving vouchers, which were made available to needy Choctaw families in the 10-1/2 county service area, included a turkey, two cans each of corn and green beans, a can of yams, cranberry sauce, a box of tea bags, a bag of

sugar, dinner rolls and a 10-inch frozen pie. The Christmas voucher was the same only it included a ham instead of a turkey.

“Our first year, we handed out about four food baskets,” says Betty Jackson from the Choctaw Nation Outreach Services Program, “and it has evolved to where it is today. We began this program about eight years ago after hearing tribal members say the meal they ate at the Choctaw Nation Thanksgiving dinners would be the only one they had for the holiday.”



Choctaw Nation: LARISSA COPELAND

Tribal Events employees Faye Self, Tammy Lawson and Elaine Thomson fill their carts with toys that will be given to needy Choctaw children through Chief Pyle’s and Assistant Chief Batton’s Needy Christmas Program.

To receive a voucher for the food, tribal members completed an application that included income verification. The vouchers were made

available for pick-up at their local Choctaw Nation Community Center and could be redeemed at certain
See GIVING Page 5



Choctaw Nation: KAREN JACOB

Choctaws gather to celebrate the holidays

Holiday celebrations have been going on all over the Choctaw Nation, beginning with Thanksgiving dinners at the community centers last month and now visits with Santa are kicking off the Christmas season. Above, at Atoka’s Christmas gathering, Santa Claus visits with Councilman Anthony Dillard, Carmela Lopez, Danika Billy, Dresden Billy and Jalie Miller.

■ **Community Thanksgiving dinners –
photos on Pages 10-13**

Choctaw Nation donates \$1 million to Dean McGee Eye Institute

Dean McGee Eye Institute
Ophthalmologists and Choctaw
Nation celebrate 10-year partnership

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma has contributed \$1 million to the Dean McGee Eye Institute Capital Campaign, putting the Institute within \$2 million of its \$46 million campaign goal. The capital campaign has provided funds for completion of the new, five-story, 78,000-sq.-ft., world-class research and clinical facility that was dedicated on September 30 and for renovation of the existing 70,000-sq.-ft. building constructed in 1975.

“We are extremely grateful to the Choctaw Nation for this very generous gift. Our ophthalmologists, led by Dr. Stephen Fransen, have enjoyed a long and meaningful relationship with Choctaw leaders since 2001 in working together to preserve vision for the Choctaw people through the Diabetic Retinopathy Outreach Program clinic in Talihina,” said Dr. Gregory Skuta, president and CEO of the Dean McGee Eye Institute and Edward L. Gaylord Professor and Chair of the OU College of Medicine’s Department of Ophthalmology. “This gift helps to expand our clinical and research capabilities in treating and preventing vision loss from diabetes and other disorders in the hundreds of tribal members who visit our doctors both in Okla-

homa City and in Talihina.”

Dr. Fransen and other Dean McGee Eye Institute ophthalmologists have treated over 3,000 tribal members at the two clinics, performing nearly 600 retinal laser procedures in the Talihina clinic alone.

“Encouraging American Indians to seek vision care is a major health goal of the Choctaw Nation, especially considering the high risk of diabetic retinopathy in this population,” said Chief Gregory E. Pyle of the Choctaw Nation. “The Dean McGee Eye Institute has proactively dedicated itself to working with us to help diagnose and treat retinal problems earlier in the disease process and thereby achieve better outcomes.”

The newly expanded Dean McGee Eye Institute facility, which adjoins the original facility, doubles the space for research laboratories, expands clinical capacity by 40 percent, and consolidates all of the clinical care, vision research, teaching, and administrative functions into one location.

The Institute’s clinical and surgical teams provide more than 150,000 patient visits (both adult and children) in addition to 7,000 surgical procedures each year. Dean McGee Eye Institute physicians and scientists are internationally respected and hold numerous leadership positions in major professional and scientific organizations. The residency
See DONATION Page 5

Employees’ value to tribe is immeasurable

From the Desk of
Chief Gregory E. Pyle

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma has grown to approximately 210,000 members and 7,000 employees. Every time I think of this, I am thankful for the great group of people who comprise the workforce of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. The individual strengths and talents of these caring individuals are one of the main reasons the tribe has developed into such a respected entity in southeastern Oklahoma, the country and the world.

One example of the exceptional type of people we have working for us was Brenda Hampton, executive director of the Choctaw Nation Membership Department. Brenda passed away on Nov. 30. I was the assistant chief when Brenda began working for the tribe over 26 years ago and I feel the loss not only as a colleague but also as a friend. She devoted many long hours to people who needed assistance with obtaining their CDIB and membership cards and was often the last person to leave the office to go home. She exemplified the spirit of the Choctaw – strong, compassionate and dedicated. The staff of the membership department has shown true leadership by its continued dedication to providing quality service to tribal members, a reflection of Brenda’s compelling example.

I have visited many different types of businesses – small and large, tribal, government agencies and corporations – and I am proud to say the employees of the Choctaw Nation stand



out from the crowd. The common thread I see among them all is servant leadership. We receive hundreds of phone calls and visitors to our offices and businesses daily. It is important to me to know that each person on staff has the best interests of the tribal member or customer at heart. The value of having such

employees is immeasurable.

We honor our employees with tokens of appreciation upon their 5-, 10-, 15- and 20-plus-year anniversaries with the tribe. This year we have five employees who will receive awards for 30 years of service – Shelia Kirven, Cora Rockwood, Randel Bohanon, Fred Logan Jr. and Joe Williams. It is not unusual to have several people in the 15- to 25-year range and literally hundreds in the 5- to 10-year range. Thank you all for the wonderful job you do.

The positive attitudes that I see put forth result in a job done well and creates an environment of good will for all concerned. There is a desire to learn more, cooperate and provide the best possible experience for everyone involved.

The desire to grow in knowledge and skill has led to a new initiative through the Choctaw Nation Training Department to develop a series of leadership trainings, beginning in January. A freshman level is being offered to associates who wish to grow their careers to a higher degree. The training will escalate to a sophomore and junior training and on to a master level. The master or senior level will first be offered to executive directors.

The goal is for the curriculum to be accredited through Southeastern Oklahoma State University.

The final and exciting piece of this is an established training called Choctaw U!

The investment in our associates is an investment in the Choctaw Nation.

Chaplain’s Corner

Peace on earth

May you have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2012.

During this season as we think and sing about the Christmas message, “Peace on Earth,” many continue to be frustrated and unsure of life and ask, “Where can we find this Peace?”

Peace for the world will be found only in the Christ of Christmas. The Prophet Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 9:6, “... his name shall be called “The Prince of Peace.” And in the same verse in Isaiah 9:6, Isaiah wrote, “... and the government shall be upon his shoulder ...”



REV. BERTRAM BOBB
Tribal Chaplain

The Bible begins with, “In the beginning ...” in Genesis 1:1 and the Gospel of John 1:1 begins, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Jesus Christ was the Word and the Word became flesh. (John 1:14)

The Lord Jesus Christ was marked from the beginning of time to reign. On the first Christmas Jesus came as the Savior, born of Virgin Mary in Bethlehem. When He comes again, He will come as the sovereign. Sovereign means that whatever He says or does is final. He answers to no one.

The Lord Jesus Christ came to die on the cross for our sins. He bought back with his precious blood. He went to heaven and today He sits at the right hand of God the Father, (Hebrews 12:2), and He is coming back.

Once He came in lowliness, soon He will come in glory.

The matter of who shall rule has been the cause of all our conflicts down through the ages.

Who shall rule in heaven?
Who shall rule in earth?
Who shall rule in the hearts of men?

Two of these questions have already been answered. God is ruling in heaven now. Hesus said in Matthew 6:9, “After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.”

God’s will is done in heaven. This is settled. God rules in heaven. And God rules on the earth. He has given to us His Son the right to rule on the earth when He comes the second time. The Scriptures declare in Isaiah 2:3-4, “... for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”

But Peace is not due until the Prince of Peace comes. What are we doing today? We are doing right the opposite – we pre-

pare for wars. At that time we shall beat out swords into plowshares and our spears into pruning hooks. We will prepare for peace, because the Prince of Peace will be here and ruling with a rod of iron.

Jesus Christ is not only appointed to reign on earth but He is also appointed to reign in the hearts of men. Christ did not come to take away our joy, to work hardship upon us or to make us slaves of fear and men whose hearts are full of misery. He came that He might reign in our hearts and reign there in peace.

Jesus said, “... that in me ye might have peace.” (John 16:32) And this is why He came, this is why He wants to rule in our hearts. Not just to rule so that He might be the sovereign and make us do His will, but to rule in our hearts to give us peace, to make us joyful, happy people.

Paul wrote in Romans 5:1, “... being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 26:3, “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.”

Let us not make the mistake of trying to find peace somewhere else. We will never find peace until, by trusting in the Prince of Peace, we allow Him to reign in our hearts. This is God’s remedy for all the problems of the heart. Nothing else and no one else can bring peace into the human heart.

Again the Prophet Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 57:20-21, “But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.”

Peace was the promise of the angels at Christ’s birth. As the Prince of Peace He came to bring men peace with God, and the daily experience of peace of heart. Only those who accept Christ as their Savior find peace with God and it is necessary to commit our life to Jesus Christ as the ruler of our lives in order to experience daily peace of heart.

When you come to Christ, the Holy Spirit will give you joy and peace in the midst of your trials and troubles. You can start now, by being willing to give up your sins and by receiving Christ in simple, childlike faith.

The joyful news is that Jesus saves. “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners ...” (I Timothy 1:15)

May God bless you in a very special way today is my prayer.

Pray for America and for our men and women in our Armed forces.

Number of care packages doubles

From the Desk of
Assistant Chief Gary Batton

As I looked out over the hundreds of veterans and their families on the Capitol grounds at Tushka Homma for our Veterans Day ceremony last month, I felt a deep gratitude for what they have done to keep our country free. Nothing we can do for them will ever equal the sacrifices they made for us. Many of the men and women fighting for our freedom today will hopefully be on American soil again soon. In the meantime, we keep praying for their quick and safe return.

Choctaw Nation’s Veterans Advocacy Deputy Director Brent Oakes has reported a record number of care packages sent in the last month to Afghanistan and Kuwait. In addition to the department’s regular quarterly mailing of 150 care packages, the Choctaw Nation has paid for shipping of 450 additional packages, all in the month of November. Families are bringing boxes filled to the brim with things such as snacks, Christmas ornaments and presents, and iTunes and phone cards. The boxes range in size from a foot square to three feet square. One package contained everything needed to have a Thanksgiving meal. We have even shipped a few Christmas trees on request to make the holidays brighter.

The packages sent every three months by our Veterans Advocacy staff are packed with canned goods, snacks such as peanuts, candy and beef jerky, and toiletry and specialty items.

The staff has done an outstanding job. There are currently only two of them in the office – Brent Oakes and Darla Moody. Their director, Kelly McKaughan, and coordinator, John Lance, are deployed.



A Christmas gift from the tribe was sent again this year. Each person on the program’s mailing list received a case with a pocketknife and a Maglight, two things that are always needed by our troops and can often mean the difference in life and death.

We have also helped many organizations mail care packages – the 180th Family Readiness Group, the Caney Volunteer Fire Department and area churches, schools and vo-techs to name a few.

Durant Intermediate School students and faculty made donations to fill 27 boxes for Bryan County soldiers and two of the boxes were specifically for the dogs in canine units so they could have a Christmas present, too.

It is heartwarming to know we are part of such caring communities and thankful for the opportunity to help bring a little holiday pleasure to the service men and women engaging in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

SOSU celebrates Native November

Southeastern Oklahoma State University’s is hosting several events on the Durant campus to celebrate Native November.

The month-long celebration started Nov. 1 with guest speakers and has featured the Native American Symposium, High School Visitation Day, Native Movies, Native Storytelling Competition, Traditional Dress Fashion Show, Choctaw Social Dancing, and the Miss Indian Southeastern competition.

The High School Visitation Day on Nov. 9 included South-eastern services, tribal funding, lunch and Stickball, a Native social game. The pictures feature students sharing in a traditional Native American dance.



Tribal Council meets in regular November session

The Choctaw Nation Tribal Council met on Nov. 12 in regular session at Tushka Homma. Tribal Council Speaker Delton Cox called the meeting to order, welcomed guests and then asked for committee reports. After committee reports were given the Tribal Council addressed new business.

- Approval of several budgets included: Family Violence program, Environmental General Assistance fund, Tribal Ozone Monitoring project, Victim Assistance program, Teen Pregnancy Prevention, Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting program, and program support for Pregnant

and Parenting Teens and Women.

- Budget modifications to long-range Transportation plan, DHHS Administration on Aging FY 2012 and Capital Projects Budget #2 FY 2012.
- Donations to the Peggy and Charles Stephenson Oklahoma Cancer Center and the Dean McGee Eye Institute, both at Oklahoma University Health Sciences Center.

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

Choctaw Nation to aid with loans

The Southeastern Oklahoma Indian Credit Association offers small business, home, home improvement and agriculture loans.

To be eligible to apply, a person must reside with-in the 10-1/2 county service area of the Choctaw Nation and must possess a Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) from a federally recognized tribe.

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



NOTES TO THE NATION



Choctaw Nation: BRET MOSS

Pictured are Chief Gregory E. Pyle, Brice Brown, Amber Samuel, Brittany Burgin, Caydence Burgin, Gwen Dunham and Assistant Chief Gary Batton. They send greetings to their family in Bakersfield, Calif.

Seeking information on Joe Barrick

I am attempting to locate and/or obtain information regarding Joe Barrick. In 2007, he was around 85 years old and living at 517 W. Tyler St. in McAlester. His mother was original enrollee Ethyl Duncan, enrolled as Ethyl Eugenia Lewis.

Joe Barrick was born in Pauls Valley in 1922 and remained in that area during his youth. He became a self-taught musician at the age of 15 and music continued to be a major part of his life throughout the years. Having served a stint in the armed services during World War II, Joe settled in Los Angeles in the late '40s, finally moving back to Oklahoma, in Haywood, west of McAlester, during the early to mid-'70s.

Joe Barrick is a nationally-recognized one-man band. Over the years, he became an accomplished musician, having learned to play various music styles on a variety of instruments. During the '50s, he had began designing and building what would become a series of very unique electrified musical instruments. He is best known for his creation, the "piatarbajo," which he so named for the combination of instrument sounds emitted, piano, guitar, bass and banjo, as he played it with foot pedals, while playing a guitar, mandolin or fiddle with his hands and singing or playing harmonica, which was held in a neck harness.

After moving back to Oklahoma, Joe stayed busy performing as a one-man band, including entertaining at many Choctaw events, dedication ceremonies of the Choctaw Nation Headquarters and annually at the Labor Day Festival. In 1977, the Choctaw Nation presented Joe with an award of honor in recognition of outstanding work in designing musical instruments.

My purpose in locating him, his instruments and/or gathering as much information as possible is to again honor him for his musical accomplishments and to pay long overdue tribute to a man who, with his creation, the piatarbajo, redefined the worldwide meaning of one-man band, which I myself am a Choctaw one-man band.

If you have any information whatsoever concerning Joe Barrick or his whereabouts, if you are a relative, a friend or acquaintance, you are familiar with his musical instruments, you possibly have or know of a recording of his music, have a story of seeing him perform or can contribute any information concerning any aspect of his life or any link that might be of help, please contact John "Butch" Cusher at 5410 Kimberly Rd., Durant, OK., 74701, at johnboy@netcommander.com, or call at 318-237-7264.

Thank you to kind employees

We are to give honor to whom honor is due. In doing so, I say yakoke to Beverly Vanriette and Angela Lyles, two kind ladies who are employed at the Choctaw Nation Travel Plaza in Atoka.

I recently traveled to Durant and stopped there. I accidentally left a ring in the ladies rest room. On my return trip, I stopped at the plaza, asking Beverly about the possibility that someone had returned my ring, and it had been placed in the store's safe! However, the person who had access to the safe was not there. So, Angela mailed my ring to me, priority mail. I am so thankful for honest and thoughtful employees of the Choctaw Nation. Angela and Beverly, you are to be commended!

Rebecca S. Good, Bokoshe, Okla.

Gregory E. Pyle
Chief

Gary Batton
Assistant Chief

The Official
Monthly Publication
of the
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Judy Allen, Executive Director
Lisa Reed, Director/Editor
Melissa Stevens, Circulation Director
Larissa Copeland, Assistant Editor
Karen Jacob, Purchasing Coordinator
Bret Moss, Copy/Production Assistant
Chrissy Dill, Journalism Intern

P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702
(580) 924-8280 • (800) 522-6170
Fax (580) 924-4148
www.choctawnation.com
e-mail: biskinik@choctawnation.com

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.

Appreciative veteran

Although I am not a Choctaw myself, I have been very involved with most of the functions, activities and benefits allotted the members of the Choctaw Nation. Being the genealogist in the family, I have been the one who has gotten most of my wife's family their CDIBs and Tribal Membership cards. I have also been the one who has sent in the obituaries to the Biskinik for her aunts, uncles, cousins, etc. I was also responsible for getting her uncle's name on the World War II memorial at Tushkahoma. We were present for that dedication and have been to each Veterans Day celebration, with the exception of one, since then. I have met both Chief Pyle and Assistant Chief Batton at these Veterans Day events as well as my wife, who is very proud of her heritage.

In May of 2009, Chief Pyle sent me a personal sympathy for the passing of Mike Pitts and telling me to contact his office if he could help me in any way. I know that this is probably normal procedure that you do for all members' families, but I just wanted to tell you that it was deeply appreciated and most thoughtful.

THE NEWS OF A NATION the many accomplishments that you and all of your staff have done, not only for the Choctaw Nation, but other things you have done for this country in the name of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

Jim W. Winn



Photo submitted

Daniel says thank you

Daniel Cullum, a Silo student and Bryan County 4H member, would like to tell the Choctaw Nation how much he appreciates them buying premium on his show calf recently at the Tulsa State Fair. Daniel won first place with his market steer. He and his family appreciate the many opportunities provided by the Choctaw Nation.

Thank you from Julie

I would like to tell the Choctaw Nation thank you for allowing my brother and myself the opportunity to attend the summer camps. We had so much fun this summer making friends, enhancing our athletic abilities and learning about the heritage of our tribe.

Julie Cullum

Native American Baptist Women's Day

Pictured are U.S. Representative Lisa Billy, Chickasaw, and 2011 Miss Indian Oklahoma City Stephanie Tehauno, Choctaw. They were invited to the Native American Baptist Women's Day at the First Indian Baptist Church of Moore on Nov. 6. Representative Billy was the keynote speaker. Stephanie is a former Miss Choctaw Nation princess. Both women are powerful role models setting positive examples for Native American women. The First Indian Baptist Church of Moore appreciates their taking time out from their busy schedules to be with them on this special day.



Perrin "Ninak Chulosa" Deal



Davis Cup a success

The Davis Cup event at our golf/tennis club in Sarasota, Calif., the Meadows Country Club, was a huge success. The letter from Chief Pyle was met with applause and appreciation. Before the competition, there were drawings for the various gifts the Choctaw Nation had donated. The crowd was staggered. One of the comments from the pro over the PA system was, "Don't you wish you were Choctaw?" That was met with more applause. Ultimately, the event was a tremendous success and it represented a significant rise in Choctaw awareness. I could not be more pleased.

In the competition, we placed second. Thanks again to all involved in the support, including Chief Pyle.

Chuck Hanner

Seeking information

I am looking for photos of my grandparents and great-grandparents. I am willing to pay for copying and postage. Photos I seek include: William Pusley, born 1844, died in 1880, married Elizabeth Hampton, I have a photo of her; James Thomas Ryan, born September 1845, died September 1878, married Lela Eugenia McCarty, I have a photo of her; Lenora Eugenia Ryan, born Dec. 25, 1877, died Oct. 6, 1899, married William Wiley Pusley, I have a photo of him and his second wife, Lelan, and their three children. I am the granddaughter of Lenora.

I am willing to share any of my photos at no cost. If you have any information regarding these photos, contact Betty J. Pusley Simmons at 32526 Ruth Hill Road, Squaw Valley, CA 93675 or 559-332-2342. Thank you.



Photo submitted

Staff Sergeant Anthony Emery and Sergeant Higinio Garcia along with Little Miss Choctaw district princess Amber Battice participated in Cameron's Veteran's Day Celebration.



A Salute

Appreciation for Veterans Ceremony

The Oklahoma Choctaw Veterans Day Ceremony on Nov. 11 was great, moving and monumental. It should have been recorded for PBS television and/or Oklahoma Educational television for future showings. Lt. Gen. Sisco and Maj. Gen. Aragon were wonderful. Chief Pyle and Assistant Chief Batton and all other tribal participants and facilitators should be congratulated for work well done. I am sure all veterans attending felt honored to be appreciated. We should always remember, they fought our enemies over there so we would not have to fight them over here.

D.R. Ferguson, retired Navy Navigator and Commercial Ship Master,



Post #4501's float places third

Choctaw Veterans Association, Post #4501, of Spiro, participated in the Poteau Veterans Parade on Nov. 12. The theme of the parade was "Veterans Don't Forget, Don't Forget the Veterans." The float was built by members of Post 4501. They hoped to win the first place trophy again this year, but they received third place. They were somewhat disappointed, but they were all very proud to represent the Choctaw veterans in the parade. Poteau DAV Post #63 won first place in the float category this year.

Pictured is Post #4501 commander Paul Perry of Spiro (center) accepting the third place plaque from VFW Commander Robert Carter of Spiro Post #4884 (left) and VFW member Don Bosley of Heavenier.

John presents Veterans Day program

On Nov. 8, John C. Smith presented the 2011 Veterans Day Program for the Rotary Club of Roseville, Calif. Smith has been a member of the Rotary Club's Board of Directors for the last three years and is a past commander of the Roseville American Legion. He lived in Boswell and Bennington and graduated from Del City High School. After a tour in the Marine Corps, he has lived in California where he was a chief of police. He is the son of tribal members John Williams Smith and grandson of Ruby Gertrude Crawford. As a child, he lived on the land grant of Joe Durant in Bennington.



Seeking information on Guthries

I am looking for information on Joe Thomas Guthrie, the brother of the late William Terrell "Woody" Guthrie, who passed away in January 2005, of the Maysville area. I am also seeking information on Troy Guthrie, the son of Woody. If you have any information, contact Robert Guthrie at P.O. Box 6195 Noman, OK 73070 or email at rdguthrie@sbcglobal.net.

Thanks for ornament

Thank you for the beautiful Christmas ornament depicting the Choctaw drum. The history of the drum is very interesting. At our ages, 75 and 74, each year we debate on if we should put up our Christmas tree or not. Each year we say no, but we get to thinking about all the personal decorations we have and the Choctaw ornaments and we bring out the tree and decorate it so we can tell all our friends about the Choctaws. Thank you, again.

Charles E. Boatman



BISKINIK 2011

Smart tips to avoid holiday overindulgences

December is a wondrous time of year. As we look around at all of the many blessings we have, all the young children wondering what Santa will put under the Christmas tree for them, wondering what to prepare for family Christmas dinner, and of course, wondering “why did we eat so much, so fast!” More often we are putting so much thought into why we ate what we did and feeling guilty for these overindulgences that we are not enjoying the special holiday foods that typically come around one to two times a year.

Yes, we will be tempted with an abundance of wonderful meals full of old family recipes and new, yet if we allow ourselves to truly enjoy the once-a-year treats we just might be able to avoid the overindulgence and look back at these special moments with wonderful memories.

- Here are a few ways to slow down and enjoy this time of year:
- Make a list of your typical holiday meal, divide into foods that taste best just placed on the table and foods that still taste good or better as leftovers. Then from the first list take off all the foods that you can have any time of year like mashed potatoes. All the foods left, high in carbs, you can portion into three to four carb servings. Generally a carb serving is about ½ cup.
 - Include a lot of non-starchy vegetables on your plate. Half of your plate should be filled with non-starchy vegetables such as garden salad, broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, squash, tomatoes or green beans (not in a creamy casserole)..
 - Go for a family walk after the meal and before the dessert.
 - Wait two hours between the meal and dessert.
 - Portion desserts to have one after the family meal then save the rest to enjoy another serving the next day.
 - Drink plenty of water, just plain water. To enhance the flavor try adding sliced cucumber, berries and/or citrus slices to a pitcher of water.
 - Enjoy family conversation and memories while at the table, this can help to slow down how fast we eat.
 - And enjoy tasty recipes that will help to keep us healthy for the years to come.

Recipe of the Month

Honeyed Carrots

A recipe from Better Homes and Gardens

Ingredients:

- 6 cups water
- 3 pounds baby carrots with tops trimmed to 2”, peeled or scrubbed
- 2 tbsp. butter
- 3-4 tbsp. honey
- 1 tsp. finely shredded lemon peel
- ½ tsp. crushed red pepper

Directions:

1. In heavy skillet bring water to boil; add carrots. Return to boil; reduce heat. Simmer, covered, 8-10 minutes, until carrots are tender; drain carrots, pat dry.
2. For glaze, in skillet stir butter, honey, lemon peel, red pepper, and ½ tsp. salt over medium heat until butter is melted and glaze bubbles. Add carrots; toss 2 minutes. In serving bowl drizzle carrots with glaze, sprinkle additional red pepper.


Nutrition facts

Amount per serving: 12 servings
Calories - 75, Total Carbs - 14g, Total fat - 2g, Unsaturated - 1g, Fiber - 3g, Protein - 1g, Sat fat - 1g, Sodium - 180mg, Cholesterol - 5mg, Vitamin C - 6mg, Calcium - 30% DV
For further information you may contact: Erin Adams, RD, LD, Choctaw Nation Diabetes Wellness Center 800-349-7026 ext.: 6959.

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Head Start Center receives grant to enhance outdoor play

Head Start Body Start National Center for Physical Development and Outdoor Play today announced Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Head Start as one of 394 recipients of a \$5,000 grant to improve the outdoor play space at the Wright City Head Start Center in Wright City. The Head Start Center can purchase value added packages from one of 27 elite vendors who were selected by a team of evaluators for the packages’ developmental appropriateness, safety and both play and monetary value. The National Center was created through a federal grant to the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) and the American Association for Physical Activity and Recreation (AAPAR) from the Office of Head Start.

According to Head Start Director Rebecca Hawkins, “We appreciate Head Start Body Start for helping us evaluate our play spaces and educate our children and their families about the value of physical activity and playing outdoors, in particular. This grant will enable our Head Start to enhance our outdoor playground at the Wright City Center.”



Choctaw Nation WIC

WOMEN, INFANTS AND CHILDREN

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

FOOD DISTRIBUTION

ANTLERS

Market open weekdays Jan. 3-26 , except for:
Jan. 4 : Idabel 9-11 a.m.; Broken Bow 12-2 p.m. (market closed)
Jan. 11: Bethel 9-10:30; Smithville 12-2 (market closed)
Closed Jan. 27-31 for inventory
Cooking with Carmen: Jan. 9 & 20, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

DURANT

Market open weekdays: Jan. 3-26, except for:
Closed Jan. 27-31 for inventory
Cooking with Carmen: Jan. 3 & 13, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

McALESTER

Market open weekdays Jan. 3-26, except for:
Closed Jan. 27-31 for inventory
Cooking with Carmen: Jan. 11 & 16, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

POTEAU

Market open weekdays Jan. 3-26, except for:
Closed Jan. 27-31 for inventory.
Cooking with Carmen: Jan. 5 & 18, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

CHOCTAW NATION FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Open 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Monday thru Friday. Staff will take lunch from 11:30 to 12 noon.

WAREHOUSES & MARKETS

Antlers: 306 S.W. “O” St., 580-298-6443
Durant: 100 1/2 Waldron Dr., 580-924-7773
McAlester: 1212 S. Main St., 918-420-5716
Poteau: 100 Kerr, 918-649-0431

FOOD DISTRIBUTION SITES

Bethel: Choctaw Community Building
Broken Bow: Choctaw Family Investment Center
Idabel: Choctaw Community Center
Smithville: Choctaw Community Center
Stigler: Choctaw Community Center

In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, political beliefs, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Adjudication and Compliance, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call 800-795-3272 (voice) or 202-720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Healthy Holidays: How to avoid weight gain

WIC

WOMEN, INFANTS AND CHILDREN

As the sights, sounds and smells of the holiday season arrive, food is at the center of many family gatherings. Between big family meals and holiday treats throughout the day, staying healthy can be a challenge.

Here are some healthy ways to enjoy the holidays without packing on pounds:

- Follow *MyPlate* – When it comes to mealtimes, follow *MyPlate*. The new *MyPlate* is a visual guideline for meal portions.
- Be realistic about holiday eating – Do not set a weight loss goal during the holidays because it is the hardest time of the year to lose weight.
- Plan ahead for holiday parties – Eat breakfast or a healthy snack before arriving at a holiday party. Going hungry might cause you to eat more than you need.
- Say “No thanks” to leftovers – Eliminating the temptation to eat leftovers is an important step to stay as healthy as possible during the holidays.


Many holiday memories stem from family time together. By keeping your families active and healthy there will be many more holiday memories to cherish.

Remember, Family time creates happy, healthy memories that last a lifetime!

NURSERY NEWS


Olivia Lavan

Olivia Mikell Lavan was born at 1:16 p.m. on Oct. 16, 2011. She weighed 9 pounds and 13 ounces and measured 21 inches. Joe, Heidi and big sister Ava are overwhelmed with joy.



Maria Carpio


David and Samantha Carpio from Oklahoma City welcome Maria Eufemia Carpio. She was born on March 16, 2011. Great-grandparents are McDonald and Naomi Johnson, as well as Jesus and Bertha Carpio. Grandparents are Delva and Ruben Laquna.



Allee Rolan


Allee Redsky Rolan was born on Sept. 12, 2011, at the Chickasaw Medical Center in Ada. Allee weighed 8 pounds and 1 ounce and measured 18.5 inches long. Her proud parents are T.J. and Kathie Rolan of Fittstown. She is the granddaughter of the late Albert Wallace of Ada, as well as Elaine Wallace and Chris Richter of Ada.

She is also the granddaughter of Trese Little of Francis and Terry Sr. Rolan of Fittstown. Those welcoming her home were her brother, Chase Rolan of Fittstown; uncle Cebrane and aunt Becky Wallace; uncle Vincent Wallace; uncle Randall Bohanon; cousins, Krischelle Wallace, Mackenzey Wallace, Felicia Trent and Gary Trent Jr., all of Ada; along with many more family members.




Allen Battiest

Allen Battiest is the name chosen by Walker and Jamie Battiest for their son born on Nov.2, 2011. Allen weighed 9 pounds and 7 ounces, and measured 20 inches long. He joins sisters Kathleen, Madeline, Vivian and brother, Carson in the family. Paternal grandparents are Debbie Battiest and the late Allen Battiest. Maternal grandparents are Ronald and Veta Howard, from Duncan. Great-grandmother Flora Howard is from Duncan as well.




Ella Grace


Congratulations to Aaron and Leslie Folsom of Moore. A baby girl, Ella Grace, was born on March 24, 2011. She weighed 7 pounds and 5 ounces. She has a big sister, Makayla, and her grandparents are Belinda Darnell and Jim Nash and Richard and Wilda Folsom.



Aubree Knight

The Burns-Knight families welcome Aubree Ann Marie Knight, born April 21, 2011, in Poteau. She weighed 7 pounds and 13 ounces. She is the daughter of John and Tereasa Knight of Cameron. Aubree’s great-great-grandfather was original Choctaw enrollee Henry Franklin Burns of LeFlore. Great-grandparents include the late Vernon Burns of LeFlore, Ora Burns of Wister, the late Junior and Alene Knight of Summerfield. Grandparents are Willis and Mary (Burns) Knight of Wister, and Je and Beverly Wilson of Cameron. A host of family and friends also share in welcoming Aubree to the world.





Find out what’s going on with the Choctaw Nation.

Like us on facebook to: learn about current events • view photos • share information • read news articlees • keep up-to-date

<http://www.facebook.com/choctawnationofoklahoma>

Want to Quit Smoking?



Are you....

- Native American
- 18 years old or older
- Smoke cigarettes?

You can quit smoking through a FREE research program for Native people that respects the sacred nature of tobacco.

All group sessions held in McAlester, Atoka, and Hugo

Call 1-855-552-2424 ext. 3303

IRB# 15044

HAMPTON

Continued from Page 1

Choctaw Nation opened a window of opportunities to assist others. She was also always one to do whatever she could to help those who had exhausted all avenues trying to prove their Indian ancestry, especially in the cases of adoptions. She loved to travel the United States helping Choctaws all over the nation.

She was adamant about the right to vote and how it is a privilege. Brenda’s position at Choctaw Nation involved her in several election processes and she always stressed how important it was to vote not only in tribal, but also local, state and federal elections. She worked with the U.S. Census, aiding Choctaws in signing the forms correctly so that tribal members were accurately counted.

When she wasn’t at work, Brenda loved driving around Durant looking at the city grow and reminiscing about the early years growing up in Durant. She loved spending time with her granddaughters and showed her family how much she loved them and taught them how to love.

She loved the employees in her office and wrote the definition of loyalty. Brenda touched many lives and will always be remembered.

“Brenda Hampton was a dear friend of mine that I admired from the time I came to work for the tribe back in 1987. She portrayed a great leadership style of serving from the heart that I have tried to duplicate. She was the type of person who knew what her values were and she stood strong

for them,” Assistant Chief Gary Batton said. “I think about Brenda and I see this lady who was so full of energy. She was beautiful and elegant in a southern sort of way meaning that if you messed with her values she was ready to drop all of those things and go to battle if need be.

“She had an unbelievable work ethic. Brenda helped the Choctaw Nation grow to over 200,000 proud Choctaws all around the world. I will miss that spry and spunky lady I knew as my friend and colleague. She always reminded me to be thankful for all of the things the good Lord has given and to make sure and give Him the thanks and praises he deserves.

“The Choctaw Nation has truly lost a friend and a warrior.”

Brenda is survived by: husband Gene of the home in Durant; sons, Ronnie with wife Courtney of Durant and Scott Hampton with wife Ashley of Calera; grandchildren, Elizabeth Tyburski with husband Joe of Sumter, S.C., Brittany Hampton, Hailee Hampton, Rylie Jo Hampton, Preslee Hampton, Lydia Parson and Will Brister, all of Durant; sister, Charlene England with husband Barney of Denison, Texas; brothers, Barney Potts of Durant, Bobby Lilley of Colorado Springs, Colo., and Frankie Lilley with wife, Barbara of Caddo; sisters, Nancy Lilley Eversole of Cushing and Cathy Lilley Stanfield with husband Stewart of Cushing.

She was preceded in death by her parents, William “Peewee” and Margie Lilley, and brother Charles Lilley.

First Tina Willis Memorial Scholarship Softball Tournament held in Broken Bow

A softball tournament benefiting the Tina Willis Memorial Scholarship was held Oct. 29 at the Choctaw fields in Broken Bow. The Choctaw Nation Outreach Services Division hosted the tournament and had 12 teams competing. All proceeds from the concession stand and tournament benefit the scholarship fund.

The Tina Willis Memorial Scholarship is a \$500 scholarship to be awarded to a Choctaw student living in the 10-1/2 counties who is entering or returning to college for a degree in criminal justice or social work.

The staff of Outreach Services would like to thank everyone who participated in and donated to this first tournament. They would like to especially thank Tina’s family for all that they did to help on the day of the tournament, along with umpires Chris Baker and Jason Baker. They also express their thanks to all the Outreach staff who assisted, Councilman Tony Messenger, and others that helped to make this first tournament a huge success. They plan to make the tournament an annual event.

Not pictured is the runner-up team, the Noah family from Oak Hill.



Photo provided

Winners of the Tina Willis Memorial Softball Tournament Homerun Derby, Tiffany Clay-Lindly and Randall Clay, are pictured with Kerstan Willis. Kerstan was injured in a car wreck in July and the monies raised from the Homerun Derby went to her.



Photo provided

The championship team from the tournament, “Winship Dynasty,” included, back row from left, Sonny Winship, Michael Clay, Dave Lindly, Cade Clay, Allen Clay, Randy Hammons and Randall Clay; front row from left, Becky Winship, Connie Winship-Courtwright, Alex Clay, Tiffany Clay-Lindly and Donna Winship-Courtwright.

GIVING

Continued from Page 1

local grocery stores. Outreach Services employees went shopping for and made deliveries to those who were home bound and unable to pick up their food.

Those receiving a Thanksgiving voucher were automatically qualified for the Christmas vouchers.

Also, through the Needy Christmas Program Chief Gregory E. Pyle and Assistant Chief Gary Batton will give gifts to nearly 3,000 Choctaw children this year. The program, paid for all with tribal dollars, serves children ages birth to 16 years from needy Choctaw families within the 10-1/2 counties. To be on the list for these gifts, an application, which included income guidelines, was required to be filled out by a parent of the child (or children). The Tribal Events department purchased the gifts which were then collected by a representative from each community center and then distributed to the families in their respective areas.

In the spirit of giving, Outreach Services’ Victim’s Assistance/Elder Advocacy Program held its “Elder Angel” gift drive amongst the tribal employees for the eighth year. Items given to the seniors were often modest and included things such as gloves, slippers, clothing items and scarves. This gift-giving drive guaranteed presents for 240 Choctaw seniors throughout the tribe, 20 from each district, who might not otherwise have received anything for the holidays.

“Many of them (the seniors) don’t have family or don’t get out of their houses much. They are always happy to receive a gift,” said Vicki Perez, deputy director of the program. “They are excited that someone remembered them on Christmas and we really enjoy doing it.”

Outreach Services also had the “Youth Outreach Angels” gift drive, which provided more than 80 youth in the program with a gift this year. The employee-driven drive provides gifts for the youth who exhibit some kind of hardship and range from Head Start students up to seniors in high school.

Gifts were also purchased for the “Jones Academy Angels” by many Choctaw employees to make certain the students at the school had a present to open up for Christmas. Ranging from first to 12th grades, 167 students made first and second choice requests for gift-givers to choose from, with a \$30 limit, to ensure the youngsters received something that they really wanted.

“We’ve had the best turnout this year,” said Higher Education Scholarship Officer Freda Scott, speaking on employee involvement.

After all the gifts are purchased and wrapped, they are given to the students by Santa Claus at Jones Academy’s annual Christmas party.

Additionally, Choctaw Nation Indian Child Welfare (ICW) holds a toy drive every Christmas in order to give the foster and adopted children in its program a toy for Christmas. In addition to donations from an employee toy drive, all toys and monetary donations received from the Health Promotion department’s Jingle Bell Run are donated to the program. On Dec. 17, ICW will host a Christmas party for all the 195 foster care and adopted children in the program and Santa Claus will be there to hand out the gifts.

“We do this to make sure our kids have a toy for Christmas,” says Lari Ann Brister, director of ICW and Adoption/Foster care programs. “Some might be one of 10 children in a household and may not have much of a Christmas otherwise, but this way they will be getting a toy from Santa.”

AWARD

Continued from Page 1

ability to recycle large amounts of paper, plastics, cardboard, and even electronics. It is now able to process styrofoam, making it one of only two known facilities in the state with that capability.

The recycling facility came about by efforts from the Going Green Team, who was inspired to help the environment on a larger scale. They teamed up with the Grants Department, and in 2009 were awarded an Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG), which pays for the facility as well as many other recycling activities and events.

This recycling initiative employs five personnel; three driver/collectors, Terry Garner, Chris Stover and Justin Tillery; one administrative assistant, Tamera Couch, who also does occasional driving and collecting; and coordinator, Cyndi Houser.

The drivers/collectors duties are to travel across the 10.5 counties of the Choctaw Nation to replace the receptacles, called “roll offs.” When one gets full, they will be called and take an empty one to replace it, and in turn, take the full roll off back to the fa-

cility where the contents are emptied and sorted. The facility sees about 1.5 full rolloffs each day on average.

Once the material is sorted, it is placed in one of two bailers and compacted into squares, each weighing anywhere from 700 pounds to just a little over a half ton, stacked on pallets and made ready to be transported to other facilities that purchase them and use the material to make other usable products.

Horst explains that much of the paper products will be shipped to paper mills and reformed into a downgraded version of its original state. She went on to say that once a paper product goes through this process, it loses some of its durability, and thus cannot be reformed back into the same object, but is still valuable in other forms.

Getting the most out of a resource is a top priority because what is reused not only subtracts from waste, but also offsets the usage of new resources, therefore postponing the need to gather fresh supply.

The environment is not the only beneficiary of these actions; the bottom line is also reaping the benefits as well. Horst makes mention that businesses, namely the Casino and Resort in Durant, save money on their trash bill

by recycling a large portion of their waste. Since the volume of disposed matter is subtracted from the dumpsters at no cost, it leaves more room for non-recyclable materials.

Horst, who is responsible for communicating with city governments and other entities, as well as grant regulation and personnel, is making a strong effort to encourage this type of relationship with businesses and recycling.

She has used her knowledge to help the cities of Wilburton and McAlester begin a similar program, and also has teamed up with the City of Durant to maximize the amount of recycling in the area.

Over time, she hopes to have many more roll offs at various Choctaw locations and she is also pushing for other businesses to join the effort as well. “If they have a place where they can keep it [recyclables] separate from the trash dumpster, we can go around once or twice a week and pick up their cardboard or shredded paper,” said Horst as she spoke of the mutually beneficial relationship between business and recycling.

The practices and facility that won the recent awards are fairly new and only in the first stages. At the current time, Durant is the only hub of the operation and where most of the action takes place,

but it is the hope of the staff that this initiative spreads to other locations across Choctaw Nation.

In the short time between March and June, the number of roll offs have increased from three to 26, and numerous new and creative ways have been employed to help recycle since 2009.

Crayon recycling is a prime example of the innovation to this endeavor. At Choctaw head starts, large cylinders have been decorated like giant crayons and used as receptacles for which children dispose used crayons. These small pieces are then used to create new crayons without using fresh resources.

The recycling crew has also teamed up with the Choctaw Nation Outreach Program to help with annual toy and coat drives, which help usable items stay in homes and out of landfills.

The recognition for the many efforts CNO is making, along with the recent awards is just a sidebar to the real results of the actions. The environment that the people of the Choctaw Nation care so deeply for is being preserved and protected through this initiative. The Choctaw Nation is, and plans to continue “Making Southeastern Oklahoma cleaner and greener,” the motto of the recycling effort.

DONATION

Tribe makes \$1 million donation to eye institute

Continued from Page 1

and fellowship training programs at the Institute, which are affiliated with the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine’s Department of Ophthalmology, are highly competitive and attract top candidates from throughout the country.

About Dean McGee Eye Institute

The Dean McGee Eye Institute is one of the largest and most respected eye institutes in the United States and houses the Department of Ophthalmology for the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine. Its research and training programs are among the most highly regarded in the country. More than half of the Institute’s ophthalmologists are listed in The Best Doctors in America; its Director of Vision Research is a Past President of the International Society for Eye Research; two members of

the faculty are recent or current directors of the American Board of Ophthalmology; two serve on the Board of Trustees of the American Academy of Ophthalmology; and one recently served as president of the American Glaucoma Society.

About Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

The Choctaw Nation is the third largest tribe in the United States, governed under the leadership of Chief Gregory E. Pyle since 1997. Under the constitution of 1983, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma is a three-branch government – legislative, judicial and executive. Making up the 10.5 counties of the southeast corner of the state, the Capitol of the tribe is at Tushka Homma, located in Pushmataha County, where the tribal council makes legislative decisions and the judicial branch holds court.

The administrative headquarters are in Durant (Bryan County), and 17 community centers scattered in the various counties house field offices for the many programs and services so that the tribal members are served with convenience. A new hospital and clinics have been constructed over the past several years, and 5,000 new jobs have been created since 1997 through economic and program development.

PEOPLE YOU KNOW



Hallcom sisters receive Christian Character Award

Hannah, Haley and Heather Hallcom received the Christian Character Award from West End Christian School, chosen by the faculty. Hannah received the award in 2007, Haley in 2009 and Heather in 2010 and 2011.

The girls are the daughters of David Hallcom and the step-daughters of Debby Hallcom. They are the grandchildren of the Rev. Jim and Bonnie Hallcom of Hopewell, Va.

Hannah graduated from South Carolina School of Leadership in 2010. Haley graduated in 2011 from the same school and Heather will enter the school in August. Haley is going to California to study at the extension of Southeastern College, Assembly of God. Hannah and Heather are employed at West End Day Care.

Upon graduation from West End, Hannah was recognized as the student with the highest GPA. She is leading a youth group in her church in Chester, Va.

Maggie selected for All-State softball team

Maggie McBayer was selected to the Large West All-State softball team for the 2011 season. She attended Tishomingo High School until her junior year and attended Altus High School her last two years of high school. She is a proud tribal member of the Choctaw Nation. She is the daughter of Michael and Kara McBayer of Altus and the granddaughter of Roy and Cheryl Fogleman of Tishomingo, Terry Tipton of Durant and Jim McBayer of Tushka.

The All-State game will be played at the University of Oklahoma softball field in June. Maggie plans to attend and play softball at Western Oklahoma State College in Altus.



Happy birthday, Tyrone

Happy birthday wishes go out to Tyrone Wallace of Idabel. He turned 19 years old on Nov. 21. His mother is Priscilla Wallace and Whitney, his big ATM sister. Grandparents are Truman and Bertha Jefferson of Idabel, and he is the brother of Brock.



Happy birthday, girls

Happy belated birthday wishes to Krischelle, Mackenzy Wallace and Marissa Trent on Sept. 25, Oct. 8 and Sept. 22. Also happy birthday to Kathie Rolen on Oct. 1 and Becky Wallace on Oct. 8. Krischelle and Mackenzy are the granddaughters of Elaine Wallace, Marissa is her great-niece, Kathie is her daughter and Becky is her daughter-in-law. Happy birthday, girls.

Mohammad named Eagle Scout

Congratulations to Mohammad K. Al-Khalili, 12 years old, who received his Eagle Scout Rank in the Boy Scouts of America on Oct. 18. He is a member of Troop 924 and completed his Eagle Project on June 25, 2011.

For his Eagle Project, Mohammad led a project that involved repainting the fire lane curbs at Gravely Elementary School in Haymarket, Va. The project also included refreshing the mulch around the school, pulling weeds and planting bushes and flowers.

Mohammad is the youngest Eagle Scout in Troop 924 and possibly the nation. His next goal will be helping the other scouts in his troop advance and provide leadership and guidance to the younger scouts. He is currently a Den Chief for his younger brother's Tiger Den as well as a patrol leader and Webmaster in his troop. He is a member of the Order of the Arrow and holds the position of Vice Area Chief. Mohammad is also involved in sports. He plays lacrosse, football and wrestles. He received all A's in his core subjects in school.



Happy birthday, Jackson

Happy birthday to Jackson Alexander Whitworth, who turned 1 year old on Nov. 1. Lots of family and friends were present when Jackson dove into his cake with both hands. At first he wasn't quite sure what to do with the bright blue frosting but quickly figured it out and had a great time smearing cake everywhere. Jackson's parents are Jeremy Whitworth and Jennifer Adams. His paternal grandparents are Gerald and Pamela Whitworth of Glenpool. His maternal grandparents are James and Teresa Adams of Broken Arrow. Jackson's Uncle Ian Whitworth and Aunt Amanda Adams are also very proud of him.



Happy anniversary

Bill and Judy (Sharp) Freeze of Jacksonville, Texas, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Dec. 1. The couple were married at the Hillcrest Church of Christ in Oklahoma City with the groom's father, E.W. Freeze, officiating. The bride was given in marriage by her parents, Walter and Bernice Sharp of Wichita, Kan.

The couple's children and families include son, William Jr. and wife Teresa and their children, Aaron, Rachel and Austin of Haslet, Texas; daughter, Debbie Myers and husband Randy; and Adell, Ronnie and William of San Antonio will host a celebration at the family's residence.

50th anniversary

Ronald and Brenda McClelland celebrated their 50th anniversary with trips to Wilmington, N.C., Niagara Falls and Kentucky. They were married on Aug. 5, 1961, in Beaumont, Texas. The McClellands have three sons, Michael, Patrick and Daniel. Brenda is the daughter of the late Evelyn and Vanard Casey and the granddaughter of the late Eliza Ward Casey, an original enrollee from Spiro.



Birthday girls

Lee and Linda Knight wish their twin granddaughters Cierra and Kierra Knight a happy birthday. The girls turned 1 year old on Sept. 25. They have a sister, Hannah, and they celebrated with family and friends at Ansley Park. Their parents are Ricky and Stacey Knight.



Happy birthday, Hailey

Lee and Linda Knight wish their great-granddaughter a happy birthday. Hailey turned 3 years old on Sept. 12. Her parents are Sha Ward and Tony Clinton. Her grandparents are Ruth Ward, Donnie and Jacque Knight of Shawnee and Carmalita. Great-grandparents are Mary and Lloyd Ward of Paris, Texas. She also has a sister, Bethany.



Noah turns 2

Noah Riley Barteau celebrated his second birthday on Oct. 14 with family and friends. Noah is the son of Sara Barteau, grandson of Cheryl Packard and great-grandson of Rita Packard, all of Tulsa.



Canyon is 11

I would like to wish my son, Canyon Lane Taylor, a happy 11th birthday on Dec. 20. Canyon will celebrate his birthday at home with family and friends. His parents are Becky Peters and Dwayne Taylor of Hugo, and his grandparents are William and Judy Taylor of Soper, the late Dodson Lamb and Theda Lamb of Hugo and Betty Shawhart of Fort Towson. Canyon is in fifth grade at Hugo Elementary. He enjoys playing football, baseball and spending lots of time with his brothers and sisters. He has four older sisters and two older brothers. He also has four nephews and one niece and one on the way.



Bianca turns 7

Celebrate with us the seventh birthday of our little princess on Dec. 17, Bianca Genevieve Fuller. She has enriched our lives with laughter, hugs and kisses and questions we could never be able to answer. We thank God every day for the light that shines through those beautiful little eyes. From her mom Princess, dad Richard and daddy Brian.



Happy birthday, Kimmie

Kimmie Sue Couch turned 3 on Dec. 4. She is the daughter of Ronnie Jr. and Natallie Couch of Poteau. Her grandparents are Ronny and Wanda Couch, Ronald Adams and Debbie Nietert and Rob and Wanda Lawrence, all of Poteau. Her great-grandparents are Helen Adams and the late Fay Berry Adams and Bessie Thurman and the late Fred Thurman.



Look who's 1

We would like to wish Terrin Phillip Steed a happy belated first birthday. Terrin turned 1 year old on Sept. 13. He celebrated with friends and family at his home. His parents are Matt and Tahasha Steed and his brother is Cayden Hostletler of Hugo. His grandparents are Marc and Mary Payne of Paris and Nona Alonna Steed of Del City and his Grams is Becky Peters of Hugo. Terrin also has several cousins, aunts and uncles. Happy first birthday, baby boy!



Happy birthday, Hydee

Hydee Ayanna Lyman turned 1 year old on April 8. The proud mother is Heather Watson of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Her grandparents are Brian and Joyce Watson of Coeur d'Alene. Her great-grandparents are Shirley Watson of Kellogg, Idaho, and the late Norman Watson. She celebrated her birthday with several family members and friends who care for her very much.



Happy birthday, Ronnie

Ronnie Smith Jr. will be celebrating his 12th birthday on April 8. His family wishes him a very happy birthday. Ronnie is the grandson of Evelyn Johnson and the nephew of Annett Johnson. He is the son of Ronnie and Deloures Smith, the little brother of Danielle Smith of McAlester and the grandson of the late Eulus Johnson Jr.



Hornbuckle earns silver medal

Jack Hornbuckle (pictured far left) of Poteau won the silver medal in the Veterans Worlds Freestyle Wrestling Championships held in Tirana, Albania. The Veteran World Championships are held by FILA, the governing wrestling body of the International Olympic Committee for athletes over 40 years old.

Athletes from 27 different countries competed in the tournament. This was the fifth time Hornbuckle has competed in the championships and his third time to medal. He previously won a silver in Cali, Columbia, and gold in Hradrac Kralove, Czech Republic. He is proud of his Choctaw heritage and his grandfather, William Free, was an original enrollee. He is the son of the late Bill and Louise Hornbuckle.

Look who turned 2

The family of Xanden Lee Ward would like to wish him a belated second birthday wish. Xanden celebrated his second birthday at home with family and friends with a Toy Story theme on Oct. 23. His parents are Amber and Cody Ward of Valliant. His grandparents are the late Terry Ward of Hugo, Mary Payne of Paris and his Grams is Becky Peters of Hugo. His great-grandmother is Betty Shawhart of Fort Towson and grandma is Brenda Wyrick of Hugo. His older brother is Drake Stubbs, who is 5 years old, of the home. Xanden has several cousins, aunts and uncles who care for and adore him very much. Happy second birthday, sweet baby boy!



Carlie's Champion Duroc

Congratulations to Carlie Nieto and family of Casa Grande, Ariz. Carlie and her show pig, Hershey, recently won Champion Duroc at the 2011 Arizona State Fair. This is her second year showing livestock.

Congratulations, Pearl

Pictured is Pearl Swan Melton, age 17 of Susanville, Calif. Pearl was crowned Susanville Indian Ranchera Princess 2011. She is the daughter of Jerome Melton of Susanville and the granddaughter of Willis Melton of Talihina. Pearl is of the Maidu and Choctaw tribes.



Happy birthday, Bailey

Bailey Reid Thorne turned 6 years old on Nov. 29. He celebrated with family. Bailey played T-ball and is a kindergartner at Butterfield Elementary in Tucson, Ariz. His grandparents are Gene and LaHoma Murphy Crauthers of Oklahoma City. He is the great-grandson of the late Bill and Ella Murphy of Idabel.





LEE PELL MEASHINTUBBY

Former Jones student perseveres

The Jones Academy Scholarship Foundation is presently providing funding for 23 former students who are attending institutions of higher learning. One of those students is Lee Pell Meashintubby who graduated from Hartshorne High School in 2003. Lee is a wife, mother of three, and works part-time for Kibois Community Action Inc., where she often works up to 30 hours a week. Lee is also enrolled in the rigorous nursing program at Eastern Oklahoma State College in Wilburton. She will complete her first semester next month. Lee was on the Dean’s honor roll for the fall 2010 and spring 2011 semester before she was accepted into the nursing program this year. In spite of the numerous challenges, Lee has persevered in her quest for an education. She is an example to all present-day and former Jones Academy students. She embodies the Choctaw, Jones Academy and Hartshorne Miner spirit that follows the call to “Never Give Up!” Lee has expressed enthusiasm for her future and loves her classes, regardless of her demanding schedule.

Jones Academy eighth-graders attend college conference

Six hundred eighth grade students from the McAlester area attended the Fifth Annual Career and College Tour on Nov. 8. The event was sponsored by Eastern Oklahoma State College, Kiamichi Technology Centers, the City of McAlester, McAl-ester Regional Health Center and the Choctaw Nation. Several Jones Academy students participated in the fair and found valuable resources to aid them in the future. The program featured about 50 vendors from college departments and local industries which offered career choices for students. The main activity included a “life game” and a presentation by motivational speaker Jim Franks. During the life game activity, the students learned the practical lessons of managing household budgets and living expenses. Mr. Franks addressed the crowd about the importance of making good decisions early in life. He encouraged the audience to prepare themselves early for future success and avoid at-risk behaviors. David Sanchez, the Jones Academy sponsor, observed that the students remained engaged and attentive during this informative and useful presentation.



Photo provided

Kirkland Loman, Darianne Valdez, Ava Trujillo, Danielle Murillo, Delanie Lime and Naomi Christmas.

Conference teaches students how to dare to be different

Twenty-five Jones Academy students and staff attended the “2011 Dare to be Different” teen conference this fall held at the Southeast Expo Center in McAlester. The event was sponsored by the Pittsburg County Local Service Coalition Youth Team (LCS) in an effort to promote good lifestyle choices and prevent at-risk behaviors. According to the coalition’s news release, the team’s purpose was to assist youth in developing and implementing “youth specific” strategies to address social issues identified as high risk.

The keynote speaker was Kirk Smalley, founder of “Stand for the Silent,” a grassroots program aimed at stemming bullying behaviors among youth today. Mr. Smalley gave an impassioned speech to about 300 area ninth-graders about the dangers and effects of bullying behaviors. The Smalleys lost their 11-year-old son due to suicide in the spring of 2010. The father noted that his son’s actions were a result of being tormented and harassed at



Photo provided

Thomas Etsitty, Ke’ana Watashe, Brandon Bissonette, and Wesla Butler.

school. In other breakout sessions, presentations were offered in the areas of teen pregnancy, meth abuse and suicide prevention, developing healthy dating relationships, and

promoting nutritious lifestyles. Students who attended the conference gained a healthy respect for their peers as well as insight into how their behaviors affect others.

Jones Academy students tour Kiamichi Technology Center



Photo provided

KTC counselor Shelly Hallum speaks with Jones Academy students Mariss Smith and Brylee LaFaunce.

Not all students want to go to college when they finish high school. For those individuals, the Kiamichi Technology Center in McAlester offers an alternative. KTC opened its doors on Nov. 16 to area-wide schools in an effort to showcase the varied career choices in vocational training.

About 140 10th-graders including Jones Academy students from the high school and the alternative center attended the open house. They were able to tour the facilities and visit vo-tech classes in different fields. Students from Jones Academy observed sessions in photography, welding, early child care, health careers and commercial home services to name a few programs.

The prospective students were genuinely excited about the career opportunities offered by KTC.



Photo provided

KTC counselor Shelly speaks to Jones Academy students at the KTC Showcase.



Photo provided

STAR students include Melissa Sam, 11th grade; Jeremy Pitts, fifth grade; Joshua Sam, 12th grade; Shelby Tushka, sixth grade; and Cheyenne Neal, 11th grade. Other recipients not pictured are Kendale Willie, eighth grade, and Billie Jo Nunn, 10th grade.

Students receive STAR treatment

Jones Academy students were recognized for their academic achievements by the Choctaw Nation STAR Program for the spring 2011 semester. Success Through Academic Recognition (STAR) honors Choctaw students for classroom excellence and perfect attendance. This semester the students were rewarded with Walmart gift cards valued from \$10 and \$25. Students receiving these awards are enrolled in the Hartshorne public schools.

Group joins EOSC’s Mountaineer Mania

Jones Academy seniors attended Eastern Oklahoma State College’s Mountaineer Mania on Nov. 2 in Wilburton. The event’s theme this year was “Make Your Mark.”

According to the school’s website approximately 435 students from 35 area high schools visited the campus for the annual recruiting fair. EOSC President Dr. Steve Smith, the school’s cheerleaders and band gave short presentations. Afterwards, the students were able to tour the campus and visit with different departments and school organizations.

A large portion of the event was held outdoors with booths set up to distribute information about various services and activities at EOSC. All the students received free t-shirts and were served lunch.

Some students were lucky enough to win prizes such as school scholarships, iPods and other assorted gifts.

Jones Academy has 12 seniors this year who are projected to graduate in May of 2012.



Mountaineer Mania on the campus of EOSC.



Alyssa Trujillo, Courtney Wallace, David Gordon, Tia LaRoche, and Tasina Lone Elk.



Photos provided

Martina Delaware.

Choctaw Head Starts participate in Child and Adult Care Food Program

The Choctaw Nation Head Start has announced its participation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). All participants in attendance are served meals, at no extra charge to the parents and without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) policy, the Choctaw Nation Head Starts are prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.

To file a complaint, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington DC 20250-9410 or call 800-795-3272 or 202-720-6382 (TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

EDUCATION

CAB program helps Tolbert gain master’s degree at Duke

Trenton Tolbert joined the Choctaw Asset Building program in December 2010, originally intending to become a homeowner in three years.

After completing his bachelor’s degree at Dartmouth College, Trenton was accepted into the prestigious Fuqua Business School at Duke University to pursue a Master’s of Management Sciences.

Although he had earned \$15,000 in scholarships, he still needed more funding to cover the cost of the 10-month-long master’s program. He changed his asset goal from home-ownership to education and continued saving.

Within six months, Trenton had saved \$2,000. CAB matched his savings with an additional \$4,000, giving him \$6,000 to fund his education. In June 2011, he used his CAB account and matching funds to help pay for his first



semester at Duke. “This degree will make me a competitive employment candidate. Recipients of this degree have a very high employment rate, around 95 percent. With this degree, I will have a significant edge over other potential employees.

This degree is intended to

place its recipients into management positions in the business world,” said Trenton, who is pictured in front of the cathedral at Duke University.

CAB is a matching savings program that can help Choctaw Career Development clients save for a first-time home purchase, to pay for education or to start or expand a small business. CAB clients open a savings account with \$50 and make monthly deposits of at least \$25 per month for at least six months. CAB offers a \$3 to \$1 match on up to \$2,000 of savings to purchase a home and a \$2 to \$1 match on up to \$2,000 of savings to pay for education or to start or expand a small business. Information about the CAB service area and qualification guidelines can be found at www.choctawcab.com or you can call Dawn Hix or Janie Joplin at 866-933-2260.

Summer jobs for youth

WIA Applications available Jan. 3, 2012

Deadline: Must be complete and in the Durant office no later than April 16, 2012.

Applicants must live within the 10 1/2 counties of the Choctaw Nation service area. Applicants must have a CDIB card and be 14-21 years of age by April 16, 2012. Because of the large amount of applications received last year, only the applications that are completed and eligible by April 16, 2012, will be allowed to work. The program will last five weeks beginning June 11, 2012, and ending July 13, 2012. For those who completed the program last year, you only need to fill out a renewal application packet. Those who did not work last year must fill out the New Application and send all required documentation before the application can be completed. Listed are dates the WIA staff will be visiting the area schools to hand out applications. Applications will be available at any Choctaw Nation field office, school, or you may call the main office in Durant to request an application at 580-924-8280 or 1-800-522-6170.

SCHOOL	DATE	TIME	CONTACT	PHONE NUMBER
Achille	1/3/12	11:45am	Renee Barnhill	580-283-3775
Antlers	1/18/12	10:50am	Melinda Martin	580-298-2141
Arkoma	1/13/12	1:30pm	Leslie McBride	918-875-3353
Atoka	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA
Battiest	1/25/12	10:00am	Jo Tonihka	580-241-5550
Bennington	1/3/12	10:05am	Mary Pierce	580-847-2737
Bokoshe	1/17/12	10:00am	Suzzana Brassfield	918-969-2491
Boswell	1/18/12	9:00am	Steven Roberson	580-566-2735
Broken Bow High	1/18/12	11:00am	Monica Billy	580-584-3365
Broken Bow Jr. High	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA
Buffalo Valley	1/31/12	10:30am	Amanda Florosana	918-522-4426
Caddo	1/11/12	8:45am	Mr. Cole	580-367-2208
Calera	1/13/12	11:00am	Marilla Parker	580-434-5158
Calvin	2/7/12	10:30am	Patricia Marlow	405-645-2411
Cameron	1/26/12	10:30am	Kristy Cauthron	918-654-3225
Canadian	1/25/12	9:00am	Carolyn Miller	918-339-2706
Caney	1/26/12	10:00am	Sherry Brown	580-889-1996
Choctaw Interlocal	1/20/12	1:00pm	Sheree Williams	580-931-0691
Clayton	1/31/12	9:00am	Ramona Davis	918-569-4492
Coalgate	1/11/12	11:15am	Karen Burris	580-927-2592
Colbert	1/13/12	12:00pm	Jane Hughes	580-296-2624
Crowder	1/25/12	10:30am	Patty Tucker	918-334-3204
Durant High	1/20/12	9:30am	Kelly Cane	580-924-4424
Durant Jr. High	1/20/12	11:30am	Mary Morgan	580-924-1321
Eagletown	1/23/12	2:00pm	Chris Maxwell	580-835-2242
Fort Towson	2/8/12	9:00am	Cindy Brumley	580-873-2325
Goodland	2/8/12	10:30am	John Grief	580-326-7567
Grant/Goodland	1/19/12	1:30PM	Steve Allred	580-326-8315
Haileyville	1/30/12	10:30am	Veronica Miller	918-297-2627
Hartshorne	1/30/12	9:00am	Cheryl Baker	918-297-2033
Haworth	1/30/12	9:00am	Ruth Ebert	580-245-1440
Heavener	1/24/12	9:00am	Janet Hurst	918-653-4436
Hodgen	1/9/12	9:00am	Courtney Altstatt	918-653-4476
Howe	1/11/12	12:30pm	Susan Powell	918-658-3368
Hugo High	1/4/12	10:00am	Susan Stepp	580-326-9648
Hugo Jr. High	1/4/12	12:45pm	Sarah Henson	580-326-3365
Idabel	1/30/12	11:25am	Allen Bryant	580-286-7693
Indianola	1/25/12	1:00pm	Alaina Patrick	918-823-4231
Keota	1/18/12	1:00pm	Pat Jones	918-966-3246
Kinta	1/10/12	11:00am	Mr. Morton	918-768-3338
Kiowa	1/23/12	9:00am	Wade Daniel	918-432-5631
Krebs	2/7/12	8:30am	Cookie Holland	918-426-4700
Leflore	2/8/12	11:00am	Patricia Holly	918-753-2345
McAlester	2/11/12	10:30am	Ann Boothe	918-423-2804
Mccurtain	1/10/12	9:30am	Perry Amwine	918-945-7237
Moyers	1/18/12	10:00am	Marsha Armstrong	580-298-5547
Panama high	1/17/12	1:00pm	Janet Steelman	918-963-2415
Panama jr. high	1/17/12	2:00pm	Penny Hepherington	918-963-4479
Panola	1/6/12	1:00pm	Linda Albright	918-465-3813
Pittsburg	1/23/12	10:30am	Karey Anderson	918-432-5513
Pocola hs/jr.high	1/12/12	12:30pm	Carolyn Jones	918-436-2042
Poteau high	1/25/12	10:00am	Janet Baxter	918-647-7716
Poteau jr. high	1/25/12	12:20pm	Lorraine Caldwell	918-647-7741
Quinton	2/1/12	8:30am	Judy Needham	918-469-3100
Rattan	1/25/12	9:30am	Michelle Birchfield	580-587-2715
Red Oak	2/8/12	9:00am	Teri Ober	918-754-2426
Rock Creek	1/3/12	9:00am	Jan Frederick	580-295-3137
Savannah	1/23/12	1:00pm	Charles Everett	918-548-3887
Silo	1/11/12	12:50pm	Kate McDonald	580-924-7000
Smithville	2/17/12	10:00am	Delbert McBroom	580-244-3333
Soper	1/19/12	11:20am	Sue Haggerty	580-345-2213
Spiro hs/jr.high	1/19/12	1:15pm	T.McKinney	918-962-2493
Stigler hs/jr.high	1/18/12	9:30am	Ms. Hoover	918-967-2374
Stringtown	1/11/12	1:00pm	Rick Herd	580-346-7423
Talihina	1/11/12	Applications available in the school office		
Tupelo	1/11/12	9:30am	Jerry Romines	580-845-2460
Tushka	1/26/12	11:15am	Matt Simpson	580-889-7355
Valliant	1/30/12	12:30pm	Kim Marro	580-933-7292
Victory Life Academy	Applications will be available at the school on January 3, 2012			
Visions Academy	1/20/12	8:30am	Amy Riley	580-924-2423
Whitesboro	1/11/12	8:10am	Katie Blagg	918-567-2624
Wilburton hs/jr high	1/6/12	10:00am	Carmen Harkins	918-465-3125
Wister	1/9/12	11:30am	Francine Curnutt	918-655-3132
Wright City	1/30/12	1:30pm	Judy Strange	580-981-2558

Choctaw Nation Distance Learning Technology

GED Classes



Martha Childs gets ready to conduct Adult Education Classes over One-Net Distance Learning. Monitors have been set up in Choctaw Nation Community Centers in Atoka, Bethel, Coalgate, Smithville, Talihina and Wright City so students in these rural areas will have an opportunity to take the classes and earn a GED.

Beginning January 3, 2012

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

Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Choctaw Nation Community Centers in Atoka, Coalgate and Talihina

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 (Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood) 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.

Thompson - Athlete of the Month

Kaleb Thompson of Southmoore has been named the Native American Athlete of the Month by Lucky Star Casino and the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes. Kaleb has achieved a GPA above 4.0 for his whole school career. In his junior year, he scored a 32 on his ACT.

He is a very dedicated individual in everything he does. He finished his Summer Pride this summer with a 100 percent completion; this was his fourth consecutive year to earn this award, and there are only two total athletes



that have completed this challenge.

As a senior Kaleb is a starting middle linebacker for Southmoore High School. He

loves the game of football and he shows that on the field. He is one of the team captains for the Sabercats and is a respected leader of the team by his teammates and coaches. He was awarded Football King 2011 at SHS Homecoming as well.

He is receiving many letters from colleges for his athletic talent as well as academics, including Dartmouth and Princeton. Kaleb is a member of the Choctaw Nation and is very proud of his heritage. He loves God and lets his light shine to others.

Unclaimed Funds

The Accounting Department of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma is trying to contact the individuals listed below. Choctaw Nation is in possession of unclaimed funds (uncashed payroll checks) that may be due to these individuals. If you are an employee or former employee of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and your name is listed, please contact: The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma at P.O. Box 1210 Durant, OK 74702, Attn: Becky Allen, Payroll Accountant, or by phone at 580-924-8280 ext. 2434.

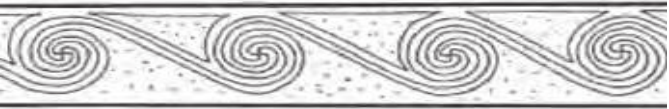
Attaway, David	Holt, Terry	Smith, Barbara
Babcock, Ramona	Horton, Stephen	Smith, Neatha
Barker, Juanita	Jackson, Jeremy	Smithart, Jerry
Belcher, Tony	Junell, Keri	Stephenson, Danielle
Bittle, Kenneth	Kenyon, Cory	Steve, Samuel
Burns, Dillon	Louis, William	Stevenson, Pamela
Callahan, Benjy	Malcolm, Robin	Taylor, Jannette
Coleman, Rashee	Masoner, Lyle	Vizueth, Cassandra
Cook, John	McClary, Hunter	Ward III, Troy
Cooper, Thomas	Merryman, Kimberley	Ward, Henry
Davidson, Deborah	Miller, Jimmy	Wilkinson, Thomas
Duboc, Barbara	Morris, Micah	Williams, Tyson
Duncan, Kayla	Murry, Connie	Willis, Robert
Duncan, Tiffany	Phelan, James	Wilson, Areline
Elliott, Kelly	Russ, Billy	Wilson, Hunter
Elliott, Tommy	Samples, David	Wilson, Riley
Emmert, Lacey	Sawyer, Jennifer	Wolf, Dustin
Enriquez, Jeffrey	Scarbrough, Tammie	Workman, Dianna
Fuller, Bryan	Shearwood, Colton	Zaicek, Sherley
Grider, Erin	Shearwood, Joeseeph	
Hall, Sharawn	Slawson, Colten	

Choctaw Nation Vocational Rehabilitation Calendar

	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
JANUARY	1 New Year's Day	2	3 Antlers by appt.	4 Broken Bow 8 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. Idabel by appt.	5	6 Wright City by appt.	7
	8	9 Durant 8 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.	10 Talihina 9 a.m.-2 p.m.	11 Broken Bow 8 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. Idabel by appt.	12	13 Crowder by appt.	14
	15	16 Durant 8 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. Mohr-Libbey King, Jr. birthday (Wednesday)	17 Poteau 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.	18 McAlester 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Stigler by appt.	19	20 Durant 8 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.	21
	22	23 Durant 8 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. Chinese New Year	24 Wilburton 9:30 a.m.- 2 p.m.	25 Broken Bow 8 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. Idabel by appt.	26	27 Broken Bow 8 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. Idabel by appt.	28
2012	29 Durant 8 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.	30	31 Atoka 9 a.m.- 11 a.m. Coalgate 12:30 p.m.- 2:30 p.m.				

Durant - Mondays; Broken Bow - Mon., Wed. and Fri.; Idabel - By appointment
Phone: 580-326-8304; Fax: 580-326-2410
Email: ddavenport@choctawnation.com

Revitalization of Choctaw Stickball in Oklahoma



Iti Fabussa

Ancestral game once again bringing families, tribes together

This December, the writers of Iti Fabvssa would like to take another look at the game of stickball. In July 2010, Iti Fabvssa presented a little bit about the history of Choctaw stickball. This month we want to make a tribute to the recent revitalization of Choctaw stickball in Oklahoma.

Stickball is still played by many of the southeastern tribes. In Choctaw, we call our version of the game “ishtaboli” or “kapucha;” it is also known as the little brother of war. The game is played with two sticks, one in each hand. The sticks, or “Kapucha,” are made from hickory or other hardwoods, and are either cut from the tree trunk or made from saplings. The sticks have cups at one end, which are used to hold the ball. The cups are formed by thinning the wood of the stickball stick at one end, and then bending this thinned portion around to form a loop. The lose end is attached back to the handle of the stickball stick with leather or electric tape. The cup is then flared out, which pitches it forward slightly. Leather strips are used to make a lacing inside the cup, so that it can hold the ball. Sometimes players attach hair from a horse or other animal, to their sticks, so that they will be able to duplicate the desirable qualities of that animal on the stickball field. The ball, called a “towa,” is generally made of tightly wadded cloth wrapped in a laced pattern of leather. The size of the ball varies, but is usually close to that of a golf ball.

To score a point, a player must either hit the goal post with his sticks, while holding the ball in them, or throw the ball against the post. The game can be played in one of two ways: either a time limit is used, as in football, or the teams agree to play to a certain score. The rules can be altered and the play style changed to meet the needs of the environment and the players. Due to this flexibility the game can be played inside or outside, with only one pole, and with any age or sex.

In a tournament setting the Choctaws of Oklahoma play in their own individual way. Usually the game is played on natural field that is measured to the approximate dimensions of a 100-yard football field. At either end of the field is a goal post, called a “fabvssa.” The goal posts are made from a 4x4 set vertically that extends no more than 12 feet into the air. The posts are placed in the center of the field with 10 to 15 yards of space left behind. No limit exists on the number of players that a team can have, however only 30 of them can be on the field at one time. Players usually wear T-shirts, sometimes with sleeves cut off, and shorts. Traditional forms of dress such as breach cloths and the use of paint are also acceptable. The game can be played barefoot or in shoes; cleats are not allowed.

Today’s Choctaw stickball is full-contact and played without protective padding or helmets. Because many players work and have families there are rules in place to protect them from major injury. Some common rules: no touching the ball, no slamming or clotheslin-

ing, no swinging sticks at other players, no hitting below the knees, and no late or early hits. Tackling can only be done to the individual who has possession of the ball.

During the 2011 Choctaw Nation Labor Day Festival the Nation hosted its first Stickball Tournament. Curtis Billy and Josh Willis were recognized at the event for their contributions to stickball. Curtis Billy is a language teacher at the Choctaw Nation Language Department. Curtis doesn’t just teach Choctaw language, he has been involved in promoting Choctaw history and culture his whole life.

Josh Willis is the cultural coordinator for stickball at the Choctaw Nation Cultural Events Department. He has been head coach for the Choctaw Nation stickball team since late 2009.

Revitalization of stickball in Oklahoma started as far back as the 1970s in Broken Bow. Curtis had been working for the Broken Bow Public Schools when a number of students from Broken Bow High School asked if he could help them learn the game of stickball.

Curtis contacted his uncle, Clelland Billy, who worked for the Nation helping to revitalize culture and language. Curtis and Clelland both decided that making stickball sticks would be the first step. Curtis, Clelland, and the students gathered at the Indian Development Center in Wright City one weekend. The students

were taught what tools to use, how to split the wood, and how to make the sticks. Now with sticks in hand, the students started to practice and learn the rules of the game. During the next few years, the group did demonstrations at tribal events and cultural events for schools, demonstrating the game but also teaching it to others.

In 1975 Curtis and the youth did their first exhibition game at the Choctaw Nation Labor Day Festival in front of the Capitol Museum.

In 1980 they added Choctaw Social Dance. Every year since then, stickball is played and dances have been performed on the same field at the Labor Day gathering. Today Bryon Billy, Curtis’s son, has taken over for his father and continues the tradition of teaching game and dance.

Since 1949 the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians has played stickball at their Choctaw Fair in Philadelphia, Miss. They started the World Series of Stickball where eight to 12 teams compete every year to see who will win.

Taught by his grandfather, Josh Willis has been playing stickball since he was a child. Josh and his family moved to Oklahoma in 2008. Seeing the potential of the Oklahoma players Josh and his wife, Malesia, wanted to form a stickball team in Oklahoma. With the support of Chief Gregory E. Pyle, Assistant Chief Gary Batton, and Executive Director Sue Folsom, Josh was approved to form a team just in time to compete in the 2009 World Series of Stickball. In early 2010, Josh attended the first coaches meeting in Philadelphia in order to enroll his team of 47 players under the team name OK Choctaws. However, no team



Choctaw Nation: LISA REED

The OK Choctaw team at the 2011 World Series of Stickball.



Choctaw Nation: LISA REED

Josh Willis, second from left in the OK Choctaws’ game this year in Mississippi, is the Choctaw Nation’s cultural coordinator for stickball. He has been instrumental in bringing tribes together again through the game.

outside Mississippi had ever played in the series. Josh worked with the stickball committee over the weeks and with the support of the late Henry Williams, the stickball commissioner, the team was approved.

Dressed in turquoise and black the OK Choctaws with Josh as the head coach and Bryon Billy, Jay Mule and Steve Jacobs as assistant coaches, headed down to Philadelphia. The team that they were to face was a veteran Mississippi group known as Unified. The OK Choctaws lost to Unified by a score of 12 to 2; however, the team gained respect and support from a number of fans in Mississippi.

For the 2011 season, the OK Choctaws started practice in March. Determined to do better, they practiced every Sunday expanding their player count to 83. In July, at the World Series of Stickball in Mississippi, the team had the honor to be led onto the field by Chief Pyle.

With Josh Willis as head coach and Joey Tom, Les Williston, Steve Jacobs and Kerry Willis as assistant coaches, they made their way onto the field to play against Nukoachi. The young Mississippi team learned the hard way not to underestimate the Oklahoma players. The OK Choctaws lost 6 to 4, but they played hard.

Josh told the players “Everyone did their job, did their part, did what they were supposed to do. We might have lost the game, but we gained the respect of the Mississippi Band.” The Ok Choctaws are expected to play again at the World Series of Stickball in 2012.

In July of 2011 Josh was hired as the cultural coordinator for stickball in the Cultural Events Department. A stickball committee was soon formed and it was decided the Choctaw Nation

would host its first Stickball Tournament during the 2011 Labor Day Festival. The Tvshka Homma stickball team was formed to represent the Choctaw Nation. The team was made up of Chickasaw players as well as Oklahoma and Mississippi Choctaw players. Once word got out about the tournament, three other teams immediately signed up. The Muscogee (Creek) team registered. Players from Unified and Bok Cito arrived from Mississippi, and temporarily merged in order to meet tournament requirements. Before the tournament, Tvshka Homma had the honor of being led onto the field by Chief Pyle, Assistant Chief Batton and the Tribal Council. After introductions were made, Chief Pyle honored Curtis Billy with an award showing recognition for his cultural activities with the youth.

All three teams played hard, but there could only be one victor. Unified left the tournament as the winner; taking with them a trophy, prize, and one year’s worth of bragging rights. Tvshka Homma had lost on their own ground, but when the players made their last huddle, they saw Josh Willis with a huge smile on his face. Josh had seen all the players who participated. He told his team “We made history tonight.”

The Chickasaws, Oklahoma and Mississippi Choctaws, and the Creeks all came together to play their ancestral game. This, Josh thought, was the next step in revitalizing the game of stickball and a medium to bring together the tribal people of the southeast once again. Without Chief Pyle, Assistant Chief Batton, Executive Director Sue Folsom, the Billy Family, the Willis family, the coaches, and the players and their families, none of this would be possible.

Firing the pots



The Antlers Choctaw pottery class warm their pieces in two fires on Nov. 17.

Choctaw Nation School of Language Website

Learning more about the Choctaw language is easy. Just visit choctawschool.com and find:

- Easy to navigate language lessons
- Information on Choctaw Language classes
- Audio pronunciation of Choctaw words
- Photo galleries of Choctaw events
- Contact information for instructors
- Access to the bookstore
- Access to the “Word of the Day”

Whether you are looking for classes, or just curious, choctawschool.com is here to help!

CHOCTAW NATION CULTURAL SERVICES

Seeking more information on your Choctaw heritage?

Wondering what cultural events are happening in your tribe?

For these questions and more, Choctaw Nation’s cultural services website has answers!

Historic Preservation Department • Tribal Archaeology • Cemetery Restoration • NAGPRA/Repatriation

CHOCTAWNATIONCULTURE.COM

CHIEF GREGORY E. PYLE • ASSISTANT CHIEF GARY BATTON

Cis The Season TO GIVE THANKS



Choctaw Head Start shows everyone at Wilburton how to do the snake dance.



District 6 Councilman Joe Coley greets his district Jr. Princess Samantha Querubin, Little Miss Raven Noriega and Melvin and Corene Palmer.



Serenade Parker has her table ready at Wilburton.



Councilman Joe Coley is pictured with daughters Heather and Diane Coley.



Willhemina Baker is joined by her son, Ken Baker, and granddaughter, Candice Woodcox, for turkey, dressing and all the trimmings at Wilburton.



Justin Woodcox holds Truth Frazier while waiting for lunch. Truth turns 1 year old in December. Happy birthday!



Assistant Chief Gary Batton, Councilman James Frazier and his mom, Clovis Frazier, and Chief Gregory E. Pyle at Coalgate's Thanksgiving on Nov. 9.



Irene Stutte, seated, and friends Jannette Taylor, Dellora Miles and Emma Nanney during the Thanksgiving celebration at Coalgate.



Ricky Loudermilk, standing, James Harris and Marilyn Morgan are ready for the great meal at Coalgate.



Clover and Alfred Riley with District 12 Councilman James Frazier at Coalgate.



Alan Shipley of Calera shakes hands with Chief Gregory E. Pyle as he arrives at the Thanksgiving dinner in Durant.



Vivian Pittman and Jane Mintz stop to say hello to Chief Pyle at the Durant Thanksgiving dinner.



Assistant Chief Gary Batton greets Willie Walley, welcoming him to District 9's Thanksgiving dinner in Durant.



Chief Pyle and Charles Powell of Durant enjoy a visit before District 9's Thanksgiving dinner Nov. 14 at the Event Center.



A big smile from Kash Wilson during the festivities in Durant.



Reuben Marris stops for a picture with District 9 Little Miss Kyra Wilson, Josephine Gilmore, Anthony Sanders, Chet Austin and Kenzie Wilson. The youth were handing out flyers for the 7th Annual Pow Wow to be held Nov. 26 in Durant.



District 9 Councilman Ted Dosh and wife Carolyn enjoy the festivities.



Bonnie Horne and grandson Cadence Wolf are among the hundreds at the Durant dinner.

Photos by: LISA REED
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma



Enjoying their time at Durant's Thanksgiving dinner are Lawana Nowlin, Barbara Shipley, Chasity Nowlin, Mary Barctenas and Serena Peters.



District 7 Councilman Jack Austin greets John Hooser, welcoming him to the Thanksgiving dinner at the cafeteria at Tushka Homma.



Stanley and Louise O'Banion, William Simpson and Vernon and Norma Jean McCoy enjoy visiting at Tushka Homma's holiday gathering.



District 7 Outstanding Female Elder nominee Bettie Teal and Betty Brady.



Carolyn Wren and 1 1/2-year-old Dewayne Wren are among the hundreds attending Tushka Homma's festivities.



Assistant Chief Gary Batton says hello to Aidon Stevens. Aidon, a student at Talihina, attended the Tushka Homma Thanksgiving dinner with his family.



Assistant Chief Gary Batton and granddaughter Kaylyn.



District 10 Councilman Anthony Dillard welcomes Alma Gossett, Sherman Armstrong and Delloise Armstrong to the Atoka dinner.



Councilman Anthony Dillard and wife Janie speak with Pat Wood and Alice Hutson in Atoka.



Assistant Chief Gary Batton and Melvin William Wade at the Bethel Thanksgiving dinner.

Photos by: LARISSA COPELAND & KAREN JACOB
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma



District 3 Councilman Kenny Bryant poses with Don Anderson at the Talihina dinner.



Mitchell James, Louise Vanriette, Annette Smith, Ed Smith and Mike Melton gather for a picture with Assistant Chief Gary Batton in Talihina before the Thanksgiving lunch.



Councilman Tony Messenger visits with Mildred Ashalintubbi of Eagletown, left, and Carol Ishcomer and Clifford Wilson of Broken Bow at the Broken Bow Thanksgiving dinner.



Ralph and Chavela Anderson are visited by Councilman Kenny Bryant after lunch in Talihina.



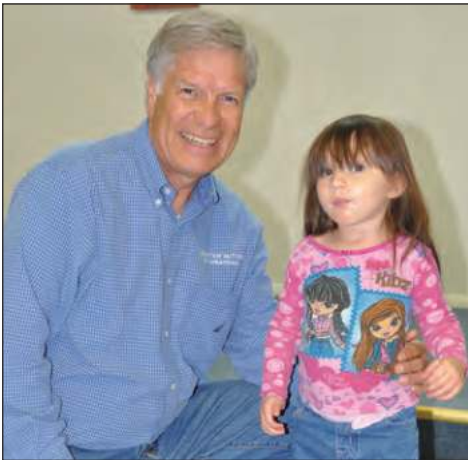
Chief Pyle and Austin Battiest in Broken Bow.



Councilman Tony Messenger welcomes Opal Bray and her daughter-in-law, Doris Bray, to the Broken Bow Thanksgiving dinner.



Margie Jones and Councilman Kenny Bryant are all smiles in Talihina.



Kristina Saramento gets some time to meet Chief Pyle in Talihina.



Jim Frazier won a door prize at the Broken Bow Thanksgiving dinner.



Assistant Chief Gary Batton and Nolan Noahubi in Bethel.



Joleigh Carlson and Margie Jones pose for a picture with Chief Pyle, Assistant Chief Batton and Councilman Kenny Bryant in Talihina.



Chief Pyle enjoys a Thanksgiving lunch with Miss Choctaw Nation Amber Tehano and Tribal Chaplain Bertram Bobb in Broken Bow.



Chief Pyle welcomes Jerry Wiley and Dale Wilson to the Broken Bow Thanksgiving dinner.



From left, Austin Jefferson, District 2 Councilman Tony Messenger, Talia Nelson, 5, Janelle Nelson and Kris Nelson, almost 2, visit before lunch is served in Bethel.



District 2 Councilman Tony Messenger visits with Mary Lou Baker and Emerson Wilson at the Bethel lunch.



Photo at left, Mason Bohanan, 6, and Nakoda Ludlow, 4, at the Bethel dinner.



Assistant Chief Gary Batton congratulates Community Health Representatives (CHR) Oma Nell Clay and Gloria Battiest on a job well done. They are taking a much-needed break after helping prepare a delicious smoked turkey dinner with all the fixings at Wright City.



Bill Amos, Isaac Jacob and Councilman Jack Austin welcome Chief Gregory E. Pyle to the Wright City Thanksgiving dinner.



Wright City Senior Citizen's raffle was won by SOSU student Terry Battiest. Presenting the Hunter's Basket to Terry's father, Lawrence Battiest, at the Wright City Thanksgiving dinner are Vera Eyachabbe and Mattie Ferguson. The basket was filled with a wide assortment of food and other essentials, including camo robe, camo slipper, mugs and hot chocolate with marshmallows.



Ludie Robinson and Janie Joplin prepare the drinks for the Stigler Thanksgiving lunch.



Above: Danny, Cyndi and Jerry Hoyt visit with Oleta and J.W. Pilgrim at the Stigler Thanksgiving lunch.

Photo at left: Councilman Ron Perry takes time to pose with Stigler Field Office Rep. Linda Colwell and CHR Sherry McGuire.

Photos by: BRET MOSS & KAREN JACOB
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma



Four friendly Choctaws – Maudie Owens, Ruby Adams, Carolyn Harris and Francille Collins – pose for the camera at Spiro.



Above: Chief Pyle and Assistant Chief Batton team up with District 4 Sr. Miss Amber Colwell and Marilyn Mize to make a great picture at the Spiro Thanksgiving Dinner.

At left: Councilman Delton Cox rallies his buddies, Leon Mize and Darrell Dunn for a picture at the Spiro Community Center.

Below: Chief enjoys the company of Tribal Judge Marion Fry and Sheriff Bruce Cornutt at the Poteau dinner on Nov. 9, 2011.



Above: Charismatic couple Ben and Helen Caldwell share good times after lunch in Smithville.

At left: Assistant Chief Batton, Francille Collins and Chief Pyle put a smile on for the Biskinik camera after a Thanksgiving meal in Spiro.



At left: Carson and Sandy Cole share laughs with fellow Choctaws before dinner at Poteau Community Center.



Below: Linda and Ed Mitchell enjoy a Thanksgiving dinner with a crowd of Choctaws at the Poteau center.



At left: Councilman Kenny Bryant greets Tommy and Louise Blake, who have been happily married for 52 years.

At right: the friendly faces of Linda Maxwell and Mary Kelly grace the Poteau center for dinner.



At left: Julie Watson, Benny Wesley, Johnny Watson and Brian McGee happily depart from the Smithville community center after lunch.

At right: Ethelyn Moore (left) and Patsy Wann (right) are excited to be at the Spiro Thanksgiving lunch.



District 4 Sr. Miss Amber Colwell takes time to visit with her sister, Jessica Hess, before performing the Lord's Prayer in sign language.



Ross Payne talks with Councilman Perry Thompson, Chief Pyle and Little Miss Choctaw Summer Moffitt at Hugo.



Christian Chase Billy, son of Rosa Billy, enjoys his stuffing at the Antlers Thanksgiving dinner.



Sisters Brooke and Jody Trusty visit and wait for their meal at the Thanksgiving dinner in Idabel.



Left: Little Miss Choctaw Summer's nephew, Jaxon Moffitt, smiled for the camera while Barbara Moffitt enjoyed his company at the Hugo Thanksgiving dinner.



Right: Gail Franklin and Selena Franklin enjoy their time at the Idabel Thanksgiving dinner.



Councilman Perry Thompson visits with the Moffitt family (John, Monica, Jaxon and Barbara) at the Hugo Thanksgiving dinner.



Leroy and Betty Walker celebrated their 51st anniversary at the Idabel Thanksgiving dinner.



At left: Employee Jamie Hamil won a door prize, posing with Crowder community center president Walter Phelps.



At right: Troy Smith smiles at the camera after finishing up his Thanksgiving meal at Crowder.



Sherry O'Dell McFerrin and Lynda Kay Sawyer enjoy visiting while eating their Thanksgiving dinner at Hugo.



Above: Dustin Franklin of the Valliant FFA Chapter presented Councilman Thomas Williston and Assistant Chief Gary Batton with an award of appreciation at the Idabel Thanksgiving dinner on behalf of Valliant FFA.



Assistant Chief Batton visits with Issac Jacob of Valliant at the Idabel Thanksgiving dinner.



Leah White enjoys her meal at Crowder.



At left: Choctaw employees Traci Umsted (left) and Brenda Gabbart wait in line to grab some plates for hungry community members at Antlers.

Below: Leslie and Deron Brown and their son, George Brown, wait to be served their Thanksgiving meal at Antlers.



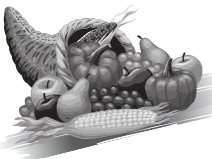
Councilman Jack Austin smiles with friend Delton Billy at Antlers.

Photos by: CHRISSY DILL & KAREN JACOB
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma



Councilman Bob Pate saying "see you later" to veteran Alvie Carney and Mary Ann Carney.

Photo at right: Choctaw Casino employees line up to serve McAlester's Thanksgiving dinner.



Above: Chief Pyle poses with Katherine Battiest at Hugo.

At left: Enjoying McAlester's Thanksgiving dinner are Terrie DeGiacomo, Virginia R. Walker and Terry Walker.

OBITUARIES

Wynona Gibbs

Wynona Wilma Gibbs passed away on Oct. 11, 2011, in Sherman, Texas. She was born on April 5, 1924, in Sardis to Moses James and Emma (Anderson) James. Wynona attended grade school at the Chilocco Indian School near Newkirk and graduated high school at the Indian boarding school, Carter Seminary, in Ardmore. She later attended the Wilson N. Jones nursing school during World War II from 1944-1947. She was in the cadet program and graduated as a registered nurse. She married Joe Gibbs on Nov. 27, 1947, in McKinney, Texas. She worked at Community Hospital and Medical Plaza, retiring in 1989 after 42 years of service. Wynona was a longtime member of East Sherman Baptist Church. She enjoyed church activities, getting together with her Sunday School class, and loved reading the Holy Bible. Wynona was an avid fan of the Texas Rangers and OU and OSU football.

Mrs. Gibbs was preceded in death by her parents; three brothers, Woodrow, Cecil, and Eugene James; and a sister, Naomi Rainwater.

She is survived by her loving husband of almost 64 years, Joe, of the Sherman home; son Teddy Gibbs with wife Kim of Lewisville, Texas, and their daughter, Traci Gibbs, son, Travis Gibbs with wife Melissa and their daughters, Kailey and Valerie; son Michael Gibbs with wife Gwen of Denison, Texas, and their son, Charles Beasley with wife Kim, of Anna, Texas, and their son Kamden; one sister, Ramona Hartgers, of Tulsa; and a sister-in-law, Shirley Thompson with husband Dean of Denison.



Gladys Ellison

Gladys “Jackie” Ellison, 87, of Wellsburg, W.V., passed away on Aug. 31, 2011, at her home, surrounded by her caring family. She was born on Aug. 6, 1924, in Atoka, the daughter of Eligh and Sarah Tomlinson Lain. She was a member of the Wellsburg United Methodist Church, retired from Stone and Thomas in Wheeling W.V., and was a lifetime member of the Women of the Moose and the VFW.

She was preceded in death by her parents; two brothers, Victor and Theodore Lain; and two sisters, Opal and Pauline.

She is survived by her husband of 67 years, Ray C. Ellison, who she married on Nov. 3, 1943; two sons, Dan Ellison of Atoka and Bob “Ace” Ellison of Toronto, Ohio; four grandchildren, Dan Jr., Lain, Kyle and Kelsey; seven great-grandchildren, Kaedyn Karson, Kale, Danielle, Victor, Grace and Aralyn.

Verna Johnson

Verna M. Johnson, 72, of Lone Grove, passed away on Sept. 20, 2011, in Ardmore.

She was born on July 30, 1939, in Madill, to Nathan Thompson Sr. and Sarah (Ensharkey) Thompson.

Verna will be remembered as a devoted and caring mother and grandmother spending her life doing things for her family. She was a member of the Concord Missionary Baptist Church where she was always faithful in attendance. She enjoyed going to gospel singings and loved to sing the Choctaw hymns.

She was preceded in death by her parents; one daughter, Carolyn Kay Lewis; two sisters, Corena Bob and Susie Thompson.

Verna is survived by three sons, Jodie Lewis of Lone Grove, Rodney Johnson of Ardmore, and Shannon Johnson Sr. of Ardmore; four daughters, Theresa Lewis, Ramona Perez, Luella Johnson and Gayla Johnson, all of Ardmore; granddaughter Mariah Stoliby who she raised as a daughter; two brothers, Nathan Thompson Jr. of Ardmore, and Edwin Thompson of Overbrook; 22 grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren; four nieces and five nephews.



James Dunn

James “Jimmie” Ellis Dunn, 91, passed away on Sept. 14, 2011. Jimmie was born Dec. 5, 1919, in Gertie to Oscar Dunn and Bertha A. Pusley. He served in the U.S. Army, 45th Division during World War II and the Korean War as a combat veteran. He received numerous medals, ribbons and awards during his service.

He was married to Virginia Mackie Richison for 69 years and lived in McAlester for many years. He worked for the Bureau of Indian Affairs and subsequently retired from the Department of Defense in McAlester.

He was preceded in death by his wife, son Dwight, parents, two brothers and two sisters. Survivors include his son, James E. Dunn Jr. (Nikki); seven granddaughters, Michael Ann Lucas (Michael), Jamie Elizabeth Summers (J.C.), Daniel Elise Mackie Dunn, Cory Allyn Dunn, Dahn Dunn, Heather Dunn and Jennifer Greenwald (Jerry). He also has 14 great-grandchildren.



Michael Dewayne James

Michael Dewayne James, 47, passed away on Oct. 3, 2011, in Little. He was born May 14, 1964, in Talihina. He was the son of Andrew Jackson and Katherine (Baker) James. He was of the Methodist faith and a member of Hampton Chapel Church in Spencerville. He was a laborer of trade and enjoyed being outdoors. He liked to draw, go fishing, and making Native American jewelry. He was happiest spending time with his family and playing with his grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents; sisters, Kelley Ann James and Sharon James; brother Dewayne James; and nephews, Bradley Lemmons and nephew Matthew James.

He is survived by his daughters, Talisha Wise-Harris of Little and Sheena with Ted Richards of Soper; grandchildren, Terence Harris, Tiffany Harris, Taylor Harris, Vincent Richards and Mika Richards; the mothers of his children, Doris Hooks of Dallas and Milly James of Hugo; brothers, Andrew James of Wilburton, Mark James of Rufe, and Patrick James of Millerton; sisters, Donna James of Hugo, and Jackie Jennings of Millerton; aunts, Wynona James of Ft. Towson, and Evelyn James of Hugo; eight nieces; eleven nephews; and numerous other friends and family members.



Etta Goar

Etta Mae Goar, 81, of Kingsport, passed away on Oct. 18, 2011, in Johnson City, Tenn.

Etta Mae was born March 2, 1930, in St. Louis, Okla., the youngest of three daughters born to the late William Nelson Spencer and Lessie Arena McCarey. She was a proud member of the Choctaw Nation Oklahoma and of the Jewish faith.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband of 30 years, Rodney Grady Goar; a son, Edward Gene Goar; and sister, Oneita Elizabeth Edwards.

Surviving are her daughters, Lydia Risney with husband James of Kingsport, Deborah Hansen with husband Frank of La Habra, Calif.; son Robert Goar with wife Mary Frances of Whittier, Calif.; 10 grandchildren; two great-granddaughters; and one sister, Mary Lou Main of Locust Grove, Va.



Renee Shoemaker

Renee Gaylene (Bohanon) Shoemaker 35, of Talihina, passed away on Dec. 30, 2010, at Hillcrest in Tulsa. Renee was born on May 24, 1975, at Hillcrest in Tulsa. She was the daughter of Carolyn Bohanon; and granddaughter of Susie Bohanon. She was raised by her aunt Ramona Billy and lived all her life in Talihina. Renee is survived by her sister, Susan Bohanon of Tulsa; aunt Cheri and family of Tulsa; Vanessa James of Fort Smith, Ark; uncle Jessie James of Wilburton; Henry James of Memphis Tenn.; along with numerous aunts, uncles and cousins.

Sebastian Pugh

Sebastian D’Wayne Pugh, infant son of Billy D’Wayne and Cyndi Victoria (Wheeler) Pugh passed away on Oct. 9, 2011 in Durant. He entered this life on Aug. 30, 2010, in Oklahoma City.

Sebastian is survived by his maternal grandparents, Shawn and Daniel Cress of Antlers, and Tom Wheeler of Durant; paternal grandparents, Lavana Lee Pugh and Brian Keith Millard of Durant; maternal great-grandmother Lucille Frasher of Truckee, Calif.; paternal great-grandmother Mary Millard of Silo; aunts and uncles, Keith and Jennie Pitts, Roy Wheeler, Travis and Fawn Cress, Kari and Duke Dill, Nathan and Sandy Cress, Danette and Jeff Sons, Danny and Melissa Cress and Herbert Andrew Bliss; cousins, Shawna Pitts, Riley and Trevor Wheeler, Sondra, TJ, Troy and Moses Cress, Karina, Tonya, Shade and LeAndra Dill, Nathan, Nicholas and Autumn Cress, Garland and Staci Percell and MaKenzee Sons, Madison and Blake Cress; honorary family, Lora Speers and daughter Alizye Speers, Megan and Bradley Jackson, Mark and Kayla Nunnally and Frank and Tonya Bell and son “Little Frank”; and numerous other relatives.

Sebastian was preceded in death great-grandparents Louise Brewer, Mary Idaho Shastid and Walter Baumann.



Edith Wilson-Morris

Edith E. Wilson-Morris passed away on April 18, 2011, at Ramona Care and Rehabilitation Center in El Monte, Calif. Edith was born on March 26, 1918 to Ray and Ivy Wilson in Celestine. She graduated from Celestine High School and married Bill Albert Morris, who passed away in McAlester on Feb. 3, 1971. Together they had eight children.

She retired from Safeway Bakeries and spent her last years traveling, doing senior citizens activities, playing Bingo and cards, watching sports and danning every time the music played. She was baptized and a member at Upland CA Baptist Church. Her mother, Ivy, was an original enrollee of the Choctaw nation and Edith was very proud of her Choctaw heritage.

She was preceded in death by her children, Joyce Morris-Corneau, Billy Don Morris, John Morris, Shawn Morris-Cran, Robert (Bobby) Morris and Shannon Morris; grandchildren, John Morris, Doug Criswell and Danny Shepherd; sisters, Marcy Wilson, Betty Wilson-Stone, Juanita Wilson-Smith; and brothers, Richard Wilson and Billy Ray Wilson.

She is survived by her children, Wathena Morris-Morrison of El Monte, and Wynaith Morris-Pizzuto of Sun City, Calif.; grandchildren, Keith Criswell of Weatherford, Texas, Lorena Filewood of Fort Worth, Kenneth Criswell of Azle, Texas, Kathryn Hayes of Azle, Richard Morrison II of Duarte, Calif., Michael Morris of Azle, Phillip Pizzuto of Oceanside, Calif., Billy Jo Morris, Allen and Richie Shepherd of Chino Valley, Ariz., Lori Casillas of Sylmar, Calif., Jennifer Morris of Keller, Texas, and April Morris of Los Angeles; 23 great-grandchildren; 12 great great-grandchildren; sisters, Irene Wilson-Tennant, Marie Wilson-Adair, Pearl Wilson-Tidwell; and brother Ralph Wilson. She also had many nieces and nephews.



Thompson LeFlore

Thompson LeFlore, 70, a longtime Atoka area resident, passed away on Sept. 18, 2011, in Bonham, Texas. He was on Feb. 21, 1941, to Thompson LeFlore Sr. and Carrie (Gipson) LeFlore, in Bentley. He graduated from Tushka High School in 1960, and went on to become a machine operator. Thompson proudly served his country in the Air Force and the Navy during the Vietnam War. He married Vonda Joyce (Reed) on Feb. 7, 1972, in Dallas. Thompson was a member of the Cane Hill Methodist Church. He enjoyed fishing with his friends and his grandson.

He was preceded in death by his parents; wife; daughter Dianna Kay LeFlore; and siblings, Anderson and Preston LeFlore, Charles and Harold Dean Gipson and Jo Ann Gipson Jackson.

He is survived by his grandson, Thompson LeFlore, III of Dallas; siblings, Donald LeFlore with wife Rose of Sherman, Texas, Ted LeFlore with wife Mary Ann of Atoka, and Christine Dillard with husband Glen of Caney; sister-in-law Sharon Gipson of Wright City; brother-in-law Tom Mayo of Bentley; along with numerous nieces, nephews, other relatives and dear friends.



Frank James

Frank Richard James, 81, passed away on Sept. 16, 2011, at his home in Farris.

He was born on June 1, 1930, in Stringtown to Susan (Wilson) James and Frank James, an original enrollee of the Choctaw Nation. He was the oldest of nine children.

He was preceded in death by his parents and an infant son.

He is survived by his daughters, Nita James and Frankie James, both of Oklahoma City; sons, Ricky Horton and Bill Horton, both of Arkansas; brothers, Jesse James with wife Jackie of Lancaster, Calif., Jack James of Oklahoma City, Paul James with wife Lillie, Bill James with wife Wilma, and David James, all of Farris; sisters, Dorothy Flowers with husband Otto of Oklahoma City, Ruth Wayman with husband Donald of Antlers, and Carol James of Farris.



Edna Henry

Edna Cleo (Whitehead) Henry passed away on Oct. 1, 2011 in Purcell. She was born on Dec. 29, 1922 in Baily. He parents were Clinton Whitehead and Willie May (Henderson) Whitehead. She taught Sunday Scholl and Vacation Bible Scholl for many years. She enjoyed gardening, reading, quilting and singing. She sang in the senior choir and the Living Christmas Tree for many years at her Church in Lindsay.

She married Louis W. Henry on Aug. 4, 1945, and he is still living in Lindsay.

She was preceded in death by parents and six brothers.

She is survived by her sister, Virginia Mann of Marlow; four children, Larry Henry with wife, Josie, Loeva (Henry) Hauser with husband John, Terry Henry with wife Carla, and David Henry; eight grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; and one great great-grandchild.



Grace Shallenberger

Grace Lynn Whisenand Shallenberger was born on March 4, 2011 at St. Mary’s Hospital in Reno, Nev., to Mathew and Jolene Shallenberger (Irmer) and big brother, William of Washoe Valley, Nev. She was 6 pounds 13.5 ounces and measured 20.5 inches long. Grandparents include E. Nena Dilbeck of Stagecoach, Nev.; Bruno Irmer of Bladen, Nev.; and Frank and Judy Shallenberger of Genoa, Nev. Her great-grandmother is Earline Bullard of Carson City, Nev.

Patricia Watson Skarpa

Patricia Watson Skarpa passed away in Tulsa Oklahoma after a ten-day illness in the Oklahoma State University Medical Center in Tulsa Oklahoma.

She had the best of care. Her Kidneys and Liver stopped working due to a stomach ulcer causing her system to go into shock and nothing could start them up again.

Pat was a special person who was always ready to assist anyone both at work and in her personal life.

Pat met Skip Skarpa in college around 1970 in Huntsville, Texas. They were involved then, but went their separate ways for many years. Eventually, by what some would call and act of the Lord, Pat and Skip were reunited accidentally online while he was living in Alaska and she in Texas.

In a few weeks they had moved together and became married. They moved back to Texas and after about four years in Paris, Texas, they retired to Talihina on Aug. 15 2011.

Pat became ill on September 15 with stomach pains. She had to be life-flighted from the hospital in Talihina Oklahoma to Tulsa Oklahoma to the Oklahoma State University Medical Center.

She will be missed greatly by her husband and those who knew her.

Phillip Ray Smith

Phillip Ray Smith passed away on Sept. 9, 2011. He was born on March 5, 1980, to Roy Daniel and Alice Smith.

He was preceded in death by his father, Roy Smith Sr.; his brother, Wilson Smith and sister, Barber Smith.

He is survived by his mother; two daughters, Tahla and Taliyah Smith, three brothers, Curtis and Danny Smith, and Roy Smith Jr.; sister, Shirley Smith; two nieces; three nephews; three great-nephews; two great-nieces; and a host of family and friends.



Michael Eagle Sr.

Michael “Mike” Eagle Sr., 48, of Quinton passed away on July 20, 2011. He was born on Jan. 2, 1963. He was a member of the middle San Bois Methodist Church in Bascum community. Mike lived most of his life in the Bascum community. He enjoyed the outdoors and spending time with his niece and nephew.

Mike worked several years as a mechanic for Buddy Dugan of Quinton. He also worked in the siding industry for Troy Dugan of Quinton. He also did many brush hogging jobs for several people in the Quinton and surrounding areas.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Frank and Leoda Eagle; grandparents, Turner Silmon and Ella Wilkin; three brothers, Reynold, Frank and Dewayne Eagle.

He is survived by three sons, Dereck Eagle of Quinton, Michael Eagle Jr. and Zachary Eagle, both of Poteau; one granddaughter of Poteau; two brothers, Turner with Kathy Eagle of Tulsa, and Clifford Eagle of Tucson, Ariz.; three sisters, Walley Eagle of Oklahoma City, DeeSandra Ben of Choctaw, Miss., and Nancy Eagle of McAlester; a half-sister Helen Lester of Stockton, Calif.; two aunts, June with Dick Sidles of Durant, and Wilma with Monte Liston of Denison, Texas; uncle Turner Silmon of Shawnee; 11 nieces; four nephews; nine great-nieces; nine great-nephews; many friends; and numerous aunts, uncles and cousins of the Montana area.

He will be missed by all.



OBITUARIES

Michael Hooten

Michael Joe Hooten, 48, formerly of Paris, passed away on Oct 16, 2011, in Casa Grande, Ariz. He was born on June 14, 1963, in Dallas to Paul Henry and Zelma Juanita Wear Hooten. He married to Glenna McKinney Hooten. He was a professional truck driver, which was his passion and he was happiest while he was on the road. He was a great grandson of Mary Irene Breashers, and original Choctaw enrollee, and the grandson of William Bailey Wyers. He was proud of his Choctaw heritage.

He was preceded in death by his father; grandparents, Bill and Nellie Hooten, as well as Bailey and Gracie Wear.

He is survived by his wife, Glenna Hooten; mother; son Michael James Hooten; sister Trena Renaye Hackler; half-brother Paul Clayton Hooten; half-sisters, Kathie Laverents and Deborah Williams; uncles, Jimmy Ward, Billy, Melvin, Raymond, Charles, Donald and Bobby Wear; aunts, Lemmie Chennault and Greta Baker; numerous cousins and other family members.



Elma Severn

Elma Severn, 93, of Valliant, passed away on Oct. 31, 2011. She was born on Jan 12, 1918, in Glover to Oliver Clinton Whitfield and Ida Mae Merry Whitfield, original Choctaw enrollee. Elma was a graduate of Southeastern State Teachers College. She was an avid educator for 30 years in Oklahoma and New Mexico schools. She served as a teacher, basketball coach, 4-H Leader and principal during this time. She was an employee of the Department of Human Services for seven years. For five of those years she worked with the elderly. The last two years were spent working through the court with delinquent children, foster homes and adoptions. Her training and schooling for this work were at Hissom School for the Impaired and Oklahoma University. She was a member of the National Retired Teachers Association and Oklahoma Education Association. She was a longtime member of Sothern Baptist Churches in which she served as a Sunday School teacher, Training Union Director, Sunday School Superintendent and Women’s Missionary Union Director. She was also a member of the National Association of Baptist Senior Adults. According to her, there were no duties or work; everything was a God given privilege. Elma leaves us with these words, “Love one another, let not your hearts be altogether lonely. Now that the last reluctant words are said, I take away my body and voice, but leave my hearts with you instead.”

She is survived by a son, Gene Henry with wife Sarah of Valliant; daughter Marcella Dent with husband Tony of Stafford Va.; 10 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; and many cousins, nieces, nephews and her church family.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Mark Severn Jr.; son, James E. Henry; grandson Randall Henry; granddaughter, Tanya Henry; two great-granddaughters, Trista and Kayla Henry; two brothers, Lewis and Omagene Whitfield; sister, Oulda Whitfield Carroll; and aunt May Gimlim.



Joseph Jackson

Joseph Jay Jackson, 41, passed away on Nov. 3, 2011, in Okmulgee. He was born Sept. 3, 1970, in Durant, the first child of William (Butch) Jackson and Anna Judene (Judy) Jackson. Joe grew up in Mead, near the beautiful Lake Texoma. He attended Silo schools and then graduated from Southeastern Oklahoma State University in Durant, where he earned a B.A. in history and met his wife, Kirsten. They were married July 31, 1993, at Crossroads Baptist Church. Kirsten and Joe attended Victory Life Family Center where they helped with the youth group.

Feb. 2, 1999 Joe and Kirsten had their first child, Josiah, and soon moved to Okmulgee, where Joe worked at the Okmulgee County Department of Human Services/Adult Protective Services. He also worked at the Tulsa City-County Health Department on the SWAT (Students Workers Against Tobacco) program, as director of the Okmulgee County Homeless Shelter, INC, and for Beggs Independent School District as a Title 7 Indian Education Tutor. Joe also served as Case Manager/Career Counselor at Oklahoma State University-Okmulgee and later as manager for Custodial/Environmental Safety Services. On Nov. 16, 2001, Joe and Kirsten welcomed their second child, Anya, and Nov. 23, 2003, Lydia joined the family.

For almost four years Joe worked as a Coordinator for First Time Offender Program, One Eighty Program/Outreach Life Skills teacher and mentor as well as a Life Skills Coach for Anne Moroney Youth Services (Okmulgee-Okfuskee County Youth Services, Inc.).

Joe’s work with teenagers was a calling to him, but his passion was making a paradise for his family on a little farm outside Okmulgee. He created and built special spaces for their many animals and pets, landscaped paths through the one-acre woods, and made one-of-a-kind playthings for his children.

He is preceded in death by his grandparents and survived by his wife, Kirsten Stensaas-Jackson; his three children, Josiah Quinn Jackson, Anya Elizabeth Jackson and Lydia Colleen Jackson; his parents; and his brother, Jon Mark Jackson.

Madeline Wren

Madeline Christine Wren, 89, Henryetta resident, passed away on Nov. 7, 2011, in Henryetta. She was born on July 3, 1922, in Quinton to Samuel and Jalia (Gray) Quinton. She married Thurman Wren on July 21, 1943 in Quinton and was a homemaker.

She was preceded in death by her husband; four brothers; and four sisters.

She is survived by her son, Sammy Wren with wife Angie of Lawton; daughters, Janice Thompson and Kathy Jozwiak with husband Larry, both of Henryetta; grandchildren, Michelle Bennett, Lisa Burger, Samuel Wren, Michael Thompson, Jennifer Case, Amanda Ogg, Catie Barr and John Mitchell; great-grandchildren, Ashley Bennett, Sara Bennett, Sydney Burger, Caden Burger, Jakob Wren, Avery Moore, Chandler Ogg, Kelbi Okk, Ryker Ogg and Lilly Barr.

Billie Cantrell

Billie Sue Cantrell passed away on Nov. 5, 2011. She was born in dust bowl Oklahoma at the beginning of the Great Depression on June 1, 1929, in Atoka. During her time she laughed, danced and shared the best part of her life with Roy Cantrell, her husband of 38 years. She was the second born to Dewey and Hagar Petigrew. Her older sister Anna Lou died at the age of six when Billie was just four. In her early teens, she and her family left on a Greyhound bus for Globe, Ariz., where her father found work at the Inspiration Copper Mine.

There she attended Miami High School, quickly winning friends and earning the nickname “Blondie.” She eventually found her way to Tucson and decided to call it home. Along her way she picked cotton in the fields, worked on an assembly line for General Electric and staffed the jewelry counter at Hayden’s Jewelry Store. Later, with her husband Roy, she helped run B&R RV Repair in Tucson for over 12 years.

She and Roy were both members of Good Sam’s and enjoyed traveling in their motor home and making good friends along the way. He lived under 14 different presidents in her lifetime. She didn’t see a television set until 25 year after she was born, yet would rather have an iPod loaded with her favorite country music. Billie loved to dance. Her children even remember her dancing with the refrigerator door when inspiration struck. She also loved to watch cooking shows, especially Rachel Ray and Paula Dean. Billie was proud of her Choctaw heritage and told the story of how her great-grandmother Emaline Betts walked the trail of tears from Mississippi to Oklahoma. She always had a positive outlook and saw the silver lining in everything she faced. She saw the bet in others by default. Billie encouraged individuality in her children and grandchildren. She had a kind word for everyone and an infectious personality that endeared her to all those who came into her life. She especially enjoyed spending time with her family and doting on her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Christmas mornings at grandma’s house were a tradition the whole family looked forward to each year.

Billie was a living example of faith and positive thinking. The impression she made on the hearts of those dear to her will not be forgotten. Endowed with a fighting spirit, she willed herself to beat cancer two separate times over 27 years. She was able to overcome the third, but put up a commendable fight.

She is fondly remembered by her husband, Roy D. Cantrell; children, Bert (Patricia) Harmon of Lincoln, Calif, Marilyn (Michael) Fabian of Tucson, Pamela (Mark) Kern of Tucson, Roy Cantrell Jr. of Clayton, Susan (Dennis) Hollingsworth of Antlers; her brothers, Dewey Edward (Anne) Pettigrew and Ellis Dwayne (Maribeth) Pettigrew, all of Orem, Utah; seven nieces and nephews; 14 grandchildren; and 23 great-grandchildren.



William Guthrie

William Terrell “Woody” Guthrie passed away on Jan. 14, 2005. He was born on Aug. 2, 1949, in Oakland, Calif., to Edna Mae Guthrie and Joe Thomas Guthrie, both of Maysville.

He was a long time resident of Oklahoma, living in Maysville, Garvin County, Purcell, McClain County, Norman and Edmond. He was a volunteer fireman.

He was preceded in death by his parents; grandfather Edgar Guthrie; and twin sister, Gertrude (Guthrie) Holt.

He is survived by Henry Michael (Hank) Guthrie, of Sanoma, Calif.



Hazel Cowen

Hazel LaVerne Cowen, 98, a Grady County resident passed away on March 26, 2011. She was born to Thomas Richard and Emma Bailey McCalla on April 19, 1912, on her mother’s Choctaw allotment in Chickasha. She attended Friend School and then graduated from Amber High School. She graduated from OWC with a bachelor’s degree in home economics on May 29, 1935, the same day she married Chester Melcenia Cowen, a marriage that lasted 66 years until his death in 2002. She applied the home economics degree throughout her life as she raised her family. Hazel was a active member of Delphian, American Association of University Women, Eastern Star and Methodist Women’s Circle.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband; brothers, Joseph Bailey McCalla, William Duncan McCalla, Thomas Richard McCalla Jr. and Woodrow Wilson McCalla; and her sister, Beulah Martha McCalla.

She is survived by her son, Chester Richard Cowen with wife Linda Lee; daughter Margaret Ann Gumma with husband Victor; sister-in-law, Jean McCalla, widow of Woodrow McCalla; and many nieces and nephews.

Wilma Garland

Wilma J. Garland, 90, passed away on Oct. 8, 2011, in Oklahoma City. She was born on Sept. 25, 1921. During World War II she worked for the federal government as a clerk in the Gasoline, Price and Rationing Office in Stigler. She married Jerry W. Garland in 1948, and they made their home in Stigler. After 30 years as a caseworker with the Department of Human Services, she retired and she and her husband became “winter Texans,” spending winter at their vacation home in Rio Grande Valley where they golfed and fished. She and her husband also enjoyed traveling to New Mexico for part of their summer, visiting Santa Fe and Pecos. In retirement, she kept busy with many hobbies especially golf, oil painting, fishing and studying Spanish. Even at age 88 she enrolled in Spanish class.

She cared for her family very much and enjoyed many happy days with them after moving to Oklahoma City in September of 2006. Her friends also were very important to her and she kept in contact with many of her school friends from Stigler, including her dear friend and roommate from Connors College.

She was a member of Main Street Baptist Church in Stigler. She loved her church and all of her church friends. Her family is very grateful to Mercy Hospice of Oklahoma City for the support, care and love extended during her illness. She was preceded in death by her parents, Zenos W. Garland and Leda Mae Stevens Garland; sister Lucille Garland Frizzell; brother Billy Ray Garland; brothers-in-law, Kenneth Frizzell and Eugene Merriman; and sisters-in-law, Betty Garland and Opal Garland.

She is survived by her husband, Jerry W. Garland; daughter Ann Simank Bankhead with husband Gary; granddaughter Jean Ann Frank with husband Richard; grandson Edmund Dow Simank III; great-grandfather, Kaylee Simank, all of Oklahoma City; and one sister, Jo Merriman of Stigler.

Tillman Hockett

Tillman Laverne Hokett, 75, Wapanucka resident, formerly of Mead and Calera passed away on Oct. 17, 2011, in Ada. He was born on June 13, 1936 to Carl and Lillie Florence (Hyde) Hakett, in Atoka. He attended Keneff, Hopewell and Caney Schools. Tillman quit school to join the Marines. Tillman was a Marine for 22 years and a rancher working in the Bryan County area. Tillman proudly served his country in The Marine Corp during the Korea and Vietnam conflicts and was highly decorated with five Purple Hearts, two Silver Stars, a Bronze Star and numerous others. He cherished his family and will be greatly missed by all that knew him.

He was preceded in death by his parents; sisters, Nina Johnson and Ina Pruitt; son Tillman Hockett Jr.; and grandmother Annie Neal, an original enrollee of the Choctaw Nation.

Tillman is survived by his siblings, Shirley Bushong of Odessa, Texas, Greta Campbell with husband Johnny of Antlers, Wylie Hockett of Mead, J.D. Hockett with wife Judy of Wapanucka, and Barbara Peoples with husband Frank of Ardmore; grandchild Cody Hockett of Texas; along with numerous nieces, nephews, other relatives and dear friends.



Albert Perry Jr.

Albert Perry Jr., 81, Keota resident, passed away on Sept. 14, 2011, in Fort Smith, Ark. He was a retired Rodeo cowboy. He was born on Feb. 15, 1930, and was in the U.S. Army, serving in Korea.

Virgil Bohanan

Virgil Ray Bohanan, 61, of Wright City, passed away on Jan. 14, 2011 at the OU Medical Center in Oklahoma City. He was the son of Robert and Melissia (Peters) Bohanan and was born on March 5, 1949 in Talihina. He lived most of his life in McCurtain County and married Carolyn Willis on Jan. 16, 1967 in Antlers. He enjoyed hunting, fishing and most of all he was his grandchildren’s greatest supporter in their events. He was a very devoted husband, father and grandfather and will be truly missed.

He was preceded in death by his father; one sister, Margaret Ludlow; grandparents, Ed and Melcie Peters and Impson and Jincey Bohanan; two brothers-in-law, Wendell Ludlow and Eugene Bohanan.

He is survived by his wife, Carolyn of the home; mother Melissia of Bethel; daughter Tina Parker with husband Stacey of Wright City; two sons, Virgil Jr. (Bo) Bohanan with wife Amanda of Wright City, and Michael Bohanan with wife Melissa of Broken Bow; three granddaughters, Staci (Chele) Ridenour with husband Josh, Brandy and Tara Bohanan; seven grandsons, Will and Dylan Parker, Brett and Casey Bohanan, Dusty, Dallas and Ethan Bohanan; three great-grandchildren, Micah, Kaleb and Rachel Ridenour; one brother and sister-in-law, Herb and Marvada Bohanan of Pickens; seven sisters and four brothers-in-law, Eunice Bohanan of Broken Bow, Mary Bohanan of Battiest, Linda with Austin Jefferson of Bethel, Emilou with Andy Sanchez, Betty with Jimmy Tom, all of Broken Bow, Brenda with Tony James of Hugo and Lois Bohanan of Bethel; several aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews and a host of church family and friends.



Ron Boatright

Ronald Joseph Boatright, 72, passed away on Oct. 14, 2011, in Ogden, Utah. He was born on Nov. 29, 1938, in El Paso, Texas. Most of Ron’s formative years were spent growing up in Fontana, Calif. His good friend and future best man A.C. Phillips grew up just a few houses down the street. After graduating from Fontana High School he joined the Coast Guard as a radio technician. He completed the Coast Guard Training School in Groton, Conn., and then continued his service in the Philippines, and in Lompoc, Calif. Ron went on to a lengthy career in construction, building materials distributing, and electronics. Ron married Dorothy Jean Waddle in Fontana on March 10, 1961. Ron and Dottie’s loving family grew larger with Dan in 1964, Ken in 1966 and Jeff in 1969. They settled in Alta Loma, Calif., in 1966.

Ron’s long list of community activities took off in the mid 1960s with the San Bernardino County Sheriff’s Search and Rescue Mounted Posse. He led the Mounted Posse as its commander for a couple of years. He was also a special deputy reserve on the San Bernardino County Sheriff’s Department. It was as part of this group that he met some of his life-long friends; Tom Wickum, Bill Arthur and Phil Draper. As a businessman, Ron was active in the local Kiwanis Club which provided assistance to various community social service organizations. As a teenager in the Boy Scouts, Ron had completed the requirements necessary to achieve the designation of Eagle Scout. When his sons became teenagers it was no surprise that he became a leading fixture of the local Boy Scout Troop, serving as scoutmaster for many years.

Ron had many hobbies and activities that he loved to share with family and friends. Hunting, fishing, horseback riding, camping and boating were constant sources of fun and relaxation. For a while he took flying lessons, got his private pilot license and even had his own plane. In the mid 1980s Ron and Dottie bought land and built a vacation cabin in Montana. This cabin became Ron’s favorite place to spend time. Among the various good friends he met in Montana are Dave Clarke and Ted Waldo. Given Ron’s many skills in construction and other trades, and his desire to constantly be in action, he always had projects to keep him busy. Whether he was making changes or additions to the house or cabin (often just before the holidays), rebuilding or repairing vehicles or fabricating new trailers or equipment, there were very few dull moments with him around. If he wasn’t busy with his own projects, he could often be found helping out various friends and neighbors with their efforts.

Good genetics and constant activity helped Ron enjoy good physical health. Unfortunately over his final years dementia and then Alzheimer’s disease robbed all of us of Ron’s wonderful and generous personality.

He was preceded in death by his father Joseph, mother Bernadine, and brother Douglas.

He is survived by his wife of 50 years, Dorothy; sons Daniel, Kenneth and Jeffrey; and sister Nancy.



Amos’ life provides many opportunities to learn

Choctaw elder William “Bill” Allen Amos is much like the many other Choctaw Nation elders; he has many memories that are well worth sharing. Listening to these Choctaw elder stories like Bill’s gives someone a look into history and provides the opportunity to learn about the past of our respected Choctaw members.

Bill Amos was born on May 3, 1923, at his home in Hugo to Wesley Allen Amos and Lucy Charles Amos, both full-blood Choctaws. Bill’s father, Wesley, finished eighth grade at the Indian School at Hugo. His mother, Lucy, was from Wright City. Wesley was an orphan and Bill believes his mother was an orphan as well because he never knew his grandparents. The Amos family had little money and they lived on what they raised in the garden.

Bill is the oldest of six children in the Amos family consisting of his younger siblings, Dan, Simon, Sexton, Kathryn Amos Goombi and Charlene Amos Kilpatrick. His sisters went to college and went on to become teachers, both currently retired.

Bill attended school at Forest Grove School in McCurtain County, which still stands today. After he finished the eighth grade, he went to Chilocco Indian School. His brothers and one of his sisters also attended school there. They all wanted to participate in sports. To get to Chilocco, the tribe had to take the Amoses to Ardmore. From Ardmore, they would take the train that went to Chilocco which would stop all along the way to pick up Indian children.

Bill lived in Home 6 at Chilocco. Ernest Childers, who later received the Congressional Medal of Honor, was a senior when Bill was a freshman. Bill was a member of the football team, but the team wasn’t able to go anywhere for games because of the war rationing.

There were 900 to a 1,000 students who attended school with Bill, all from the Five Civilized Tribes or the Eastern Tribes. Superintendent Corell was a good guy and opened the gym up for the kids to dance. Bill’s class schedule included carpentry, electric service, barber classes, dry cleaning and baking. They baked bread for 900 students. They’d start the dough at 4 a.m. and knead just how much flour, sugar, shortening and yeast to add. Bill was a part of Chilocco School for four years and graduated in 1943.

After graduating from Chilocco, Bill joined the U.S. Navy in July of 1943. After he enlisted, he was able to return home to Idabel for a couple of months, then was sent to San Diego for training.

Bill’s experience at Chi-

locco helped him a great deal while in the Navy where he became a baker. After boot camp, he was moved to a new base in Long Beach, Calif., where he applied to work in the bakery shop. Since the base was new, no one knew how to make bread. The Chief brought Bill some bread that didn’t taste good and asked him what was wrong with it. “Well there’s a number of things that could be wrong with that bread,” said Bill. “The only thing I know is I can make a better loaf of bread than that.” The Chief said, “How good can you make it?” “As good as you can buy in Long Beach,” said Bill. That evening, 19-year-old Bill reported for work as a baker and was put in charge of 10 or 15 other men in the bakery.

At the bakery that same day, Bill met a young boy about his age who had experience working in a bakery in Brooklyn with his father since he was 12 years old. He gave Bill a recipe for bread that resembled the recipe he had in Chilocco, which Bill put to good use when serving his first loaf of bread to the Chief. Because of Bill’s ability to make great bread, the Chief appointed him Third Class Baker, a title usually earned after 12 to 16 months of baking that Bill earned after one night.

After one year of being Third Class Baker, Bill was assigned to a ship: a minesweeper, The U.S.S. Scout, Number 296. The U.S.S. Scout was built in the Bremerton area in Washington. Bill was given the choice of working on the Scout or a larger ship. He asked an older sailor for his advice on which crew to join. The sailor said, “I can’t make your decision for you, but if you were a Japanese pilot going to drop a bomb and you saw two ships down there, would you drop it on the large ship or the small one?” Bill chose the small ship and he was glad he did, because the old sailor was right. Suicide bombers would crash into the larger ships and bypass the minesweeper.

When the Scout’s crew was well trained, they headed to San Francisco, then to Honolulu. During the two-week trip from California to Hawaii, Bill was new to the sea and became sick, not eating anything. When they arrived in Hawaii, the Captain was aware of Bill’s state. He ordered Bill to stay on base and work as a baker. He asked to stay with the ship, and the Captain allowed it, but said if he hears of him getting sick again, he would be sent



Bill and Louise Amos

back to the states. Bill eventually overcame his seasickness, but there were times when he wished he had stayed in Honolulu.

You’re not a sailor until you’ve crossed the Equator, is what Bill was told when he hit the high seas. He went through “sailor initiation” for a week before his ship crossed the Equator. Bill, along with the rest of the new sailors, had to shine their shoes and get sprayed with a waterspout that would just about knock him down. The worst part of initiation was the last activity Bill had to do to become a true sailor: crawl through a long sack filled with garbage while being hit with clubs made of stockings by the sailors.

After Bill became a true member of the crew of the U.S.S. Scout, they invaded the Philippines, where minesweepers played a big role because of their mission to remove the mines out of the bay so other ships wouldn’t be destroyed or damaged. The Scout was a part of a platoon of six ships that headed for the Philippines. When they were about four days away from the mainland, the Scout along with two other ships went on ahead while the others stayed behind. The next day, two of the three ships went ahead, including the Scout. After that, the Scout was the only ship continuing on to the mainland. Luckily, Bill’s ship didn’t meet any warlike operations coming from the Japanese because they knew they were coming, so they didn’t waste their ammunition.

The Scout probably made seven or eight invasions in the Philippines. During one invasion, a suicide bomber hit one of the larger ships, and

the Scout had to pick up 125 sailors because their ship was sinking. The ship was sinking slow, so Bill was able to gather up some barber tools, which led to him cutting the hair of the crew members, though he didn’t like it because he used his hands to bake bread.

When the 125 sailors joined the Scout, Bill had to make biscuits to feed them. They told him those were the best biscuits they have ever eaten.

One day, Bill was on the top deck when the rest of the crew were in the galley listening to the news on the radio. They were just informed by the captain that they were going to Pearl Harbor then to Japan. By this time, Bill was thinking how nice it would be to return home to the states. Usually, when the war was over, ships would blow their horns in celebration. Though Bill’s ship wasn’t aware yet, he started hearing horns blowing and saw soldiers shooting their guns in celebration on shore. Soon after, the Scout got the news and started shouting and shaking hands.

When the Scout arrived at Seattle, the crew decided they wanted to celebrate the end of the war with a good \$1.50 steak dinner at a nice restaurant. When they had their fill and were ready to pay, the waitress told them it had been taken care of by the gentleman sitting in the corner. He looked like a farmer and was waiting on his boy to return from the war. Bill was in the Philippines from July 1943 to August 1945, when the war ended and the Japanese had given up.

When Bill returned home to Idabel after almost three years of serving his country, his mother met him at the gate with a hug. She said she knew he was coming home because she had been praying for him. All four of her sons and a son-in-law had served in World War II, and they had all come home safely thanks to her prayers.

After Bill had returned

home, he realized he wanted to further his education. “To me, education is learning how to live,” he says. “You’ve got to ask yourself: what is education, and have I got it?” Bill graduated from Bacone.

When Bill returned from serving, all of his friends had gotten married which made him start thinking about what he would want in a wife. One day, he was at a ballgame and saw an Indian girl at the Coke stand. She was smiling, and that put her first in Bill’s book. This is when Bill first saw his wife, Louise.

When Bill attended Bacone, he would go to Tulsa to buy clothes. At the bus station, he saw Louise and her sister. Bill knew her sister from Chilocco. Louise and Bill got acquainted and had a good time together. They started going to shows and she would make trips to Bacone to visit him.

Pretty soon, Bill and Louise went to the Justice of the Peace and got married. They didn’t have any money starting off. Bill was attending Oklahoma Baptist University and received \$120 per month school pay and that’s what they lived on. They were in Shawnee about a year and a half.

While at Shawnee, Bill began working for Tinker Air Force Base. Bill was offered a manager’s position, which he gladly accepted. He held this job for about 25 years. He went on to work as a part of the emergency crew. When a plane wouldn’t start, they would send Bill and his crew in. Bill believes a person’s career and education are a very important aspect of their life. “Always take care of your health so you can be at work every day you’re supposed to,” he says.

While working at Tinker, Bill was ordered to go to Vietnam on a trial run. He had to go to Will Rogers Airport to fly with one of the airlines. While at Vietnam, Bill mainly helped soldiers there pack up their things so they could move. Bill was glad to get back to Tinker. He worked there for a total of 30 years.

Bill and Louise lived in a veterans home community with rent of \$40 a month. Bill only made a dollar an hour at that time, so he would catch a ride to work or sometimes walk to work. Hamburgers were 15 or 25 cents back then and Bill couldn’t afford them, but as time went on they got on their feet and began to really enjoy life. Bill and Louise managed their money well and tithed to the church every month. Bill bought his first car in 1960 and taught Louise how to drive.

After Bill retired from Tinker Air Force Base, he and Louise went back to McCurtain County and the Choctaw Nation. Bill asked Choctaw

Nation if he could own a home in that area. Bill was put on the list with 125 applicants in front of him. He worked hard to attain his Choctaw home. His home was built in 1985 on an acreage his parents had left him, on his mother’s land.

Bill began working for the Choctaw Nation Smoke Shop in Idabel and stayed there for seven years. After that, he worked for the Travel Plaza in Broken Bow where he was a cashier. “Mr. Bill,” as everyone called him, retired in 2007 after seven years of work.

Bill and Louise had three children, all born while they were living in Shawnee. Mike Amos has three children. Nancy Amos Williams has three boys. Bill’s oldest child, Orvella Amos Harjo, passed away. Bill has been blessed to be able to be there for the birth of all his grandchildren. He still enjoys making bread and loves to work in his garden. He raises vegetables, cantaloupes and watermelons.

As Bill looks back over his years, he expresses the importance of education. Education is learning how to live. It begins when you’re born then continues when you go to school. You can go to the best college, but you never get to the point where you know it all. You learn something new every day. You learn how to get along with people, how to be kind to people and how to accept people.

Bill believes reading the Bible is very important. We should all try to help people out when they have problems. Bill likes the Methodist Doctrine and calls himself a Methodist, but he says in his time, it didn’t make any difference. Indians would just go to church. “Church is very important in your life,” he says. “That’s where you get your strength.” He wants everybody to be what they want to be and be proud of it. He thinks lifestyle has a lot to do with religion, saying rodeo people like to go to church with rodeo people.

Bill is in great shape and takes good care of himself. He was able to walk the entire way during the Trail of Tears Walk recently. He believes in good health and taking proper care of your body and watching what you eat. Bill’s mother and brothers were diabetic, but he is not, so he is cautious and doesn’t eat salt or greasy foods.

Bill is very happy with his life, and he’s always managed to stay happy throughout his life’s adventures. He says that everything is copasetic, and that means everything is all right. “Learn how to live by yourself,” says Bill, “because after all, a cat’s got nine lives, but a human being has only got one and you’ve got to take care of that life ’cause that’s all you’ve got.”

Jones Academy holds super Thanksgiving supper

The holidays are officially here! Jones Academy students and staff celebrated their annual Thanksgiving Supper with family and friends on Nov. 16. Guests were treated to a steak and shrimp supper with all the trimmings as well as calorie-

defying desserts of all varieties. Jones Academy hosted about 200 guests including support staff, sponsors and student families. There was plenty of food and fellowship which made for a good evening. This year Jones Academy enrolled a record high

193 students grades 1-12. A special thanks goes out to Chief Pyle, Assistant Chief Batton, the Tribal Council and the entire Choctaw Nation family for all the support and assistance we have received this year.



Corey Whitecalf and Kahlen Panteah, above. At left, the Fairchild's Family – Jacob, Kaitlan, Kenneth, Kimberly and Hailea.



Thomas Etsitty, Ke,ana Watashe and Darrienne Valdez.



Xynissa Thlocco-Deere, Karen Neal, and Wiyaka Eder.

Photos provided

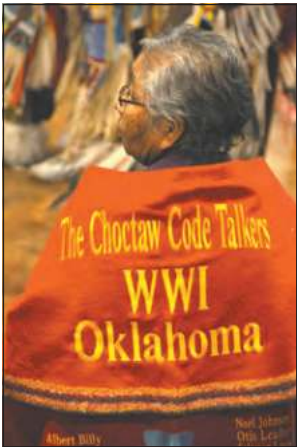




Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma 7th Annual Intertribal Pow Wow



Photos by Lisa Reed
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma



The 7th Annual Pow Wow was held Nov. 26 at the Event Center in Durant continuing the tradition of gathering for the competition dances, meeting family and friends and enjoying the day together on the Saturday after Thanksgiving. Grand Entries were held at noon and at 7.





Justin Yearby is presented the Tvshka Chunkash (Heart of a Warrior) Scholarship during the Choctaw Nation’s Veterans Day Ceremony Nov. 11. The \$1,000 scholarship is offered through the Choctaw Nation Scholarship Adviseement Program and is given on behalf of the veterans of the Afghan and Iraq wars. Captain Teri Scroggins is responsible for starting this scholarship and a major contributor for the award. Captain Scroggins was unable to attend the ceremony, so her mother, Janice Flowers, seated, made the presentation on her behalf. Also pictured are, standing, SAP staff members Shauna Williams and Director Jo McDaniel.

Continue to Live

By Justin Yearby

Virtually every American has been touched by the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Whether it is actual participation, one of the over 6,000 families whose loved ones did not return to the comforts of their homes, or just one of the many millions who knows someone, these wars have a far-reaching affect. By mechanisms of modern media these wars have been brought to our full attention with all the horror and sorrow it breeds, especially for the families that have endured loss.

Only those who have had the news of loss brought to their door can understand the unexplainable pain that saturates every fiber of their being. There may be no greater emotional pain than the loss of a child. It is a pain that lingers and corrodes every fiber in the fabric of the soul and shakes the very foundation that faith is built upon. Well-intended words of comfort such as “he’s in a better place now” or “trust God, trust Jesus” are appreciated and the intent is well understood; however, the here and now is a pretty good place and no matter how strong the trust and faith, answers to prayers are sometimes, “no.”

How one continues to live is the measure of quality that life will be experienced for the rest of a given time on earth. We can choose to lay down and give up in the face of life’s day to day, merely existing in life until the day we die, or live life to its fullest and accept the challenges life has to offer. As with any catastrophic event, the process is one day at a time and more often than not, one moment at a time.

Such an event occurred in the life of this student. It did not affect the pursuits of higher education, but initiated it. Either lie down and give up or accept the challenges life has to offer. On 14 May 2006, Mother’s Day, Lepl Hatak-Yuka-Keyu Martin Yearby USMC, my youngest child and only son, was killed in action at Al Anbar Province, Iraq. In discussing his decision to enlist, this young warrior reminded me of words that I had repeated often while expressing thoughts to groups in public venues on the old adage of how “it take the village to raise a child” and thanking our extended families, Native and non-Native alike for helping us raise our children. When expressing my misgivings on his commitment to the military he simply looked clearly into my eyes and said “Dad, it is my turn to watch the village.”

Not living life to its fullest and continuing to take on life’s challenges is to dishonor not only the memories and sacrifice of this warrior, but also those of the warriors that have gone before him and the ones that have and will go after him.

The notion of completing a college education had always been on the list of goals to accomplish, but raising a family and working to provide has always taken precedence over personal aspirations. As a senior and expecting to graduate in May of 2012, this is not only an accomplishment for me but for my family. Not in a monetary sense but as a testament of perseverance in the face of adversity. To demonstrate that it is alright to continue to live, to strive, to achieve and realize worthwhile goals and dreams.



Bob Tollett of Holdenville, center, and nephews Nathan Oglesbee, left, and Adam Oglesbee and his son, Ethan.



Elmer Crews, 86, and his daughter say hello to Chief Pyle. Chief Pyle gave Crews a flag many years ago and he has flown it at pow wows in Hugo, but now that he is older he is giving it back to Chief Pyle hoping that he can pass it forward to some deserving military person or group.



Home for a hero

A special presentation is made in the photo above to veteran Tim Little of a symbolic “key” to a home. Pictured are Chief Gregory E. Pyle, Tribal Chaplain Bertram Bobb, Bruce Lambert and David Stratton of J.P. Morgan Chase, Council Speaker Delton Cox, Lt. Gen. (Ret) Leroy Sisco, Nicole and Tim Little, Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Rita Aragon and Assistant Chief Gary Batton. At left, Chief Pyle hands the keys to Little.

Retired U.S. Army Specialist Timothy Little was born into a military family and considers himself a Navy brat. He grew up in Georgia and joined the military in July of 1988.

While serving in the Middle East, Timothy was injured by a roadside bomb on two separate occasions. The first occurred in July 2005 while serving in Iraq, and the second in September 2007 in Afghanistan. As a result, Timothy struggles with a traumatic brain injury (TBI), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as well as back and shoulder injuries.

Timothy and his family currently live in Gilbert, Ariz. Timothy’s wife, Nicole, is the bedrock of their family. She holds a master’s degree in childhood education and teaches kindergarten. Their son, Sean, is a senior in high school and a star member of the wrestling team. Timothy continues to improve every day and is striving to establish a new sense of normalcy. He is working to support his wife and family and help his fellow veterans any way he can. This new home is a miracle for them. It will help Timothy meet his current financial obligations while saving for a small business he hopes to open soon.

His awards include CIB, Purple Heart, ARCOM (2) SW Asia Medal, Humanitarian Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, NATO Service Medal.

If you know a retired combat-wounded veteran of Iraq or Afghanistan, encourage them to apply at www.militarywarriors.com.



Tribal Chaplain Bertram Bobb and Andy Choate of Findley.



Korean veteran Richard Beames and Linda Beames with grandson Zane Ryan Owens.

Photos by Judy Allen, Lisa Reed and Lana Sleeper
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma



Jack Bryant rubs his hand on the wall bearing the name of his son, William Arnold Bryant Jr.



Opal Bray, Fred Bray and Doris Bray find the name of a family member on the wall.



Buck and Sandra Byington of Broken Bow.