



A salute to those who serve

Choctaw Veterans Day Ceremony in Tvshka Homma

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December 2012 Issue

Tribal Council meets in regular November session

The Choctaw Nation Tribal Council met in regular session on Nov. 10 in Tvshka Homma. Council members voted to:

- Approve warranty deeds with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation.
- Approve budgets modifications for WIC Farmers' Market 2012 and 2013.
- Approve budgets for REACH grant, Choctaw Better Beginnings grant, COPS grant and Choctaw Project IMPACT.
- Approve the adoption of certain codes to use in the Court of General Jurisdiction.
- Approve the establishment of Choctaw Nation Utility Authority.
- Approve a TIP list of projects for the Transportation Program.
- Approve a Forest Management Plan.
- Approve to dispose of equipment by Fixed Assets.
- Approve Gas and Oil leases with Continental Resources Inc. and Kepco Operating Inc.
- Approve utility easements for PSO, Oklahoma Department of Transportation, and temporary construction easement to Arkansas Oklahoma Gas Corporation.

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

Nittak Hullo Chito
Na Yukpa

Merry Christmas
from the
Choctaw Nation
of Oklahoma

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The Mission of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

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

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Choctaw heroes honored

The Choctaw Code Talkers of World War I and World War II left a lasting legacy for the Choctaw Nation, the state of Oklahoma and the United States, and, over time, they are beginning to receive the recognition and honor they greatly deserved during their lifetimes. The contributions they made to their country were recognized at a ceremony on Nov. 9 at the Cox Center in Oklahoma City as they were inducted into the Oklahoma Military Hall of Fame with several generations of their descendants on hand to witness the event. See CODE TALKERS on Page 3



Choctaw Nation: LISA REED
Chief Gregory E. Pyle accepts the Oklahoma Military Hall of Fame award for the Code Talkers on behalf of the tribe with scores of relatives of the World War I and II Code Talkers looking on.

Idabel leaders name Choctaw Nation 'Industry of the Year'



Choctaw Nation: BRET MOSS
Chairman of the Idabel Industrial Development Authority, Dr. Walt Frey, presents the Industry of the Year award to Assistant Chief Gary Batton and Councilman Thomas Williston on Nov. 8 at the 67th Idabel Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture Community Builders Banquet. The Choctaw Nation was selected for the award because of the substantial investment made to the City of Idabel and surrounding areas.

By BRET MOSS
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Local leaders of the Idabel area gathered on Nov. 8 for the 67th annual Idabel Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture Community Builders Banquet where the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma received the award for Industry of the Year. Once a year, leaders from southern McCurtain County come together to recognize the contributions, both economically and socially, made by individuals and businesses for the betterment of the community. Assistant Chief Gary Batton and Councilman Thomas Williston accepted the award on behalf of the Choctaw Nation and Chief Gregory E. Pyle. The Choctaw Nation was selected as Industry of the Year because of the substantial investment made to the City of Idabel and surrounding areas. Dr. Walt Frey, chairman of the Idabel Industrial Development Authority, presented the award, praising tribe for the amount of industry

brought to Idabel areas, as well as the quality of employment afforded to the people. "The Indian Health Clinic is a great place to have a job," said Frey as he spoke of several Choctaw businesses in the area. He also made mention of the non-business contributions such as the assistance in building a fire department facility. As Batton accepted the award, he expressed his appreciation for the honor and spoke of his commitment to improving the lives of those in Southeast Oklahoma. "It is an honor to serve the people I grew up with," added Williston. The night was complete with a meal provided by Tyson Chicken, a major contributor in the Idabel economy, along with a song and dance performance by the Idabel High School Pop-Time group. Many notable faces were in attendance, including Mayor Tina Foshee-Thomas, Rep. Curtis McDaniel, Sen. Jerry Ellis and Executive Director of the Idabel Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture Betty Johnson.



Choctaw Nation: LISA REED
Choctaw Nation Outstanding Elders for 2012 – Willie Walley and Carolyn Bohanan – are pictured with Chief Gregory E. Pyle and their Councilmen, Ted Dosh and Jack Austin.

Districts honor outstanding elders

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma held its 14th annual Outstanding Elder Banquet Nov. 1 at the Choctaw Casino Resort in Durant. Outstanding elders from all of the districts were recognized and enjoyed a special evening held in their honor. Two of the nominees were chosen from the tribe's 17 community centers as this year's top male and female elders, judged by a panel of three to be awarded for their exceptional accomplishments. This year's Outstanding Elders are Willie Walley of District 9, Durant, and Carolyn Bohanan of District 7, Wright City. "Each of our outstanding elders is an esteemed member of the community and their family," said Chief Gregory E. Pyle. "As a grandfather, I am becoming even more aware of the place we all have in teaching the younger generations. In many ways the future is up to us and I am proud to say we have an exceptional group of men and women leading the way."

See ELDERS on Page 8

■ See event photos and read elder profiles from each district on Pages 8-9

Three decades of significant growth for Nation – our tribe is outstanding

*From the Desk of
Chief Gregory E. Pyle*

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma has made great strides in the past few decades. Since our constitution was ratified in 1983, services for the members have been growing and improving at a tremendous rate.

The Choctaw Nation vision statement is “To achieve healthy, successful, productive and self-sufficient lifestyles for a healthy nation of Choctaws.”

In order to achieve the healthy nation, the tribe has taken steps to provide access to services through some tremendous health facilities across southeast Oklahoma as well as provide numerous wellness centers so that we can all become more “fit.” Our hospital and many clinics, with the exceptional health professionals on staff, have been providing leadership on the path to better health for future generations! One of the mottos of the Choctaw Health Services is GO LEAN, and we are learning a new way of eating, and a new way of living. It would be great to have a future where “Healthy is the Rule not the Exception!”

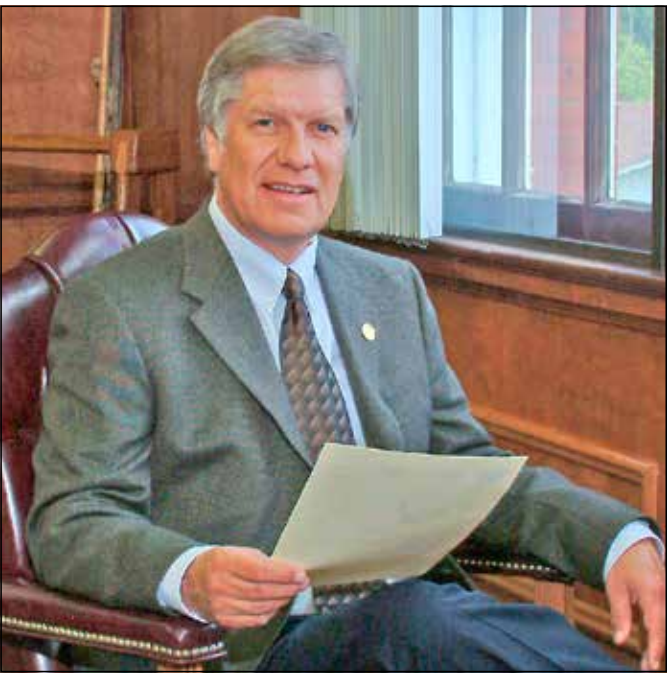
Thirty years ago, the tribe had about 100 employees – the job opportunities have increased to about 6,400 today! These

people work at the hospital and clinics, field offices, School of Choctaw Language, Career Development, Outreach, Forestry and Firefighters, and many other service-oriented job sites, as well as the administrative offices and businesses of the nation.

The numerous education and training programs, employment services, housing, safety, transportation, veterans, elders and youth programs all contribute to that Nation of successful and self-sufficient Choctaws. We all want our grandchildren to have a better lifestyle than ourselves!

The wide-ranging industries of the Choctaw Nation include Choctaw Defense Manufacturing (located in the communities of McAlester and Hugo); Choctaw Global Staffing (government contracting services providing personnel at jobs both in the United States and overseas); Choctaw Ranches; Travel Plazas in Durant, Atoka, Broken Bow, Garvin, Heavener, Grant, Idabel, McAlester, Pocola, Poteau, Stringtown and Wilburton; Choctaw Print Services; a shopping center in Idabel; RV park in Durant; Casino and Resort in Durant, Grant and Pocola - and casinos in McAlester, Stringtown, Broken Bow and Idabel.

In the past few years, the Choctaw culture has been revitalized at an amazing rate with activities, art, and dance programs. Gatherings often include speaking the language, stickball and storytelling. Awakening the interest in Choctaw



heritage is making our tribe stronger.

Our Tribal Nation could not have grown at such a tremendous rate if it were not for the support and encouragement from the Choctaw citizens. Thank you all for participating in the events, the programs and the culture of the Great Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. I am very proud to be Choctaw! And even more proud to serve all of you!



Choctaw Nation: BRET MOSS

Choctaw Nation employee Ryan Spring shares his knowledge of Choctaw weaponry with Bradley McMillian and Paul Buntz.

Southeastern hosts Choctaw Day on university campus

Students get a hands-on experience with traditional Choctaw culture in observance of Native American Heritage Month

By BRET MOSS
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Southeastern Oklahoma State University’s (SE) observance of Native American History Month received a boost from the Choctaw Nation with a Choctaw Day event hosted on campus Nov. 26. Several cultural experts, artists and dancers filled the Glen D. Johnson Student Union atrium to share knowledge and demonstrate traditions of old.

“It’s a great thing,” said SE student John Crews who expressed his satisfaction with the event. “Though I am a Choctaw, I don’t get much exposure to the culture, so this is absolutely wonderful,” he continued.

Fellow student Erin McDaniel reflected the sentiment with, “It is really exciting to bring Choctaw culture to campus. In high school I didn’t get to experience it much, so having it on campus is great.”

Choctaw Day at SE was a cooperative effort between the Choctaw Nation and SE’s Native American Center. “We thought it would be a nice thing to include in Native November events,” stated academic advisor for SE’s Native American Center, Chantelle Standefer.

Previously in the month, Native American culture was celebrated with a host of events including “To Us It Wasn’t Code,” a play highlighting the Choctaw Code Talkers, a Native student visitation for high school students, and even traditional Choctaw cuisine served in the cafeteria.

“I think a lot of people seemed to enjoy it,” said Standefer. The Native American Center has received positive feedback from those who were in attendance and look forward to another Choctaw Day in 2013.

Monday’s event began in the early afternoon with Standefer presenting the opening remarks. She then turned over the mic to Choctaw language teacher, Lillie Roberts, who filled the room with the sounds of the Choctaw language as she lead the opening prayer, speaking in both Choctaw and English.

Miss Choctaw Nation Cheyenne Murray then displayed her vocal talents as she sang the Lord’s Prayer in Choctaw. Following the song, Roberts involved the audience by teaching a small lesson on the Choctaw language, encouraging everyone to speak to one another.

Attention was then drawn to the middle of the room for the Choctaw dancers who demonstrated the Wedding, Stealing Partners and Snake dances. Many people were plucked from the crowd during the Stealing Partners and stayed to enjoy the Snake Dance.

Brad Joe, who had chanted during the dances, remained in front of the mic where he performed Amazing Grace with a handmade Choctaw flute. Then storyteller Terri Billy shared her knowledge of several Choctaw tales and concluded the presentation of Choctaw Day.

Visitors were then free to explore various booths, ask questions and get a hands-on experience with Choctaw artifacts. Choctaw weaponry, pottery and basketry were among the exhibits.

More information on the Choctaw culture can be found by visiting choctawnation.com or by calling 800-522-6170.

Ensuring success for our future generations

*From the Desk of
Assistant Chief Gary Batton*

I have been richly blessed to serve on several special boards in the state of Oklahoma that have a mission of improving lives of youth. One of the most recent appointments was to the Thunderbird Youth Academy, which gives high school dropouts an opportunity to gain control over their lives. The academy works with the youth to improve their self-esteem, increase academic performance and teach essential life skills. The students are instilled with self-discipline and community spirit. This gives the students a greater likelihood that they will be successful in their future endeavors.

This program really does change lives, allowing the youth to dream, believe and achieve. I am proud to be a part of this awesome program.

Another rewarding responsibility I have been given is to serve on the Children’s Hospital Foundation. This foundation has a hope and mission to work to improve health of all children through the support of research and education at the Oklahoma Health Center. Thanks in part to the research at Children’s Hospital Foundation, health care everywhere



should continue to improve. The Choctaw Nation is very proud of the service we provide at the tribal hospital and clinics and we are pleased to work in partnership with professionals at the Oklahoma Health Center.

Of course, the board memberships closest to home are the ones closest to my heart. Jones Academy and Chahta Foundations receive a great deal of my attention and time. These two non-profits are set up to enable a legacy for future generations – for the education and culture of Native American youth.

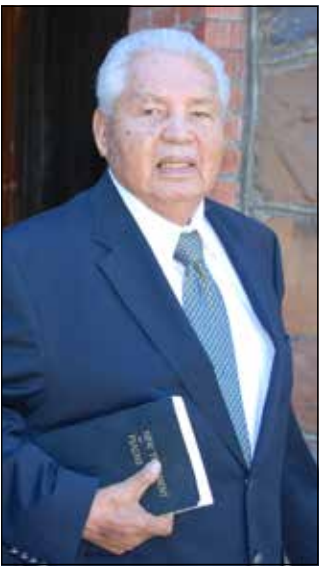
Yakoke to all those who have donated and assisted in making these foundations possible to ensure the future of the Choctaw people.

Chaplain’s Corner

The Christmas message of peace

May you have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2013.

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



REV. BERTRAM BOBB
Tribal Chaplain

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.”

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 brought us back with His precious blood. He went to heaven and today He sits at the right hand of God the Father 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. Jesus 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 shall rule 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 nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into the 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 prepare for wars. At that time we shall beat our 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, those 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 the 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 acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners...” (1 Timothy 1:15).

May God bless you in a very special way today is my prayer. Pray for America and for our leaders. Pray for our brave men and women in our armed services.



Code Talker descendants gather on stage with Lt. Gen. Leroy Sisco, Chief Gregory E. Pyle, Assistant Chief Gary Batton and Councilmen Anthony Dillard and Thomas Williston.

CODE TALKERS

Choctaw telephone warriors inducted into Oklahoma Military Hall of Fame



‘Tanampo chipunta
tukafah tushpa’

‘Tanchi nehi tuchena
micha uski naki
kanimusi pit pila’

Bob Ludlow reads words spoken by the Choctaw Code Talkers of World War I.

A small, elite group of men made major contributions leading to the end of World War I. The words of their native Choctaw language were used to develop a code the Germans were unable to break.

“Tanchi nehi tuchena micha uski naki kanimusi pit pila,” reads Bob Ludlow to the audience of the Oklahoma Military Hall of Fame Banquet, Nov. 9 at the Cox Center in Oklahoma City.” Tanampo chipunta tukafah tushpa micha tanampo chito isht itibbi mahli. Ik-achukmo micha pasha hluffa lawa chi, il ahni.”

“Most of you in this room can’t understand this language,” Comanche tribal member and veteran Lanny Asepermy said. “But more importantly the Germans were not able to understand it. What Mr. Ludlow said translated to ‘The 3rd Battalion is sending ammunition, machine guns and artillery. Expect gas and many casualties.’”

Third battalion – corn grain three; machine gun – little gun shoot fast. “The original Code Talkers developed phrases that aided in communications like no other attempt had,” said Chief Gregory E. Pyle.

Chief Pyle accepted the award for the Code Talkers from the Military Hall of Fame on behalf of the tribe with scores of relatives of the World War I and II Code Talkers watching. The oldest direct descendant of each Code Talker also received a medal and framed certificate commemorating the honor.

The World War II Code Talkers were formed using native men of several tribes to coordinate military maneuvers.

Below is a list of the men known as An-numpa Luma – Code Talker:

WORLD WAR I

Pfc. Albert Billy, born on Oct. 8, 1885, at Howe, IT, lived in Poteau. He died on May 29, 1959. His daughter, Mozelle Dawson of Coaling, Calif., is quoted as saying, “My father suggested to his commanding officer that the Choctaw language be used to confuse the enemy.” He also told her that during the night Germans were captured when a general of the German Army asked a question, “What nationality was on the phones that night?” The only reply the German officer received was that it was Americans on the phone.

Pvt. Mitchell Bobb was born on Jan. 7, 1895, at Rufe, IT, and died in 1922. Bobb delivered the first Choctaw coded message to Ben Carterby. He was an orphan and a ward of Hosea L. Fowler prior to his enlistment. At 27 years old, he was the first of the Choctaw Code Talkers to die.

Cpl. Victor Brown, born March 15, 1890, at Goodwater, IT, died on July 22, 1966. Brown was wounded during his service and his citation from President Wilson reads, “gassed (mustard gas), broken nose and head injuries.” Brown’s daughter, Napanee Brown Coffman of Bartlesville, stated “He was one-quarter French and was glad to have served in France and see Paris.” Brown attended Armstrong Academy, graduated from Haskell

Institute, and also attended Tyler Commercial College and Southeastern State College. He was a field clerk for the Choctaw Nation and an auditor for the IRS. During World War II he was a deputy state examiner and inspector for the State of Oklahoma. Brown finished his government service at Fort Sill.

Ben Carterby, born Dec. 11, 1891, at Ida, IT, died on Feb. 6, 1953. He received the first Choctaw coded message and translated to the battalion commander. In a rare interview by the Work Progress Administration on June 29, 1937, in the Indian Pioneer Papers he is quoted as saying, “I served in the World War, went to France with the other boys over there, saw a new country and came back alive.”

Benjamin Colbert Jr., born on Sept. 15, 1900, at Durant, IT, died in January 1964. Colbert was the youngest Code Talker. His father, Benjamin Colbert Sr., was a “Rough Rider” during the Spanish-American War.

Pfc. George Edwin Davenport, born on April 23, 1887, at Finley, IT, died on April 17, 1950.

Pvt. Joseph Harvey Davenport, was born on Feb. 22, 1892, at Finley, IT. The date of his death is unknown. Joseph and George Davenport were half-brothers.

Cpl. James Morrison Edwards, born on Oct. 6, 1898, at Golden, IT, died on Oct. 13, 1962. Edwards attended Armstrong Academy and Folsom Methodist Training School in Smithville. He received the Presidential Citation, worked for the Bureau of Indian Affairs and served the Choctaws as pastor of the Indian Methodist Church.



Chief Gregory E. Pyle presents Tribal Chaplain Bertram Bobb with the Military Hall of Fame’s award at the induction of his uncle, Mitchell Bobb.

Cpl. Tobias William Frazier, born on Aug. 7, 1892, at Golden, IT, died on Nov. 22, 1975. Frazier received a flesh wound in the left leg from a sniper’s bullet and was awarded the Purple Heart. According to comments adapted from his daughter, Ruth Frazier McMillan, her father attended Armstrong Academy, volunteered and enlisted on May 19, 1917, trained at Camp Bowie, Texas, and sailed for France on July 18, 1918. She was told the sniper who wounded her father was killed by his buddies and when he saw the dead sniper it looked like a woman. He may have been the last living Code Talker at age 83.

Pvt. Benjamin Wilburn Hampton, born on May 31, 1892, at Bennington, IT, died on April 15, 1963. On Aug. 16, 1939, the Durant newspaper ran an article about Hampton, part of which reads, “Ben’s part in the U.S. battle plan was unique but nonetheless important. After the war it is definitely established that the Choctaw lingo defined all efforts of German code experts, which isn’t surprising if you’ve ever heard it spoken.”

Noel Johnson was born on Aug. 25, 1894, at Smithville, IT. Johnson attended Dwight Indian Training School. His World War I draft registration stated he had “weak eyes.” According to Johnson’s great-niece, Christine Ludlow, she was told by her grandmother, the sister-in-law of Noel Johnson, that Johnson was killed in action in France and his remains have not been recovered. No date of death was provided.

Cpl. Otis Wilson Leader, born March 6, 1882, at Citra, IT, died on March 26, 1961. Leader was one of the oldest men in service (36 years old at war’s end). Called the “war’s greatest fighting machine” by Gen. Pershing, he was twice-wounded, awarded two Silver Stars to be worn on the Victory Medal, the French Croix de Guerre twice and eight Battle Stars. In 1955, the Oklahoma House of Representatives praised him as the Outstanding Soldier of World War I. Leader attended Oklahoma Presbyterian College and Texas A&M and worked with the Highway Department for 25 years. He was chosen to pose as the model of an American soldier by French artist Raymond Devereaux who was commissioned to paint portraits of the Allied Army by the French Government.

Cpl. Solomon Bond Louis, born April 22, 1899, at Hochatown, IT, died on Feb. 19, 1972. He was credited with being the leader of the Code Talkers despite being the second youngest of the group. Louis took his basic training at Fort Sill.

Cpl. Peter P. Maytubby, born Sept. 26, 1891, at Reagan, IT, died Jan. 24, 1964. He was enrolled as a Chickasaw Indian by the Dawes Commission but spoke the Choctaw language fluently.

Jeff Nelson was from Kullituklo, IT.

Pfc. Joseph Oklahombi, born May 1,

1895, at Bokchito, IT, died April 13, 1960, when he was stuck by a truck as he walked along a road. He was lauded as Oklahoma’s greatest war hero of World War I, was awarded the Silver Star by Gen. Pershing to be worn on his Victory Medal and the Croix de Guerre from Marshal Henri-Philippe Pertain. A true marksman, he and 23 of his fellow soldiers are credited with killing 79 German soldiers and capturing 171 others in action at St. Etienne, France, from Oct. 8 to 11, 1918.

Robert Taylor, a full-blood Choctaw, was born Jan. 13, 1894, at Idabel, IT; date of death is unknown.

Cpt. Charles Walter Veach, born May 18, 1884, at Blue County, IT, died on Oct. 13, 1966. After the war he helped organize Company H, 1st Infantry, Oklahoma’s first National Guard Unit, and served as their Commander.

Cpl. Calvin Wilson was born June 25, 1895, at Eagletown, IT, and date of death is Feb. 8, 1972.

WORLD WAR II

Lt. Schlicht Billy, Sgt. David Pickens, Cpt. Andrew Perry and Pfc. Forrester Baker are documented as Class II Code Talkers. They served with Company F and H, 180th Infantry Regiment, 45th Division during World War II. A Class II Code Talker was not formally trained and used his native language “in the open” substituting English words when there were no Choctaw words for military terms. Billy and Pickens conversed often with field radios. Speaking the Choctaw language, the men were able to give exact details and locations without fear of their conversations being intercepted.

Second Lt. Schlicht Billy was born on Dec. 26, 1920, and died on Jan. 10, 1994. He lived in Blanco, Okla., at the time of his death. Billy served as a platoon leader and was awarded the Silver Star medal twice and the Purple Heart four times.

Sgt. Davis Pickens was born Dec. 12, 1922, and was killed in action on June 3, 1944, in Sicily.

Cpl. Andrew Perry was born in 1920 and enlisted in the Oklahoma National Guard on Sept. 16, 1940, in McAlester. He was from Pittsburg County. He was killed in action Aug. 20, 1944.

Pfc. Forrester Baker was born in 1919 and was also from Pittsburg County. He joined the Oklahoma National Guard at the same time as Perry on Sept. 16, 1940.

Information courtesy of the Choctaw Code Talker Association, Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, Oklahoma Historical Society, Choctaw Nation Public Relations Office, Choctaw Nation Genealogy Department, Biskinik newspaper, Find a Grave, various family members and the Texas Military Forces Museum.

Photos by Lisa Reed | Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Add more vegetables to your day

It's easy to eat more vegetables! Eating vegetables is important because they provide vitamins and minerals and most are low in calories. To fit more vegetables in your meals, follow these simple tips. It is easier than you may think.

1. **Discover fast ways to cook**
Cook fresh or frozen vegetables in the microwave for a quick-and-easy dish to add to any meal. Steam green beans, carrots or broccoli in a bowl with a small amount of water in the microwave for a quick side dish.
2. **Be ahead of the game**
Cut up a batch of bell peppers, carrots or broccoli. Pre-package them to use when time is limited. You can enjoy them on a salad, with hummus, or in a veggie wrap.
3. **Choose vegetables rich in color**
Brighten your plate with vegetables that are red, or-ange, or dark green. They are full of vitamins and miner-als. Try acorn squash, cherry tomatoes, sweet potatoes or col-lard greens. They not only taste great but also are good for you.
4. **Check the freezer aisle**
Frozen vegetables are quick and easy to use and are just as nutritious as fresh veggies. Try add-ing frozen corn, peas, green beans, spinach or sugar snap peas to some of your favorite dishes or eat as a side dish.
5. **Stock up on veggies**
Canned vegetables are a great addition to any meal, so keep on hand canned tomatoes, kidney beans, garbanzo beans, mushrooms and beets. Select those labeled as “reduced sodium,” “low sodium,” or “no salt added.”
6. **Make garden salads glow with color**
Brighten your salad by using colorful vegetables such as black beans, sliced red bell peppers, shred-ded radishes, chopped red cabbage or watercress. Your salad will not only look good but taste good, too.
7. **Sip on some vegetable soup**
Heat it and eat it. Try tomato, but-ternut squash, or garden vegetable soup. Look for reduced- or low-sodium soups.
8. **While you're out**
If dinner is away from home, no need to worry. When ordering, ask for an extra side of vegetables or side salad instead of the typical fried side dish.
9. **Savor the flavor of seasonal vegetables**
Buy vegetables that are in season for maximum flavor at a lower cost. Check your local supermarket specials for the best-in-season buys. Or visit your local farmer's market.
10. **Try something new**
You never know what you may like. Choose a new vegetable and add it to your recipe or look up how to fix it online.

Recipe of the Month

Caprese Bruschetta

Recipe provided by BetterHomesand Gardens

Ingredients:
2 medium tomatoes, seeded and chopped
1/3 cup mozzarella cheese cut into small cubes
1/4 cup finely chopped red onion
2 tablespoons shredded fresh basil
2 teaspoons olive oil
1 teaspoon balsamic vin-egar
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
12 slices whole grain ba-guette, toasted

Directions:
In medium bowl combine tomatoes, cheese, red onion,

basil, oil, balsamic vinegar, salt, and pepper. Serve im-mediately or cover and chill for up to 24 hours.
To serve, spoon tomato mixture onto toasted ba-guette slices.

Nutrition Facts: makes four servings.
Amount per serving: Cal-ories - 166 Total Fat - 6g, Cholesterol - 6mg, Sodium - 337mg, Carb - 22g, Fiber - 6g, Protein - 9g
For more information you may contact: Erin Adams, RD, Choctaw Nation Diabe-tes Wellness Center, 800-349-7026 ext. 6959.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION

ANTLERS
Market open weekdays Jan. 2-28. Jan. 2 : Idabel 9-11 a.m.; Broken Bow 12-2 p.m. (market open) Jan. 13: Bethel 9-10:30; Smithville 12-2 (market open) Closed Jan. 1 for holiday and 29-31 for inventory. Cooking with Carmen: Jan. 7 & 17, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.
DURANT
Market open weekdays: Jan. 2-28. Closed Jan. 1 for holiday and 29-31 for inventory. Cooking with Carmen: Jan. 9 & 24, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.
McALESTER
Market open weekdays Jan. 2-28. Closed Jan. 1 for holiday and 29-31 for inventory. Cooking with Carmen: Jan. 3 & 15, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.
POTEAU
Market open weekdays Jan. 2-28. Closed Jan. 1 for holiday and 29-31 for inventory. Cooking with Carmen: Jan. 11 & 22, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

CHOCTAW NATION FOOD DISTRIBUTION
Open 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Monday thru Fri-day. Staff will take lunch from 11:30 to 12 noon.

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

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

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NURSERY NEWS

Makiah Shields

Makiah Je’Lyn Shields was born at 11:37 a.m. on Oct. 10, 2012, at Saint Francis South. She weighed 9 pounds 7 ounces, and was 21 inches long. Proud parents are Holly Jones and Morgan Shields of Glenpool. Proud big brother is Mashawn Shields, also from Glen-pool. She is the granddaughter of Alan and Velaria Jones of Glenpool, Anita Jones of Coalgate, and Cheryl Brooks of Dallas; great-grandparents are Robert and Carol Schmidt of Sallisaw, and the late E.J. and the late Marie Johnson of Atoka; aunts and uncles include Misty and Emmit Lynch of Ponca City, Marcus and Michele Shields, and Mario Shields of Dallas.



Aria Heath

Aria Marie Heath was born on Nov. 4, 2012, weighing 8 pounds 2 ounces and measuring 21 inches long. Parents are Benjamin and Krista Heath; grandparents are Eric Heath and Patricia Smith; and Tommie Heath is her grear-grandparent.



Aiden Banister

Aiden Nashoba Banister was born at 2:35 a.m. on Aug. 23, 2012, in Pon-ca City, weighing 5 pounds 10 ounces and measuring 19 inches long. Aiden lives in Tonkawa with his parents, Cynthia Epperly and Jonathan Banis-ter. His grandparents are Dennis and Leveda Epperly of Tonkawa, Cora Thompson of Ponca City, Verla Joh-nico-Hatcher and Charles Hatcher of Blackwell, and Melvin Banister; great-grandparents are Bob and Pauline Epperly of Blackwell, Alvin and Nellie Thompson of Tonkawa, Tranch and Nora Johnico of Talihina, and the late Paul N. and Cora Banister. Aiden is a happy little guy with a large and loving family.



Landon Edging

Landon Michael Ray Edging was born Oct. 21, 2012, weighing 8 pounds 1 ounce and measuring 19 inches. Landon is the son of Ocean Rickey, the grandson of Tim Rickey and the great-grandson of Joyce Tallent.



Diabetic Eye Disease Rates increase among U.S. Population

Number is projected to rise to approximately 11 million people by 2030

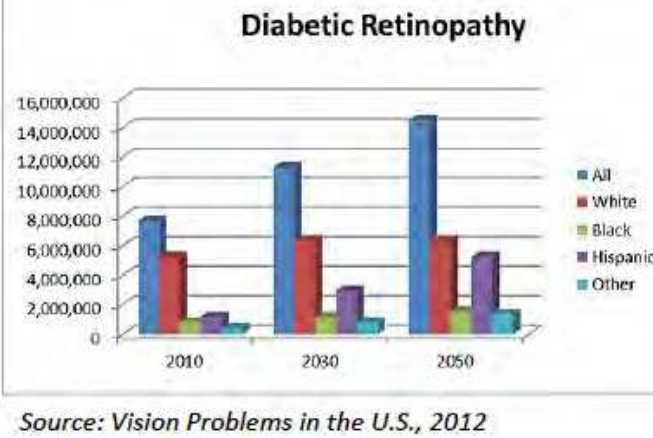
Diabetes affects nearly 26 million people in the United States. In addition, another 79 million people are esti-mated to have pre-diabetes, a condition that puts people at increased risk for diabetes. All people with diabetes, both type 1 and type 2, are at risk for diabetic eye dis-ease, a leading cause of vision loss and blindness.

Diabetic eye disease refers to a group of eye problems that people with diabetes may face as a complication of the disease and includes cataract, diabetic retinopathy, and glaucoma. Diabetic retinopathy, the most common diabetic eye disease, is the leading cause of blindness in adults 20–74 years of age. According to the National Eye Institute (NEI), 7.7 million people age 40 and older have diabetic retinopathy and this number is projected to increase to approximately 11 million people by 2030.

“The longer a person has diabetes the greater is his or her risk of developing dia-betic eye disease,” said Paul A. Sieving, M.D., Ph.D., direc-tor of the NEI. “If you have diabetes, be sure to have a comprehensive dilated eye exam at least once a year. Diabetic eye disease often has no early warning signs, but can be detected early and treated before vision loss occurs. Don’t wait until you notice an eye problem to have an exam because vision that is lost often cannot be restored.”

While all people with diabetes can develop diabetic eye disease, African Americans, American Indians/Alaska Na-tives, and Hispanics/Latinos with diabetes are at higher risk of losing vision or going blind from it. All people with diabetes should have a dilated eye exam at least once a year to detect vision problems early. “In fact, with early detec-tion, timely laser surgery, and appropriate follow-up care, people with advanced diabetic retinopathy can reduce their risk of blindness by 90 percent,” adds Suber Huang, M.D., M.B.A., chair of the Diabetic Eye Disease Subcommittee for the NEI’s National Eye Health Education Program.

Research has shown that when people with diabetes



Source: Vision Problems in the U.S., 2012

maintain good control of blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol they can slow the devel-opment and progres-sion of diabetic eye disease. In addition to having annual comprehensive dilated eye exams, people with diabetes should do the following to keep their health on TRACK:

- Take your medications.
- Reach and maintain a healthy weight.
- Add physical activity to your daily routine.
- Control your blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol.
- Kick the smoking habit.

NEI supports more than \$40 million in diabetes re-search and outreach, includ-ing the Diabetic Retinopathy Clinical Research Network (DRCR.net), a collaboration of more than 300 physicians at more than 100 clinical sites across the United States.

For more information on diabetic eye disease and tips on finding an eye care professional or financial assistance for eye care, visit www.nei.nih.gov/diabetes or call NEI at 301-496-5248.



The National Eye Institute (NEI), part of the Na-tional Institutes of Health, leads the federal govern-ment’s research on the visual system and eye diseases. NEI supports basic and clinical science programs that result in the development of sight-saving treat-ments. For more information, visit www.nei.nih.gov.

About the National Institutes of Health (NIH): NIH, the Nation’s medical research agency, includes 27 Institutes and Centers and is a component of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. NIH is the primary federal agency conducting and supporting basic, clinical, and translational medical research, and is investigating the causes, treatments, and cures for both common and rare diseases. For more information about NIH and its programs, visit www.nih.gov.

Choctaw Nation WIC

WOMEN, INFANTS and CHILDREN



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

Free help

Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline
1 800 QUIT NOW
784-8669 OKhelpline.com

Key:
• Non-starchy vegetables – broccoli, cabbage, cau-liflower, celery, cucumber, eggplant, greens, jicama, mushrooms, okra, onions, pea pods/snow peas, pep-pers sweet, peppers spicy, radishes, spinach cooked or fresh, summer squash, tomatoes, zucchini.
• Starch – breads, couscous, pasta, rice, corn, hominy, peas, potato, winter squash – acorn, butter-nut, spaghetti, and butternut, yams/sweet potato.

PEOPLE YOU KNOW

Landon receives award from DAV Chapter 33

Disabled American Veterans Chapter 33 of Altus Senior Princess Mykenzee Weese is pictured with First National Bank and Trust Company of Weatherford Vice President of Cordell Branch Manager Landon B. Jones. Chapter 33 awarded Landon with a metal turtle for his efforts in raising funds for the Disabled American Veterans, bringing in \$236. Landon said the “luksi” will stay in his office at Cordell.

Mykenzee is the daughter of Michael and Brandi Weese of Burns Flat and the granddaughter of Melvis and JoAnn Weese of Cordell. She is the great-granddaughter of Mary Wesley Neeley of Cordell.



Happy birthday, Whitney

Happy birthday to District 1 Choctaw Nation Princess Whitney Griffith, who turned 12 years old on Sept. 20. A surprise party was held in her honor at her home in Millerton with her brothers and sisters in attendance. Many blessings to Whitney, from Mom and Dad.



Birthday wishes

Matthew Wall celebrated his eighth birthday on Oct. 28. His brother, Andrew Wall, turned 6 on Oct. 24. They both play football for the Blue Ridge Tigers.

Rebecca Wall celebrated her 19th birthday on Sept. 12. She graduated from Anna High School in June and plans to attend college in January.



Kristianna turns 18

Kristianna Holder turned 18 years old on Oct. 10. She is a senior at Waxahachie Texas Life School. Happy birthday, Kristianna!



Happy birthday, Ciera

Happy birthday to Ciera McCrae of Moore, who turned 8 years old on Nov. 2. She is the great-granddaughter of original enrollee Johnnie James.



Happy birthday, Esther

Happy birthday to Esther M. Underwood Lee, who was born Nov. 11, 1927, to Thomas Jefferson and Lucy Underwood of County Line, Okla., with a family of 13. Esther is the wife of William E. Lee of Big Thicket Lake of Rye, Texas, and a mother of three and great-grandmother of 12. She is a member of First Concord Baptist Church in Rye.



Three generations of Bohanans/Andersons

Darlene Bohanon Seebeck (aunt), Darlene Bohanon Fields (niece) and Cheyenne Maria Fields (great-niece) recently took pictures in their traditional Choctaw dress. Darlene Seebeck’s (top left) dress is red with white trim and roses as the theme of the jewelry and shawl. Darlene Fields’ (top right) dress is lavender with black trim and the Trail of Tears as the jewelry and shawl’s theme. Cheyenne’s (bottom) dress is turquoise with white trim and rainbow colors, feathers and horses as the jewelry and shawl’s theme.

The dresses, shawls, earrings and medallions were made by Fields. She plans on continuing the rest of the beadwork to add to the ensemble, including netted necklaces, fans, headdresses, chokers, bracelets and moccasins. Cheyenne made the necklaces.



The ladies are descendants of William Bohanan Sr. and his full-blood Choctaw wife, who made their home along Hashuqua Creek in Noxubee County, Miss., before walking the Trail of Tears. They are also descended from Daniel Anderson Sr. and Michou Jenny Battiest. Many of their family members are located in Sardis Cemetery and Tvshka Homma.

CVA Spiro Post takes home awards

Choctaw Veterans Association, Skullyville Post #4501 of Spiro, Post Commander Paul Perry accepts two awards for Skullyville Post #4501 for its entries in the Veterans Appreciation Parade held on Nov. 10 in Poteau. Commander Perry was very proud to accept the two awards on behalf of the members of Post #4501. The awards were given by the Poteau VFW Veterans Parade Committee. One award was for first place for the best float entry and the other was third place for the equestrian unit entry.

Pictured left to right are Robert Carter, VFW Parade Chairman, Perry and Don Bosley, VFW Parade Vice Chairman.

Commander Perry extends an invitation to all Choctaw veterans in his area to join their CVA Post at Spiro. You can get information at the Choctaw Seniors Center in Spiro.



Birthday wishes from Griffith family

Happy birthday wishes go to Lena Walls (Shelly) from Mom, Dad and Whitney Griffith. Shelly turned the big 30 on Sept. 1. She is the mother of Kasity and Konner Walls of Idabel.

Also, happy birthday to “big brother” Patrick Gaffney of Valiant, who turned 26 on Sept. 12.

Happy 17th birthday

Happy 17th birthday to Wyatt Lane Williams of Idabel on Sept. 9 and Jeffrey Keith Davis of Texarkana on Sept. 14. Wyatt’s parents are Barry and Linda Williams of Idabel. His grandparents are Donald and Bobbie Scott of Idabel and the late Arvel and Pauline Williams of Summerfield.

Jeffrey’s parents are Keith and Sharon Davis of Texarkana. His grandparents are Earl and Ann Davis and Donald and Bobbie Scott of Idabel. His great-grandmother is Evelyn Mills of Atlanta, Texas. Happy birthday, boys!



Happy birthday, Cody

Happy birthday to Cody on Nov. 2 from his Grandma Louise, mom and dad, brother and family. They are very proud of him.



Emmalee turns 1

Happy birthday to Emmalee Hope Francis, who celebrated her first birthday Nov. 7. Emmalee is Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek and of Mexican descent. She is the daughter of Tonia Francis, has a big sister, Maelisa, and brother, Halen “Bear.” Her grandparents are Michael and Emma Francis; all are of Coalgate.



Happy birthday, Kendal

On Oct. 4, Kendal Morris turned 16. Kendal is very excited to get his driver’s license. He is active in all kinds of sports. The football team he played for in middle school won the league championship. He was also on the swim team and baseball team. He now plays baseball on the high school team. He is a boy scout and has earned many badges, and he enjoys backpacking trips. He is proud of his Choctaw heritage. His family would like to wish him a happy birthday, from his father, Jason; his mom, Trish; brother, Bryant, and his grandparents.



Mykenzee helps DAV raise funds

On Sept. 29, the Disabled American Veterans hosted a pancake sale, car and truck show, bike show, poker run and had vendor booths, with all proceeds going to the program.

Pictured are Commander Virgal Williams, Altus Senior Princess DAV Chapter 33 Mykenzee Weese, Vice Commander Larry Myers and Adj. Judge Bob.



Ashton writes first book

Sixteen-year-old Ashton Martin attends Valliant High School, and her love of reading and passion for the surreal inspired her to become a fiction author.

Ashton began writing “Rose Amidst Thorns” when she was just 12 years old, but really committed to it her freshman year of high school when some of her friends and family read it and encouraged her to pursue her dream. She then sent the book to a publishing company and received a reply within the week informing her of their acceptance.



According to Ashton, she will begin selling copies of “Rose Amidst Thorns” in November, and the book will be released in stores around December/January.

Kareesa places at Okla/Ark State Fair

Congratulations to Kareesa Kennedy of Buffalo Valley FFA. Kareesa received Reserve Grand Champion Market Steer at the Oklahoma/Arkansas State Fair in Ft. Smith, Ark. She was the second animal in the Premium Sale, which was proudly purchased by Choctaw Nation. A special thanks to Brad Spears of Hartshorne for representing Choctaw Nation at the Oklahoma/Arkansas State Fair Premium Sale.

Kareesa is the daughter of Jackie and Brenda Kennedy, granddaughter of Byron and Gertrude Bohanon and Johnny and Laverne Kennedy, all of Buffalo Valley.



Birthday wishes for Bydia

Paul would like to wish his “other half,” Bydia E. Coley Carney, a happy 50th birthday on Dec. 18.



Adysen named Overall Gymnast

Congratulations to Adysen Finch of Hugo. Adysen recently competed in “Pretty in Pink,” located in Plano, Texas. She scored first and second place in all four events and received “Overall Gymnast” with an overall score of 38.75. She trains at Powerhouse Gymnastics in Paris, Texas.

Adysen also celebrated her 10th birthday on Sept. 20. Happy birthday and congratulations, Adysen!



Trinity turns 7

Trinity Skye Thorne turned 7 years old on Sept. 12. She celebrated with family and friends. Trinity is a first-grader at Northmoor Elementary School in Moore. Her grandparents are Gene and LaHoma Murphy Crauthers of Oklahoma City. Her parents are John and Marie Thorne, and her great-grandparents are the late William and Ella Murphy of Idabel.



Look who’s 12

Happy 12th birthday to Canyon Lane Taylor on Dec. 20. He plans to celebrate at home with family and friends. Canyon attends Hugo Middle School and is in the sixth grade. He enjoys participating in all kinds of sports and hunting and fishing. He also likes spending time with all of his nephews and nieces. His parents are William Dwayne Taylor and Becky Peters, both of Hugo, and his grandparents are the late William Taylor and Judy Taylor of Soper, the late Dodson and Theda Lamb of Hugo and Betty Shawhart of Ft. Towson. Canyon has four older sisters and two older brothers. He also has two nieces, six nephews and one on the way. Happy birthday, Canyon, from Mom.



Happy birthday, Robert

Happy 44th birthday to Robert J. Forzetting on Nov. 28, from Mom, Dad, Debra and Adrian. His family wishes him the very happiest of birthdays. He is special to them and fills their lives with laughter and happiness. He is the man, brother and son of which they are all proud.



Ty gets a deer

Ethan “Ty” Coker is the 12-year-old son of Jeremy and Dana Coker of Bennington and grandson of Larry and Jo Ann Coker of Bennington, Ronnie Swafford of Durant and Brenda Swafford of Milburn. Ty got his eight-point deer on the property behind his house in Bennington during the youth hunt on Oct. 19. He is in the sixth grade at Bennington and likes to go hunting, fishing and play baseball and basketball. Ty has two brothers, Cameron Teal and Jeremy Teal, and one sister, Dayla Jo Coker, all of Bennington. He is also the uncle of Kelton Teal.



OK Choctaw Tribal Alliance dance troupe ready to perform

The OK Choctaw Tribal Alliance of Oklahoma City proudly announces its newly formed dance troupe. The group, made up of Choctaw youth, gave its first performance on Oct. 6 at the OK Choctaw Tribal Alliance. They worked diligently since June in preparation for their first public appearance. These youth are honor roll students, participate in sports, marching band and are active in Choctaw language classes and excel in Choctaw language competitions held at the University of Oklahoma. They participate in Choctaw social dancing. Some have made their own Choctaw accessories.

Inspired to learn, these youth went beyond their Choctaw culture and reached another milestone by learning the Southern and Northern Plains dance as well as pow wow etiquette. They are ready to enter the pow wow arena. The OK Choctaw Tribal Alliance and families are proud of their Choctaw youth.

Casey turns 6

Happy birthday to Casey Angel, who turned 6 years old on Oct. 10. Casey is pictured with his dad, Jeff Angel. Nana and Paw Angel want to wish him a happy birthday.



4 Tribes bowling

Good luck to the 4 Tribes bowling team for 2012-13. Members include: Rick Miller (Chickasaw), Jeremy Wallace (Chickasaw), Mark Francis (Choctaw, Creek, Chickasaw) and Koi Kaniatobe (Navajo), all of Ada.



Unruh anniversary

Walter and Madeline Unruh of Athens, Texas, will celebrate their 65th wedding anniversary on Dec. 21. They plan to celebrate with their daughters, Barbara and husband Martin Thompson of Athens and Sharon and husband Richard Campbell of Seabrook, Texas; granddaughter DeAnn and husband Kevin Murphy of Athens; grandson Jason Campbell and Stacy Longoria of LaPorte, Texas; great-grandson Joss and wife Jenny Murphy of Athens; and great-granddaughter Terra of College Station, Texas.



Happy birthday, Allyson

Happy birthday wishes go out to Allyson Campbell, who will turn 10 on Dec. 24. Allyson is the daughter of Chris and Renee Campbell of Shawnee. Her Aunt Lucy and cousins Greg, Richard and Dawn of McAlester, and all her relatives along with her parents hope she has a great birthday.



EDUCATION



The Choctaw Nation Head Start in Broken Bow was honored to have veteran Clinton Barnes come take his picture with them. Barnes served in the Army National Guard and was deployed to Iraq in 2002. The Broken Bow Head Start salutes all United States veterans.

Baylee studies abroad, pursues interest in law

Baylee Butler of Ringling studied in Florence, Italy, this summer with Academic Programs International (API). The study abroad program in Italy was for five weeks, where Baylee took Art History I and II at the Italian International Institute: Lorenze de' Medici. Baylee also took the opportunity to travel to Verona, Venice, Vada, Cinque Terre, Padova, Sorento, Capri and Rome.

Baylee also attended "The Foundations of Liberty & Society: Spontaneous Order," during her summer of traveling study, a conference held in Utah, as well as the University of Arkansas, where she spent four weeks learning about the field of law. She was one of 19 sophomores and juniors in the United States who participated in the LSAC DiscoverLaw.org Pre-law Undergraduate Scholars Program (PLUS) in Arkansas.

Baylee is a junior at Oklahoma State University, a 2010 graduate of Ringling High School and the daughter of Brad and Donna Butler of Ringling.



McAlester JOM parent committee attends national conference

The Johnson-O'Malley parent committee of McAlester attended the 2012 National Johnson-O'Malley Association Conference, the theme being "An Everlasting Educational Gift," in Albuquerque, N.M. The keynote speaker was William "Bill" Mendoza, who was appointed as executive director of the White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native education. Another keynote speaker, Dr. Sherry Allison, has served on numerous national and state boards, task forces and committees and is a member of the Navajo Nation.

Pictured (top) with Mendoza are Chewelah Fry, Deloures Smith and Serena Underwood. Pictured (bottom) are Smith, Allison, Fry, Jennifer Watkins and Underwood.



Idabel child care center holds canned food drive

The Choctaw Nation Child Development Center in Idabel held a canned food drive, donating the food to Hand to Hand. The center was able to collect four boxes full of nonperishable food items. Tracey Batchelor, Choctaw Nation Child Care Coordinator, said the food drive "helps teach the children that it is better to give than to receive."

A Salute

A veteran's story

This past November, Bill Amos was at Tvshka Homma for the Choctaw Nation Veterans Day Celebration. During the celebration, Andrew Amos invited Bill, his grandfather, to be at his Lukfata School for a program, where he would give his name and experience in service.

Bill joined the Navy in 1943 and was discharged in 1946 with training. The Navy, with many ships headed to occupy the Philippine Island, four days before going to the island, six ships were selected to go ahead of the fleet.

A day before reaching the island, the U.S.S. Scout AM 296 was to go first into Leyte Gulf, which was the ship Bill was on. They were on the island until Japan surrendered on Aug. 13, 1945; World War II was over. Bill later went to Vietnam.

A hero in the Amos family was Bill's mother, who had four sons all in service in their country and all saw action overseas. She prayed for them and told her friends that she had a vision. She said, "My sons are all coming back home," and all her sons came home without a scratch.

Jessica among Top 20 Freshmen Women of OSU

Congratulations to Jessica Grace of Ringling, who was selected as one of the Top 20 Freshmen Women at Oklahoma State University. She is the daughter of Jay and Melissa Grace of Ringling and is majoring in Communication Sciences and Disorders.

Jessica is pictured with the university president, Burns Hargis, and his wife, Ann, who hosted a dinner for the Top 40 Freshmen at their home on Oct. 1.

Jessica and the 39 other students will continue on with an interview process with the Achafoa Chapter of Mortar Board at OSU that will help determine the selection of the Top Ten Freshmen Men and Top Ten Freshmen Women.



Kelbie graduates OU

Kelbie Kennedy of Buffalo Valley recently graduated Summa Cum Laude from the University of Oklahoma College of Arts and Sciences. She earned her bachelor's degree in Communication with a minor in Native American Studies. Kelbie was accepted by several law programs, but has chosen to attend the University of Oklahoma College of Law, where she is concentrating on International and Native American Law.

"I would like to thank the Choctaw Nation for making education a priority for the youth of the Nation and the generosity of Higher Education grants I have received. I also appreciate the support of my tribal councilman, Kenny Bryant, Jack Austin and especially Assistant Chief Gary Batton for his mentoring and encouragement. I am proud to represent Choctaw Nation in OU's College of Law class of 2015," said Kelbie.

Kelbie is the daughter of Jackie and Brenda Kennedy and sister to Kareesa of Buffalo Valley. Her grandparents are Byron and Gertrude Bohanon and Johnny and Laverne Kennedy, all of Buffalo Valley. Her great-grandmother is Johnnie Kirkes, also of Buffalo Valley.



Kyle receives football honors

Kyle Abbott, a senior at McCloud High School, was recently named the All District Tight End of the Year for District 4A-2. He was also nominated to represent Oklahoma on the 2013 Western Conference Football Team at the Down Under Bowl Championship in Australia next July and has been nominated to participate in the 2013 Jim Thorpe Native American All Star Football Game in June in Oklahoma City.

Kyle's plans are to play football in college and major in Criminal Justice. He is the son of Jim and Annetta Abbott of McCloud and the grandson of Ron and Concetta Gragg of Crowder.



To the Youth of the Nation

Coalgate YAB member appreciates community service

By JEREMIAH WEEDEN

Coalgate YAB Chapter

My name is Jeremiah Weedon, and I am a junior at Coalgate High School. I am the chapter representative of the Coalgate chapter of the Choctaw Nation Youth Advisory Board.

I enjoy being a part of this community-based non-profit organization. We have been encouraged to serve our communities through this organization. I have learned to be involved in civic, tribal, school func-

tions and community service activities. I have sat in meetings involving city ordinances, such as public procedures and laws of my town. The tribal council meetings help me to understand the services my tribe provides, and sitting in a school board meeting helped me understand how my school system operates.

The community service has helped me understand how my community needs services provided by the youth of the nation, from helping the elderly at the nursing home to orga-

nizing a clean-up day at the public city park and reminding citizens not to forget our service men and women by placing ribbons on the trees at the county court house.

I appreciate the Choctaw Nation for encouraging us as youth to become involved in our communities. We can learn to be better citizens and leaders for our country.

Be involved, youth of the nation. You will find yourself learning so much more by being a part of your community.

Tolliver graduates basic training

Congratulations to William Chance Tolliver, who recently graduated from U.S. Marine Corps basic training in San Diego. After further combat training in San Diego, he will be stationed in Florida for specialized training in his chosen field.

Tolliver is a 2012 graduate of Roff High School. He is the son of Kidd and Luisa Tolliver, grandson of Oscar (Dub) and Jeanie Tolliver and great-grandson of Wilcie Standridge Tolliver, all of Roff.



Choctaw/Creek pair takes first in golf

Richard Belcher got a late start in the golfing game, which he started playing at the age of 39. Along with his student, Terry Sullivan, the pair is turning heads across Oklahoma.

Belcher has been golfing for over 21 years. He started while in the Navy when he was based in Guam.

Belcher trained Sullivan for the 2012 Special Olympics, where they walked away with two first place victories in Oklahoma City at the James Stewart Golf Course on Oct. 8 and in Tulsa at Mohawk Park on Oct. 13.

In an 18-hole golf tournament, handicapped players tee off on odd-numbered holes and trainers tee off on even-numbered holes. Both alternate and hit until they each sink the shot.

Sullivan, who has a history of seizures, has been golfing since he was 3 years old. Belcher has trained him for the last three months.

"Sullivan's father, Douglas, is the one that asked me to help train him," said Belcher. "When I train him, I help him with his swing speed. He can already hit the ball a mile. We want more control when he tees off."

"I love playing golf," Sullivan said. "It is real fun and I get to make new friends at each event. Most of all, I get to play with my coach, Richard, and learn from him."

Belcher is Creek and his clan is Fusv (Bird). His parents are the late Jack and Edna Belcher. Sullivan is Choctaw.



Thank you to Career Development

Thank you so much to the Choctaw Nation Career Development program for all its assistance in the renewal of my cosmetology instructions license. My family and I just moved back to Texas from Oklahoma, and with my new license, I was able to get a job at Sport Clips with a wonderful group of girls. With this new job, so many new opportunities are allowing my family a life with less struggles, stress and worries about living on a day to day basis.

I'm looking forward to the holidays and a new year, I could not have done this without your assistance. Thank you.

Lawana Newlia and family

Choctaw Nation Vocational Rehabilitation Calendar

	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
J			1	2	3	4 Broken Bow 8 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. Idabel by appt.	5
A		6	7 Durant 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.	8 Antlers by appt.	9 Talihina 10 a.m.-2 p.m.	10	11 Broken Bow 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
N		13	14 Durant 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.	15	16 McAlester 10 a.m.- 2 p.m. Stigler by appt.	17	18 Wright City by appt.
U		20	21 Durant 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Martin Luther King, Jr. birthday (observed)	22 Crowder by appt.	23 Poteau 10 a.m.-2 p.m.	24	25 Atoka by appt. Coalgate by appt.
R		27	28 Durant 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.	29	30 Wilburton 10:30 a.m.- 2 p.m.	31	

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

Districts honor outstanding elders

Honorees share life experiences

Continued from Page 1

Willie Walley, 84, was raised in Bennington. He was the firstborn of six children and was delivered at home with the aid of a country doctor. He joined the 45th Infantry Division of the Oklahoma National Guard while in school and he was accepted into the Army Air Corps after graduation. His duties began during the Korean War.

During his service, he was part of great technological advances in aviation. He witnessed many changes, from prop planes to jets. Because his primary duties were in communication and handling highly sensitive information, Willie is restricted from discussing many aspects of his military experience. He also served during Vietnam and in addition to stateside duties, he had tours in Germany, Italy, Pakistan, the Aleutians and Alaska. He is recipient of the Air Force Good Conduct Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal with five bronze loops, Army of Occupation Medal, National Defense Service Medal with one bronze service star, and the Air Force Longevity Service Award with four bronze oak leaf clusters.

A variety of jobs awaited the military man after his service, including mobile home sales rep, a line laborer, and managing a small cattle ranch with his wife, Ella.

Willie has served as a deacon of the New Bennington Presbyterian Church, Sunday School teacher, treasurer and basketball coach. He has served on Bennington's Johnson-O'Malley board, helping to oversee programs benefitting Native American children. He has also been a volunteer umpire in the junior high baseball program. Willie is a devoted fan to both the University of Oklahoma sports program and the Texas Rangers.

He stays busy as the coordinator of Choctaw senior activities at the wellness center in Durant. He also assists at the community center's exercise program and other events. He

enjoys his fingers-in-the-dirt role as chairman of District 9's Going Green Garden. The seniors planted 800 onion plants this year.

In order to keep current and to pass along an interest in Choctaw activities for future generations of his family, Willie attends cultural classes in language and crafts such as pottery and making moccasins.

The Walleys have two children, Eddy Walley and Diana Walley Bundrant. They celebrated 47 years of marriage before Ella passed away in 2007. Willie lives on his family's land issued in the original allotment where he gardens, tends to livestock and enjoys his six grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Carolyn Willis Bohanan, 66, of Wright City was born in Rufe and attended schools at Rattan, Wright City, Valliant and Chilocco where she graduated in 1965. She earned her post-graduate vocational degree in cosmetology in 1966.

She and husband Virgil Bohanan married in 1967 and were blessed with a daughter, Tina, and two sons, Bo "Jr." and Michael, 10 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Virgil passed away in January 2011.

Carolyn was employed in a sewing plant in Idabel for 25 years, holding various positions including machine operator, instructor and supervisor. She has also worked as a coordinator for McCurtain County Indian Development Center in Wright City and in cultural development at different sites for the Choctaw Nation. She retired in 2010 from Tyson Foods in Broken Bow after working there for 15 years.

Carolyn is a lifetime member of St. John Presbyterian Church in Rufe where she has served in several office positions. She is an ordained elder for the local commissioned elder to the Eastern Presbytery. Carolyn currently holds office for the Choctaw Agency. She enjoys sewing, quilting and participating in her grandchildren's sports and school activities. Carolyn looks forward to the fellowship on Wednesdays at the Choctaw Community Center and all of the trips the seniors take together.



District 3, Talihina – Eugene McGee attended Indian school and Whitesboro Public School. He has shared his talent of playing the piano for local businesses, churches and many events at nursing homes. He has traveled to many states from Colorado to New York to play the piano. Eugene is known for his love of music, woodwork and people. Eugene is pictured with Councilman Kenny Bryant and Chief Pyle.



District 3, Talihina – Patti Hurst Atwood attended Talihina High School and Bacone College. She was employed by Talihina Public School and has also worked with the Bureau of Indian Affairs in issuing Certificates of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB). Patti has been active with the Talihina Senior Program and spends time on a daily basis visiting with the elders and working with seniors in fundraising and attending trips. She is a lifetime member of First Baptist of Talihina and is grandmother to 12 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Patti is pictured with Councilman Kenny Bryant and Chief Pyle.



District 2, Bethel – Virginia Peters Jefferson is the mother of eight children, numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren. She is dedicated to Kulli Chito Presbyterian Church in Bethel and she enjoys cooking and feeding the church people in attendance. Her work experience includes 10 years at Lane Poultry in Broken Bow and then as a cook for the Bethel Senior Center. She is known for her raisin fried pies. Virginia is pictured with Councilman Tony Messenger and Chief Pyle.



District 2, Broken Bow – Barbara Battiest is the mother of two daughters and has six grandchildren. She is employed with the Choctaw Nation Tribal Transit Program and had served as a Community Health Representative (CHR) prior to her current position. She participates in Broken Bow Senior Center activities and enjoys singing with the Broken Bow Singers and attending church singings. She has been blessed with a high alto voice and tries to inspire others. Barbara is pictured with Councilman Tony Messenger and Chief Pyle.



District 2, Broken Bow – Ivan Battiest attended North Bethel School, Battiest High School and Sequoyah High School, graduating in 1973. He continued his education at Okmulgee Tech earning a certificate in small engine repair and then received an industrial maintenance certificate from Idabel Vo-Tech. He worked 21 years at Weyerhaeuser in Wright City and has been a van driver for the Choctaw Nation for six years. Ivan is a fluent Choctaw speaker. He continues teaching Choctaw language classes to improve his spelling and writing of the language and more of the Choctaw traditions and culture. He has emceed the Labor Day Festival Gospel Singing for seven years. Ivan currently serves as the president of the Broken Bow Senior Center and enjoys the activities and singing with the senior group. He learned to play the guitar at an early age. Ivan and his wife have five children and nine grandchildren. Ivan is pictured with Councilman Tony Messenger and Chief Pyle.

Nominees chosen from each center

District 1, Idabel – Ida Tonihka Crosby, 96, was born in Broken Bow. She and her late husband, Mike Crosby, raised six daughters, four stepchildren and enjoyed 18 grandchildren, 40 great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren. Ida is a lifetime member of Yasho United Methodist Church, Broken Bow, and very active with the United Methodist Women Society. As a member of the society, she sewed quilts donated for new mothers or new preachers and sold a few to meet the needs of her family. Due to a language barrier, she was unable to hold a position in her church; yet, eventually learned the English language in order to communicate with her grandchildren. Ida is known as a hard-working Choctaw woman, a homemaker who tended to the needs of her children, a seamstress sewing clothing for her children's needs, and as a gardener working a 10-acre garden growing foods needed for the family and food items needed for canning in preparation for the winter hard times. She has been a regular participant at the Idabel Senior Citizen Center for many years.

District 1, Idabel – Reginald Don Williams was born on Christmas Day in 1939 in Poteau. He attended Goodland Indian School, Chilocco Indian Agriculture School and El Dorado (Kan.) Junior College. He served in the U.S. Army for eight years. In 1960, he went to work for Southwestern Bell Telephone Company where he worked as a telephone lineman, local exchange repairman and switching equipment technician for 32 years. Upon retirement, Don was elected mayor of the City of Idabel for which he served for five years. He and his wife, Barbara, reside in Idabel and have been married for 47 years.



District 3, Smithville – Jerry Lowman joins his wife, Shirley, as one of Smithville's 2012 Outstanding Elders. He has retired as a skidder driver logger and offers assistance to his son-in-law. Jerry also attends Buffalo Presbyterian Church in Watson. He enjoys silversmithing, watching OU Sooners, gospel singing and fishing. His silversmith jewelry includes the use of stickball décor on silver necklaces, earrings, rings and watch bands and other pieces. Jerry is pictured with Councilman Kenny Bryant and Chief Pyle.



District 3, Smithville – Shirley Lowman and husband Jerry have been married for 47 years and have raised two children. Shirley is from of a family of five brothers and four sisters. She retired in 2007 from Smithville School as a teacher assistant and bus driver after 35 years. She attends Buffalo Presbyterian Church in Watson and is active in the women's church group. Her hobbies include beading, piecing quilts, fishing, gospel singing and enjoys being outside and family gatherings. Shirley is pictured with Councilman Kenny Bryant and Chief Pyle.



District 4, Poteau – Jean Evans, a mother of three, has been involved with Choctaw Nation since prior to Chief Gardner's term and in June of 1978 began her employment with the WIC program as a field worker in northern LeFlore County. She has maintained her employment with the tribe at a social service level and enjoys her position helping people. She has also worked at the Wilburton Field Office for 25.5 years providing service to the Choctaw people. Jean is pictured with Councilman Delton Cox and Chief Pyle.



District 4, Poteau – Leland Wolfe is a graduate of LeFlore High School and has attended The Hills Baptist Church for the past 30 years. The church is where he began his life with his wife, Belinda. They have raised three children and eight grandchildren and remain busy operating a general business and attending all of their grandchildren's activities. Leland was employed in construction work for 19.5 years and then worked with the Poteau Valley Water System operating the water plant. He returned to construction work until retirement. He is active with the Poteau Senior Program volunteering in taco sales and other activities. His hobbies include fishing and gardening and he attends the Labor Day festivities on an annual basis. Leland is pictured with Councilman Delton Cox and Chief Pyle.



District 4.5, Spiro – Johnny Dale Cox and wife Kathryn of Bokeshe have three children and four grandchildren. He attended LeFlore, Summerfield, Stony Point and graduated from Spiro High School. He received higher education at Poteau Community College, Eastern Oklahoma State College and graduated from Oklahoma State University with a BS degree in agricultural education. He taught at Hayworth and Spiro High Schools, retiring after 30 years of teaching ag. After retirement, he has more time to enjoy working on his ranch, raising American Registered Quarter Horses and commercial cattle. Johnny is pictured with Councilmen Delton Cox and Ron Perry and Chief Pyle.

District 4.5, Spiro – Dorothy Downing was born in Spiro where she, her mother and grandmother lived most of their lives. She was employed by Red Wine Brothers Inc. Dorothy enjoys reading and taking care of her grandchildren. She is a member of the First Baptist Church, serving as a Sunday School teacher. She is also a member of the Spiro Chapter 144 Eastern Star and attends the Spiro Choctaw Senior Center where she is ready to serve at any time.



District 5, Stigler – Amelia Steen was born on her grandmother's allotted land in Stigler. She attended Stigler High School and Haskell Institute in Lawrence, Kan. Her first employment was with the Census Bureau in Pittsburgh, Kan., where she met her husband. They had two children. Amelia was employed by the City of Pittsburgh for 10 years and Johnson County Government for 13 years. She moved back to Stigler after retirement and attends Bethel Indian Baptist Church. She is a member of the ladies auxiliary of DFW Post 446. She has also served as a past treasurer for the Stigler Senior Center. Her hobbies include attending Choctaw-sponsored events, gardening, arts and crafts and volunteer work. Amelia is pictured with Councilman Ron Perry and Chief Pyle.



District 5, Stigler – Johnny Garland has three children and three grandchildren. He attends First United Methodist Church. A graduate of Stigler High School and OSU, Johnny was employed at Shamrock Oklahoma and Gas in the engineering department. He returned to Stigler where he bought a flower and gift shop business. He then retired after 20 years. He has served as past president of the Stigler Chamber of Commerce, served on Stigler Lions Club and the Ozark Florist Association. He enjoys restoring old cars. Johnny is pictured with Councilman Ron Perry and Chief Pyle.



District 6, Wilburton – Born in Red Oak, Linda Lawrence is a graduate of LeFlore High School where she met her husband. They have two children, five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Due to her husband's employment, she lived in Woodward for a number of years. After returning to Red Oak, Linda worked with student services at Eastern Oklahoma State College in Wilburton. When the Native American building was opened, she transferred to work with Jones Academy students and help with the Native American Club until her retirement. She attends the Choctaw Senior Center in Wilburton where she serves as secretary. Linda works with fundraising taco sales, cooks for numerous holiday dinners and helps with fundraising at Robbers Cave and the Labor Day Festival. Linda is pictured with Councilman Joe Coley and Chief Pyle.



District 6, Wilburton – Ralph Adcock was born and raised in Russellville. He and his wife, Mary, have been married for 54 years and have five children, four grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. His work experience includes construction jobs, truck driver for a food corporation and 20 years as custodian for Quinton High School. He and Mary are both active at the Choctaw Senior Center in Wilburton. He drives the senior bus from Quinton to Wilburton every Wednesday. Ralph says his greatest joy is meeting and visiting with people. Ralph is pictured with Councilman Joe Coley and Chief Pyle.



District 7, Antlers – Beatrice Williston was born in Hendrix and is the mother of six with nine grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. She received her LPN license degree and worked for the Choctaw Nation CHR program. She has served the Choctaw people for 23 years through other programs such as food distribution, the victims program, child care assistance program, and also volunteers as a cook for the senior program. Her hobbies include beading, sewing, traveling and cooking traditional food. Beatrice is pictured with Councilman Jack Austin and Chief Pyle.



District 7, Antlers – Wallan McKnight was born in Darvia and attended school at Sugarloaf and Antlers. He joined the U.S. Air Force at the age of 17 and served for four years, with one tour through Okinawa. Later, he joined the U.S. Army, serving 20 years with tours through Korea, Vietnam and Germany. He received the Purple Heart, bronze star and numerous other medals. He returned home to Moyers and was employed with McCloud Corrections Center, retiring after 20 years. He is an active member of Moyers Baptist Church and enjoys 5k walks, children's ballgames and traveling. He also enjoys the fellowship at the Choctaw Senior Center in Antlers. Wallan is pictured with Councilman Jack Austin and Chief Pyle.



District 7, Wright City – Ellis Dean Taylor and his wife raised three children and have four grandchildren. He began his employment with Holly Creek Poultry Plant and was hired on at Dereks Lumber Mill, known as Weyerhaeuser, for 35 years until the plant closed. He attended Kiamichi Technical Center in Idabel, becoming a certified automobile service technician. He began his ministry as a lay speaker for OIMC, serving the Ruth Circuit, and a lay missionary at Hampton Chapel Church. His hobbies are gardening, golf, playing games on the computer and gospel singing. Mr. Taylor is pictured with Councilman Jack Austin and Chief Pyle.



District 8, Hugo – Dorothy Glenn attended and graduated from Hugh High School, receiving a tennis scholarship to attend Victoria University in Victoria, Texas. She transferred to Southeastern Oklahoma State University where she graduated with a BS degree in education. Dorothy taught in Cashion and worked on her master's, receiving it in 1963. After six years, she moved to Omaha, Neb., and taught on that reservation for 65 years. She is a member of numerous organizations such as NIA and NIEA as well as the National Education Association. Her most treasured honor is her Eagle Feather presented by the Omaha and Lakota tribes. She returned to Hugo and enjoys her time with her horse, Choctaw. Dorothy is pictured with Councilman Perry Thompson and Chief Pyle.



District 8, Hugo – Eddie Wood is the father of two daughters. He served four years in the U.S. Army and has been employed with the Choctaw Push County Youth Services. Eddie volunteers at the Hugo Choctaw Senior Center serving as spokesperson. He has also served on the Hugo hospital board for 14 years and as chairman for four years. Eddie is pictured with Councilman Perry Thompson and Chief Pyle.



District 9, Durant – Gaylia Green was born in California but then moved back to Oklahoma. She began piano lessons at the age of 5 and at age 7 she became the pianist for worship services at her church. She attended Austin College in Sherman, Texas, and then transferred to Southeastern Oklahoma State University. She has two children. Gaylia gave piano recitals, taught private lessons and volunteered in various ways. She is currently working with the Choctaw Nation on a preservation project restoring Choctaw Hymns. Gaylia is pictured with Councilman Ted Dosh and Chief Pyle.



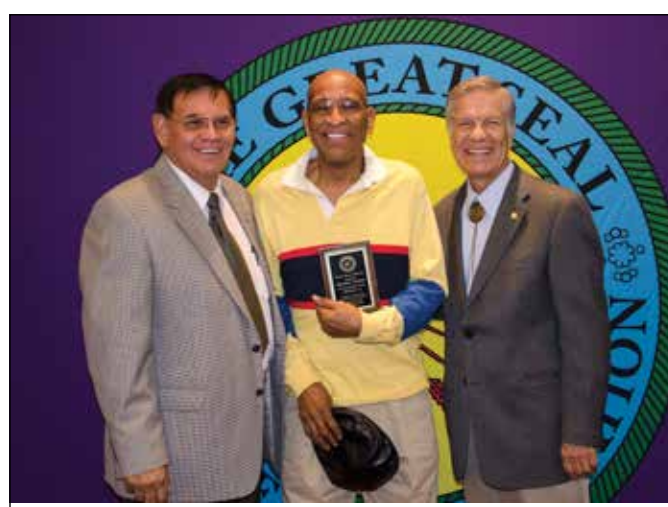
District 10, Atoka – Maricie Smith was born in Darwin. She married Troy Smith and they have three children, seven grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren. Maricie stays close to her heritage by being active with the District 10 senior citizens. She sings Choctaw hymns and goes on all the trips with her friends in District 10. She is a graduate of Atoka High School and went on to receive a BS in education. Her history reflects a hard worker who cares for her family, friends and church. Maricie is pictured with Councilman Anthony Dillard and Chief Pyle.



District 10, Atoka – Jim Lloyd is a lifelong Oklahoma resident with strong ties to his Choctaw lineage. He is active in the community and in the Choctaw seniors program. Jim was born in Bennington and currently resides in Atoka. He has two children and two grandchildren. He excelled in public school which prepared him for the journey to receive a master's degree in science for the University of Oklahoma. He taught chemistry for over 40 years at Atoka High School. Being a teacher allowed him to pursue hobbies and he became a professional photographer. He is the current president and activity director for the District 10 seniors. Jim is pictured with Councilman Anthony Dillard and Chief Pyle.



District 11, McAlester – Carol Scott remained a stay-at-home mom while raising her daughter. She started attending the McAlester Senior Center in 2009 and helps with projects at the Labor Day Festival. She routinely volunteers up to 15 hours a week for the Pittsburg County Genealogical and Historical Society in McAlester. She has attended Choctaw language classes for 12 years. Carol has sung in the church for 40 years and with numerous Christian groups. She is the Sunday School secretary, has served in VBS in different capacities for 40 years and has also led a children's Bible program. Her hobbies include sewing, genealogy, gardening and learning the Choctaw language. Carol is pictured with Councilman Bob Pate and Chief Pyle.



District 11, McAlester – Emanuel Sexton of McAlester has two children and three grandchildren. He volunteers every Wednesday at the McAlester Senior Center. He has a welding certificate and attended college at Eastern Oklahoma State and Johnson County, Kan. He was the first minority firefighter for the McAlester Fire Department. He is a veteran, serving with the Army 10th Airborne and received a conduct medal in the Vietnam War. Mr. Sexton is pictured with Councilman Bob Pate and Chief Pyle.

District 12, Coalgate – Maggie Mae Anderson was born in Centrahoma, one of eight children. She has lived in Coal County all of her life and has seven children. She speaks and sings fluent Choctaw. Some of her most memorable times were going to church and being with her family. Maggie attends the Gospel Lighthouse Church in Coalgate and has been an active member in the Coalgate District 12 senior group for many years. She loves going to exercise classes on Mondays and Wednesdays. Maggie is a strong Choctaw woman and one example of letting her light shine.

District 12, Crowder – Sylvia Horton attended Hayes School in Ada, graduated from Latta School and has three children. She has recently moved to Eufaula where she enjoys working with beads, fishing, sewing and cooking. Sylvia helps raise money for senior trips and volunteers in the kitchen. She also helps decorate for the different holidays and works at the concession stand at the Labor Day Festival.

District 12, Crowder – Auston Rodgers was raised on a farm near Tupelo and attended Tupelo School. He worked with Brockway Glass Co. before retiring in 1991. He has three sons and was very active before becoming a senior. He did foster care for several years, keeping some of the children up to two years. Later in life, he had one Choctaw girl of whom he is very proud. He has one grandchild. Auston has attended the Crowder Center since it opened in 2002 and enjoys being able to help at any event.



Chief Pyle welcomes Layla Day Nuseka Lawrence, who wore her “Choctaw best” to the Idabel.



Councilman Thomas Williston visits with Simon Amos, Truman Jefferson and Larry Ebbahotubbi as they enjoy their Thanksgiving dinner at the Idabel Community Center.



Assistant Chief Gary Batton stops to say hello to Meg Scott at Smithville’s Thanksgiving dinner. Happy 80th birthday. Meg, on the 28th!



G.B. Anderson enjoys his lunch at Smithville. He turns 92 years old on Dec. 12. Happy birthday!

We gather and give Thanks



Chief Pyle and Joyce Tran are ready for dinner in Idabel.



Councilman Jack Austin and Williston Wesley are ready to start enjoying the Thanksgiving lunch at Wright City.



Claire and Jack Sewell happily take home a door prize from the Wright City festivities.



Councilman Thomas Williston, Lydia McClure and Leon Wesley take a moment for a photo at the Idabel dinner.



Assistant Chief Gary Batton visits with Rosel-ee Senior and Leona Samuels at Smithville.



John and Ludlow joined in the festivities at Smithville.



Councilman Jack Austin, Isaac Jacob and District 7 Jr. Miss Alisha Hardy are pictured at Wright City.



Miss Choctaw Nation Cheyenne Murray hugs her aunt, Jane Mintz. Cheyenne and Little Miss Josephine Gilmore worked together to give away door prizes in Durant.



Councilman James Frazier and District 12 Outstanding Elder Maggie Anderson at the Coalgate Thanksgiving lunch.



Tashina and 13-month-old Anthony Chapman play peekaboo at the Coalgate lunch.



Eva Frederick and Janelle and Harold Mitchell are having a good time at the Coalgate Thanksgiving luncheon.



Logan Polk enjoys being with her grandmother, Ruth Polk, at the dinner on Nov. 5 in Durant.



Left, Councilman Frazier greets Noah Burris to the Coalgate Community Center. Burris is a veteran of the Army National Guard.



Eight-month-old Terrance and his grandparents, Jarvis and Sheila Johnson, arrive at Durant’s dinner.



Tara Wright gives her grandmother, Geraldine Wright, a hug while celebrating Thanksgiving in Durant.



Assistant Chief Gary Batton says hello to 16-month-old Zoey Skelton, Mary Watson and Connie Stabaugh at Wright City.



Leo and Darlene Cogburn enjoy the Coalgate Thanksgiving dinner.



Cassie Goshen smiles for the camera.



Rosa Gilmore visits with her Councilman, Ted Dosh, in Durant.



Maricie Smith, recently named an Outstanding Elder, Aaron Smith and Councilman Anthony Dillard enjoy their Thanksgiving meal at Atoka.



Councilman Anthony Dillard says hello to Joe Hayes at the Thanksgiving dinner in Atoka.



Pictured are Consetta Leflore, Charlene and Jim Lloyd, Janice Jones, Linda Cooper, Shirley Zaicek and Councilman Dillard. The group wore their traditional dress to the Thanksgiving dinner in Atoka on Nov. 7.



Mareli Lopez takes a big bite in Atoka.



Lucas Wesley snoozes before the Thanksgiving dinner in Hugo begins.



Vivian Baker and Peyton Wesley have a good time in Hugo.



Ann and Ray Jordan talk with Councilman Perry Thompson before the Thanksgiving dinner in Hugo.



Councilman Thompson visits with Faye Pillars and Mary Smith as they eat their Thanksgiving meal in Hugo.



Councilman Jack Austin greets Junior Billy to the Antlers lunch.



Betty Work-Farris is joined by her daughter and grandson, Darlene and Jaden Storie-Ellijay of Georgia, at the Antlers Thanksgiving.



Eugene Branam of Stigler is a proud member of the Choctaw Nation Color Guard.



Chief Pyle jokes with CHR Darlene Noahubi at the Bethel Thanksgiving dinner.



Councilman Ronald Perry visits with Jerome Bonaparte of Tamaha and Phillip McCann of Kanima before the Thanksgiving meal is served in Stigler.



Councilman Austin welcomes Andy Choate and Mary Wilson to the Antlers luncheon.



Assistant Chief Gary Batton and Councilman Jack Austin wish Brenda Fletcher a happy birthday at the Tvshka Homma Thanksgiving dinner.



It's smiles all around at the Stigler lunch for Councilman Ronald Perry and Don McAlvain, standing, and JoAnn Scantlen and Sharon McAlvain, both seated, all of Stigler.



Councilman Ronald Perry welcomes Iva Spring, left, and Christine Barnett, both of Kinta, to the Stigler Thanksgiving dinner.



District 8 Little Miss Choctaw Princess Savannah Herndon and Angela Herndon smile for the camera at Hugo.



Ready to eat some Thanksgiving turkey and stuffing at Broken Bow are Umbo Tisho and Seth Tisho with Assistant Chief Batton.



Regina Green, Choctaw Nation Museum director, serves tea to Community Health Nursing employees Kelly Adams and Brandi Burris in Tvshka Homma.



Beth Gann and Joseph Martin had a good time in Antlers.



Betty Thomas spent many hours helping to prepare the delicious meal for the Thanksgiving dinner in McAlester.



Chief Gregory E. Pyle talks stickball with Vernon Willis at the Bethel Thanksgiving dinner.



During the Broken Bow Thanksgiving dinner, Assistant Chief Gary Batton shares a joke with Alexandria Wade and Andres Sanchez.



Elsie Walls of Rattan and Florence Chavis of Moyers visit at the get-together in Antlers.



Waiting for the festivities to start at Bethel are Melissa Bohanan, Joey Tom, Hope Tom, Katalina Nunez, Cory Salinas, Randy Hammons, Councilman Tony Messenger and Brian McClain.



The holidays are a time for fellowship and friends. Standing in Antlers, Councilman Jack Austin, Jim Johnson of Antlers and Laland McKnight of Moyers; seated, Dwight May of Antlers and Bob Joslin of Snow.



At the Wilburton Thanksgiving dinner, Pete Swafford and Loyce Bell spoke with Councilman Joe Coley.



Seranade "Sadie" Parker attended the Wilburton Thanksgiving dinner with her great-grandmother and met Chief Gregory E. Pyle.



Councilman Delton Cox welcomes Marie Hamilton and Kaye Rutledge to lunch at the Poteau center.

Brenda Lovejoy greets Chief Pyle at the door in Spiro.



The outstanding elders from District 12, Dee Trobaugh and Auston Rodgers, take a photo with Assistant Chief Batton and Councilman Frazier.

Members of the Crowder High School band provide lunchtime entertainment with some bluegrass music.



Sisters and brother Maudie Stubblefield, Mary Pendergrass, Ruth Cummins, and Merle Kirkland are joined by Kenneth and Norma Jean Major and Councilman Bob Pate at the McAlester Thanksgiving dinner.



Following lunch, many of the attendees joined together for singing at the Poteau community center.



Assistant Chief Batton visits with brothers Grady and JB Adams.



Councilman Coley is all smiles with District 6 Little Miss Cheyenne Holman.



Language Department employee Celina Hickman serves a plate to Susan Roberts of McAlester.



Wanda McRorey, Dorris Kitterman and CJ Perera are a happy group of Talihina Choctaws.



William Johnson, left, and James Green, both of McAlester, butter the pans of rolls for the dinner. The men both volunteer each week at the community center.



Councilmen Delton Cox and Ron Perry join Kathy and Johnny Cox, Colton and Jacob Sullivan, Olivia Cox, Chief Pyle and Assistant Chief Batton for a photo after lunch in Spiro.

Left, Qualima Knapp and Margaret Vaughn had a good time in Talihina.



Mary Wilson says goodbye to Chief Pyle before leaving the Talihina center.



Lloyd Morris and Deedia Francis enjoy each other's company in Crowder.



Michael James, Connie May, Paula Lynch and Wynema Luman are all smiles in Poteau.



Tom Swafford enjoys the company of Councilman Ron Perry at the Spiro Thanksgiving lunch.



John Anderson gets a visit from Kenny Bryant at the Talihina Thanksgiving lunch.



Tonja Smalling visits her friend, Carl McIntosh, at the Talihina dinner.



Councilman Bob Pate visits with Becky Jones, Mary Maw, Anthony Johnson, Juanita Johnson, Loyce Wright and Mary Ann Farry.



Buck Durant is happy to greet the guests as they enter the Choctaw Community Center in McAlester for the Thanksgiving dinner.

Hospital hosts mock emergency

By COURTNEY PETTY
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Choctaw Nation Health Care Center in Talihina involved the local community for a "Community Response Drill". Roughly 100 high school students were bussed in from area schools to play the role of a specific victim or family member. The students arrived every five minutes acting out their assigned role handing a nurse or doctor a sheet listing their injuries. To make this event as realistic as possible, some were even brought into the emergency bay by ambulance. Other students who played the concerned family mem-

ber came in from all areas attempting to find out about their loved one. The facility also responded to a variety of community emergency scenarios that were injected into the drill at different time. In the midst of the excitement, a command center was established and manned by administrative staff to answer calls and make executive decisions as they occurred. New leadership was introduced to the command center and trained to ensure they would be able to fulfill the duties and be comfortable in that role. The goal was to have at least three people trained for the same role so there will always be a backup. Darryl Holaday, Choctaw

Nation Director of Safety, and his team, along with local Emergency Management personnel were on scene calling in their own scenarios to see how staff members would adjust and handle the situations at hand. Regional Medical Response Systems (RMRS) role was to offer suggestions and monitor the drill first hand so positive and constructive feedback could be initiated. During the drill, a CNHSA associate impersonated a doctor. The impersonating had a very convincing factitious work badge and scrubs, but was immediately stopped and questioned. He was then taken to ensure he had the correct credentials.

Once he was discovered as a fake, he was escorted off the property by the tribal police. This was an added exercise to confirm how observant and precise staff members of CNHCC are; even in an extremely busy and trying time. These drills are considered to be a crucial part of the standard operating procedures and a requirement to remain Joint Commission Accredited. Although this was the most elaborate drill the CNHCC has faced, drills such as this are welcomed as they are used as a learning tool. The drills not only prepare the staff, but also are used to gage the quantity of supplies and resources the hospital



Choctaw Nation: COURTNEY PETTY

should have in stock or readily available. This also gives the facility a chance to evaluate new plans and processes they have put in place to confirm the level of effectiveness and those needing to be revamped and improved. As the trial wrapped up, discussion on how to improve began. It was discovered that the hospital chapel used to house concerned friends and family was too small and confined to accommo-

date the number of people. Finding ways to improve such as these made the drill a huge success and a great learning process for all the staff members. Debbie Dalpoas, chief emergency management officer added, "Drills are not meant to be viewed as pass or fail. Drills are a learning opportunity for our staff and leadership to continuously improve our ability to respond in an actual emergency."

Earth Day is Every Day

Choctaw Nation's educational event attracts many students, teaches importance of caring for environment

By **CHRISSY DILL**

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

The “Earth Day is Every Day” event, held at the Choctaw Event Center on Nov. 1, featured several educational presentations to a crowd of around 600 fourth-, fifth- and sixth-graders from seven different schools, including Atoka, Wapanucka, Jones Academy, Rock Creek, Caddo, Caney and Achille.

The presenters called for much audience participation from the excited students.

The program educated the attendees on what they can do to help the environment and taught them that every action they take impacts their environment.

Those that spoke during the program included the George Miksch Sutton Avian Research Center of Bartlesville, an organization whose mission is to find cooperative conservation solutions for birds and the natural world through science and education.

Jarryd Robison of Southeastern Oklahoma State University taught the audience about snakes and other reptiles that can be found in their area of the state, their habitats and the indications to look for in order to identify the type of snake.

Two representatives from the Oklahoma Museum Network, sponsored by OG&E,

used many willing volunteers to demonstrate to the audience the importance of water and energy conservation.

Earth Day is Every Day was organized by the Choctaw Nation Going Green team, comprised of Jeremy Loper, Vonna Shults, Melissa Robinson, Cyndi Johnson, Brenda Fennel, Cyndi Houser, Dana Bonham, Tricia Keyes, Payton Guthrie, Denise Stewart, Angie Stephens and Cecilia Armendariz. This team worked to teach the attendees the importance of recycling, providing examples of recyclable materials.

Several other Choctaw Nation departments helped with the event, including

STARS, Grants and Research, Outreach Services and Law Enforcement.

Earth Day is Every Day was made possible by the Climate Showcase Communities grant, said Tracy Horst, Director of Project Management, along with several helpful sponsors: OG&E, Texoma Print Services, Mix 96.1 (who provided the event's emcee, Jay Lindley), Chili's, Oklahoma Department of Transportation, Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality and 5 Star Office Supply.

According to Horst, the educational event was a success and they received great feedback.



Photos by **CHRISSY DILL** | Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma



Outreach Halloween carnival 2012



Anna Hamilton with the SPPT program helps Cassidy James after he “hulked out” on the putt-putt course.



Makinley Jones of Talihina tries her hand at the beanbag toss.



Heather and Phillip Crosby of Smithville accompany a pair of plumbers, Rylan and Javen.



Costume contest winners include Lillie and Parker Fincher of Tvshka Homma in the 0-3 age group as a pair of Sooner super fans. The 4-8 group saw Justin Yandell of Tvshka Homma winning first place as a deviled egg. Grace Oneal of Nashoba won the 8 and up category as a corpse bride.

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



Kanyon James of Goodwater gives pumpkin bowling a shot at the PREP booth.



Annie, Cruz and Jerald Renteria accompany Shane Moon on the haunted hay ride.



Corbin Dancer of Soper was the Elder Advocacy booth's worst nightmare after he won all their candy.

OBITUARIES

D.L. Birchfield

Dr. D.L. “Don” Birchfield, 64, a Choctaw/Chickasaw man, passed into the spirit world in the early hours of Sept. 7, 2012, in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada. He was born July 10, 1948, in Atoka County.

Don’s maternal grandparents were long-time Atoka County residents Grady and Ethel (French) McDaniel. Grady was a farmer and drove a school bus for the old Harmony Grade School and the Atoka High School. Ethel was a homemaker and worked as a cook for the old Harmony Grade School. Don was born in their home.

Don’s paternal grandfather, James Birchfield, was a farmer, hunter, and fisherman in southeastern Oklahoma. His paternal grandmother, Ophelia (Crowder) Birchfield, was a homemaker and an original enrollee of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, whose allotment was near Soper.

His great-great-grandfather was Patsy Goins. His uncle, Bunnie Birchfield of Farris, was a member of the Choctaw Tribal Council at the time of the adoption of the present constitution of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

In 1962-63, he was Second Violin in the Oklahoma City Junior Symphony. In 1966, he graduated from U.S. Grant High School in Oklahoma City. In 1968, he earned his Associate of Arts degree from Mesa College in Grand Junction, Colo., where he was Student Body President from 1967-68. Also in 1968, he was Steering Committee Chairman at the First Annual Junior College Student Body Presidents’ Conference from May 18-21. Also in that year, Don was Colorado Chairman for New Majority For Rockefeller, a Youth Campaign of the Rockefeller for President Committee. He worked in Colorado, Washington, D.C., and at the Republican National Convention in Miami Beach, Fla. He was also the Delegation Leader for People-to-People Student Body Fact-Finding Delegation to Latin America, where he visited eight countries in South America.

In 1968, he also was Steering Committee Member for Colorado Y.E.S. Committee (Youth for Extension of Suffrage) for the 18 year-old voting age. Colorado became one of the 34 states, by referendum, to amend the U.S. Constitution to lower the voting age to 18 that year. From 1968-69, he was president of Colorado Collegiate Association, an umbrella organization of the student governments of 31 institutions of higher education in Colorado.

In 1971, he graduated with a double major in history and political science from Western State College in Gunnison, Colo. From 1971-73, he attended the University of Oklahoma Graduate College studying colonial Latin American History with a concentration in 17th Century Apache-Spanish relations. In 1975, he graduated from the University of Oklahoma College of Law in Norman, and received his Juris Doctor. From 1976 to 1983, Don was an attorney-at-law.

At the time of his death, Don was an award-winning author and a tenured professor of Native American Studies at the University of Lethbridge, where he was a champion of, and mentor to, numerous students. Prior to teaching at the University of Lethbridge, Don taught Native American Studies at Cornell University, the University of New Mexico, and the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. From 1987-89, he was chairman for the board of directors of the Oklahoma Choctaw Tribal Alliance Inc., a 501c3 non-profit educational and charitable corporation, formerly known as the Oklahoma City Council of Choctaws.

Don was a founding member of Wordcraft Circle of Native Writers and Story Tellers Inc., also a 501c3, sponsoring writing workshops throughout the continent and implementing a mentoring program for beginning and emerging Native American writers.

In 2007 Don was the distinguished lecturer at the 84th annual convention of the Central States Anthropological Society. The title was “Remedial Choctology (for anthropologists).” A profile and an interview appeared in the March 2007 edition of Anthropology News of the American Anthropological Society.

He has served as book review editor for Studies In American Indian Literatures (SAIL), Native Americas, and the newspaper, News From Indian Country. He was a former editor of Camp Crier, out of the Oklahoma City Native American Center.

Don won “Best Chess Promotion of 1988,” an annual best-of-category national journalism award by the Chess Journalists of America, for an essay appearing in Atlantic Chess (N.J.) and reprinted in Tennessee Chess News, PeensWoodPusher (Pa.), Minnesota Chess Journal, Iowa Chess Bulletin, South Dakota Chess Journal, Idaho Chess and other chess publications.

Don’s first book, “The Oklahoma Basic Intelligence Test: New and Collected Elementary, Epistolary, Autobiographical, and Oratorical Choctologies,” won the Louis Littlecoon Oliver Memorial, First Book Award for Prose. His first novel, “Field of Honor,” won the 2004 Wordcraft Circle of Native Writers and Storytellers Writer of the Year Award for Prose and the 2005 Spur Award for Best First Novel from Western Writers of America. It has been published in English and French.

He wrote 19 children’s textbooks with a Native American history theme, for grades one through six. Three of these books in the Native American People Series, The Sioux, (2003), The Apaches, (2003), and The Seminoles, (2003), won the 2004 University of Lethbridge Book Award. Two of these books in the Raintree Biographies Series, Sagagawea, (2003), and Crazy Horse, (2003), also won the 2004 University of Lethbridge Book Award.

He was general editor for the 11-volume Encyclopedia of North American Indians. He finished three of seven books in a Native American mystery series. The first book in the series, “Black Silk Handkerchief,” is the only one published to date. It was a 2007 finalist for the Oklahoma Book Award by the Oklahoma Center for the Book of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries. He wrote a satirical, Choctaw legal history book used by many universities today titled “How Choctaws Invented Civilization and Why Choctaws will Conquer the World.”

Don won many other awards for his writing. He wrote hundreds of scholarly articles and short stories, contributed to anthologies and served as contributing editor of many magazines, all too numerous to mention. At the time of his passing, he had several other books completed and awaiting publication. He was a prolific writer who cared deeply for the concerns of all Native Peoples and sought to express his own concerns through the vehicle of satire in his writing, teaching and speaking.

He was one of the foremost authorities on Native American Law. Future scholars with an interest in helping understand the complicated subject of the history of the Sovereign Choctaw Nation as it relates to its legal dealings with the United States, will gain valuable insights from his contribution to this important subject through his aforementioned book. This important work is a study integrating the methodologies of law and history in a study of treaty law in a new synthesis of Choctaw history. It was his most important work to date. Sadly, we may never see published two other Choctaw history books, which were in the works. Don was one of the bright lights among us and we celebrate his life as we honor his memory. Though he was far from perfect, his humor made us laugh, and his charm made us smile. He died doing something he loved to do. It is hard to ask for much better than that. He will be missed.

Don was preceded in death by his father, Richard Lee Birchfield and his brother, Leon Birchfield.

He is survived by his mother, Lavenia (McDaniel) Birchfield; sister Evelyn (Birchfield) Williams with husband Mike, all of Pflugerville, Texas; brothers, Delbert Birchfield with wife Mary of Crescent, and Ernest Birchfield with wife Susan of Oklahoma City; and numerous relatives, friends and colleagues.



Mildred Brazell

Mildred Brazell, 89, Homemaker, passed away on Oct. 29, 2012.

She was preceded in death by husband John V. Brazell; siblings, Aldred, Brack and Wallace Barker, Barbara Bryant and Ethel Hill.

Survivors include her brother, Mack Barker; and several nieces and nephews and friends.



Ruby Kirk

Ruby L. Kirk, 100, resident of Tipton, passed away on Oct. 18, 2012, in an assisted living center in Altus. She was born on March 11, 1912, to Jeff and Mary (Nail) Ferguson in Soper. She was the granddaughter of original Choctaw enrollee Joe Nail, as well as Paralee Mullins-Nail, Albert H. Ferguson and Mary Ann Thompson. She came with her parents by wagon to the Mt. Park area. She was united in marriage to Forrest “F.H.” Kirk on Dec. 19, 1929, in Vernon Texas. She attended church at Ernest Baptist Church in Laing community until its closing and was a member of the Home Demonstration Clan of Laing. She was able to stay in her own home on Otter Creek until the age of 98. In 1953 she joined the First Baptist Church Tipton where she dearly loved her Sunday school class. She loved gardening.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband in 1988; son Jack Kirk in July of 2012; brothers, Ed, Cecil and Richard Ferguson; and grandchildren, Kara Lee Kirk and Barry Keith Kirk.

She is survived by sons, Gail Kirk with wife Carlene, and Larry Kirk with wife Karen, both of Tipton; daughter-in-law, Tena Kirk of Edmond, eight grandchildren, Darla Webb, Debbie Greene with her husband Marty, Mark Kirk, Dr. Clint Kirk with his wife Tiffany, Chad Kirk, Forrest Kirk, Chelsea Kirk and Shelby Kirk; and seven great-grandchildren, T.J. Webb, Jared Webb, Lindsey Webb, Taylor Greene, Amy Greene, Tyler Kirk and Olivia Kirk.

Henry Marcum

Henry Willard Marcum, 96, of Anadarko, passed away on Oct. 21, 2012, in Lawton after a brief illness. He was born on Sept. 25, 1916, in Holdenville to Henry Clay and Lillie Ellen (Nelson) Marcum. Willard moved to Anadarko with his family at a very young age. On Oct. 13, 1934, he and the former Mary Opal Jones were married. For several years after their marriage, Willard worked for the BIA Road Service. He and Mary then owned and operated a grocery store and service station on North First St. in Anadarko for 23 years. Willard then went into farming and ranching full time. He was still active in the farming operation with his son, Clay Roy, up to the time of his death. Willard stated several times that his goal was to live to be 100 years old and recognized as a Smucker’s Centenarian. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, his grandkids, visiting with his coffee buddies and working with his livestock.

Preceding him in death were his parents; his wife, Mary; sister Rosa; brother Orville; and a granddaughter, Shelly (Marcum) Hall.

Survivors include his sons, Clay Roy Marcum with wife Loveta of Anadarko, Willard Duane (Dukes) Marcum with wife Mary of Newcastle, and Jerry Lee Marcum with wife Cynthia of Anadarko; daughter Ellen Opal (Marcum) Hawley with husband James of Anadarko; 12 grandchildren; numerous great- and great-great-grandchildren; other relatives and many friends.



Mary Harris

Mary Lee (Browder) Harris, 67, of Loco passed away on Nov. 14, 2012, in Oklahoma City. Mary was born Nov. 27, 1944, in Waurika to the late Haskell Jack Browder and Mary Melissa (Groomer) Browder. Mary was raised in Claypool, attending school there until it was consolidated with Ringling. She graduated from Ringling High School in 1962, and then attended college at Southeastern Oklahoma State University in Durant. There she received her Bachelor’s Degree in Elementary Education with a minor in Physical Education. She furthered her education at Midwestern State University of Wichita Falls, earning her Master’s Degree in Special Education. She and Mr. Ronald J. Harris were united in marriage on May 26, 1972, in Ardmore. Mary was a teacher and counselor all of her working years. She was mostly employed for Public Schools in Texas and Oklahoma, and retired from Fox Public Schools in 2006. She currently was employed for Tri County Coop as a psychometrist where she visited several Public Schools in the area. She loved to travel and visit with her grandkids and was a devoted member of the Praise Assembly of God Church of Comanche.

Ronald preceded her in death on Jan. 3, 2008. Her parents and a grandson, Caleb Harris, also preceded her in death.

Survivors include her daughter, Kimberly Harman with husband Kent of Loco; sons, Kevin Harris with wife Felicia of Mt. Pleasant, Texas, and Kendall Harris with wife Jennifer of Bronx, N.Y.; brother Bill Browder with wife Jimmie Kay of Durant; sister Martha Jo Foster of Wichita Falls, Texas; grandchildren, Kyle, Kayla, Noah, Josh, Anna, Jayden, Devon and Grayson; along with numerous other family and friends.



Mary Jane Battiest

Mary Jane Battiest, 73, of Wright City, passed away at her home on Nov. 19, 2012. She was born Feb. 5, 1939, in Battiest, to Carlo Ray and Esien (Cobb) Wade. She was affiliated with Nanih Chito Methodist Church of Wright City. She loved spending time with her children and grandchildren. Mary was a teacher in the Wright City public schools for 29 years. She enjoyed watching religious programs, the Dallas Cowboys football team and Oklahoma City Thunder basketball.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Ryman H. Battiest Sr.; parents; mother and father-in-law; grandparents; two sisters, Glenda Loma and Betty Sullivan; two aunts and two uncles.

Mary is survived by her sons, Ryman Battiest Jr. with wife Darla of Wright City, and Ryan Battiest with wife Bianca of Rowlett, Texas; brothers, Bob Wade with wife Donna of Las Vegas, Nev., and Cecil Wade with wife Adrienne of Noble; sisters, Minnie Spearman with husband Larry of Gardena, Calif., Nancy Smith with husband Ron of Lexington, Matilda Paxton with husband Jimmy of Valliant, and Marilyn Thomas of Battiest; grandchildren, Scott and Rachel Battiest, Brandon Battiest and Tara Hallford, Ryan and Jessica Battiest, Bryan and Kayla Battiest, Chey Battiest, Aaron Battiest, Amber Battiest and Kayla McGovern; 11 great-grandchildren; several nieces, nephews and a host of friends.



Tiffany Hicks

Tiffany Ann Hicks, 34, Durant resident, passed away on Aug. 19, 2012. She was born in Talihina to Travis and Annie (Billy) Rowe on Nov. 2, 1977. Tiffany was a member of the Native American Mission Church. She was proud of her Choctaw/Chickasaw heritage. Tiffany was a loving, caring soul who enjoyed taking care of others. She found interests in many things, such as word search, basketball, fishing and shopping. But more than anything else, she cherished her time with her family and her pets – her mother’s dog Josie, and her cat, Marty. She also enjoyed movie nights with Siren and Boo and talking about how proud she was of Jerika and Siren.

She was preceded in death by her grandparents, Silas and Ellen Billy, and Clarence and Mary Hicks.

She is survived by her parents; brother Lance Hicks with wife Moriah of Durant; niece Jaycie Hicks of Durant; uncles, James Billy with wife Georgene of Denison, Texas, Lewis Brandy of Bennington, Geary Hicks with wife Phyllis, and Curtis Hicks with wife Patsy; aunts, Wilma Brandy and Jane Billy, both of Bennington, Ann Maxie, Mary Nell and Mara Nell; along with numerous cousins, other relatives and friends.



Virgil Holland

Virgil L. Holland, 70, passed away on Nov. 14, 2012, in Durant. He was born on Aug. 30, 1942, in Rubottom, to Albert Melton and Lina “Sweetie” (Tom) Holland. After high school graduation, Virgil proudly served his country in the U.S. Army serving in Vietnam and then later moved to Bryan County from Love County. Virgil married Glenda Cooper on Dec. 23, 1980. Virgil retired from SE Electric Coop after 33 years of service and he was a member of the Elks Lodge, Men’s Golf Association, BBB Bike Club and many veterans’ organizations. He enjoyed playing golf, Harley motorcycles, fishing, piddling in his shop and spending time with grandkids and family.

Virgil was preceded in death by his parents and brothers, John Holland and Albert Holland.

Virgil is survived by his loving and devoted wife of over 31 years, Glenda Holland of the home; children, Lori Holland of Little Elm, Texas, Michelle Godfrey with husband Roy of Madill, and Paul Simmons with wife Tiffany of Armstrong; brother Dennis Holland with wife Robin of Burneyville; sisters, Valine Stonbarger, Corenia Hurst with husband Don, Alta Faye Carroll with husband Danny, Wanda Vaughn with husband Frankie, Gloria Willis with husband Ben, Mary Shellenberger and JoAnn Holland with husband Terry Pollard, all of Marietta; grandchildren, Kalea Long with husband Jared, Tyler Morris with significant other Ramie, Meagan Simmons, Dylan Simmons, Dillon Pearce, Sydney Simmons and Cooper Simmons; great-grandson on the way, Samuel Avery Lynn Morris; along with numerous nieces, nephews, extended family and many friends.



Tobias Frazier Jr.

Tobias Frazier Jr., 72, passed away on March 16, 2012, at the VA Hospital in Oklahoma City. He was born on Nov. 5, 1939, in Talihina. He graduated from Chilocco Indian School in 1959; attended Southeastern State College in Durant; served honorable in the Air Force and was a Viet Nam veteran; completing his college degree while in the Air Force. He enjoyed meeting people and could start a conversation easily. Many longtime friendships were formed this way. He never stopped pursuing knowledge and encouraged family and friends to do the same. Toby’s talents were endless and exceptional as a self-employed artists. His purpose was to design and create whatever he was making using materials that were already available or shopping until he found what he needed at a reasonable price. He was a bargain shopper and we shared many of good time shopping. The result would always be beautiful and unique. He was also an excellent cook and enjoyed treating us to his specialties. Whenever requests for his help were made known, his help was given generously. Toby left Oklahoma for many years but never forgot his Choctaw heritage or language, which he spoke fluently. During this time he said he would often speak the Choctaw language to himself so he would never forget. He would share stories of his travels, accomplishments and all the special people who made an impact in his life. He took part in making annual family reunion successful and never missed on for 17 years. His humor and competitiveness will be missed in family games. Many fond memories of Toby will be shared by friends and family, and never forgot.

Toby was preceded in death by his parents, Tobias and Ancey Frazier, as well as sister Doris Pettyjohn.

He is survived by sisters, Helen Hatton, Velma Angel, Sue Daney, Carol Frazier, Betty Novak with husband John; many nieces, nephews, longtime friends; and Cassie, a Labrador who was very special to him.



Mamie Price

Mamie C. Price, 96, a resident of Carrollton, Texas, passed away on Nov. 15, 2012, in Carrollton. She was born in Albany on April 7, 1916, to John Pruitt and Johnanna (Culberson) Lee. Mamie married Cecil Price.

Mamie was raised on the Smith Lee Farm. She attended Russell High School and dedicated herself to several years at Southeastern Oklahoma State University in Durant. She was part Choctaw and was very proud of her Native American ancestors who traveled on the Trail of Tears. She was married for over 60 years to Cecil Price who was a car dealer in Dallas, where they lived since 1957. Mamie was a non-resident member of the First Baptist Church in Durant before moving to Dallas where she was very active in the L.L.L. and Esther class. She also worked in the kitchen on Wednesday nights with her sister. She came back on weekends to care for her mother. Mamie loved music, gardening, and feeding the birds and squirrels. To those who knew her she was lovingly know as Chee.

Mrs. Price was preceded in death by her parents, J.P and Johnanna Lee; sister Jo Moseley; and her husband.

Mrs. Price is survived by her son, Donald P. Price with wife Gloria of Carrollton; granddaughter Donna Schabbing with husband Tom; great-grandchildren, D.W. Schabbing, C.J. Schabbing, Tara Schabbing and Kennedy Rhodes; and a number of nieces, nephews and friends.

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OBITUARIES

Carlotta Bates

Carlotta Bates, 76, long-time resident of Contra Costa County and the town of Kensington, Calif., passed away on Oct. 8, 2012, at Alta Bates Hospital in Berkeley, Calif.

She was born on Oct. 14, 1935, in Sterling, to Rollis and Essie Hollis. The family moved west in 1942, where her father got a job at the shipyard during World War II. She was raised primarily in the South Berkeley, West Oakland area. She would tell stories of growing up in the neighborhood and walking to the “show” at some of the great old theaters in Oakland.

Carlotta attended Oakland Technical High School in Oakland, Calif. Classmates at the same time included future NFL Quarterback John Brodie, and future local politician Ron Delums. She would tell about other famous alumni she remembered from the time like folk singer Rod McKuen. She was popular but always spoke her mind.

She had many “boyfriends” but never anything serious until she met Jamieson Bates in 1951. Their relationship was temporarily put on hold when Jamieson joined the Navy in 1953. They reunited when he returned and were married in 1955 in Reno, Nev. She had their first daughter in November of 1955, followed by a son in January of 1958, and then their youngest daughter in February of 1961.

Carlotta and Jamieson started out together living in Richmond Calif., then for a short time in North Berkeley, and then back to Richmond. They bought their first home and moved their family to a home in Richmond around 1960-61, also adding their youngest daughter in 1961. On Halloween of 1965, Carlotta and the family moved east to Tice Valley in Walnut Creek. After many years in Tice Valley, Carlotta and family moved to Alamo in 1974 for a short time, then onto Moraga in 1975. Finally, they moved to Kensington in 1985, where she resided at the time of her passing.

Although spending much of her life as housewife and mother, she also worked in various local retail stores. She always enjoyed helping people. Through Jamieson, she developed an interest in genealogy and enjoyed keeping in touch with many relatives across the country.

She never learned to drive a car and relied on Jamieson for most of her transportation. As time passed, Carlotta and Jamieson were almost inseparable, traveling locally for errands, traveling across the country to family reunions, spending almost every night in the living room talking. Jamieson and Carlotta enjoyed almost 55 years of marriage, until Jamieson’s death in January of 2010.

She was very proud of her Choctaw heritage, due to her mother Essie being an original enrollee. She always encouraged her children to respect and embrace the heritage.

Carlotta is survived and missed by her daughters, Wendy Tunnessen with husband Jim of Walters, and Victoria Hoffmann of Las Vegas; son Steven with wife Pamela; step granddaughter, Liliana; all residents of Kensington; and grandson Bryon of Las Vegas.

Clifford Fulton

Clifford Fulton passed away on Oct. 16, 2012, in Sacramento, Calif., after a long illness. He was born in Cambrey on July 10, 1927, to Jasper Newton and Alice (Durning) Fulton.

He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Betty Georgine (Goodnight); children, Steve Fulton and Vicki and Ronnie Rose; grandchildren, Bryan K. Rose, Kelly L. Fulton-Smith and S. Daniel (Stacy) Fulton; great-grandchildren, Branson, Ben, Derek, Kailer and Taylor; brothers, Carrel Fulton and Bobby Fulton; sister, Maudie Jenkins; and numerous nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by both parents; his brothers, Harlan, Roy and Willie; and sisters, Dorothy Lois Epperson and Christine Manos.

He grew up in the McAlester area where he still has family. When he was young, he helped his mother with the smaller children and chores. When he got older he helped his father in the cotton fields and doing whatever he needed. When he was about 18 years old he joined the Navy and was a cook. Most of his adult life his career was as a truck driver/dispatcher for United Grocers/Fleming Foods. He enjoyed bowling, camping, fishing, hunting, watching NASCAR, traveling back to the area where he grew up and telling his life stories. Those stories were about his family and the hard life he had as a youngster – always moving around to find work so his father, and later he, could find work in the fields or taking care of livestock. He loved sharing activities and his life with his family. He never met a stranger and will be missed by all who knew him.

Robert Thompson

Robert H. Thompson Sr., 88, of Wright City, went home to be with the Lord on Oct. 17, 2012, in Tulsa. He was born May 26, 1924, in Spencerville, the son of Hampton H. Thompson and Narcissa James Thompson, and the great-grandson of Henry W. Thompson and Illie Pisahumbe, and Simon and Lucy Thompson. He was also related to Captain Nanamommitabi and his clan is Loksi, Ahi Apet Okla, Okla Hannali and Okla Falaya from the Northern District in Mississippi and Alabama. He was married to Susie Mae Polk-Thompson who passed to the spirit world in 1997. He was a loving husband, father, grandfather and hard worker and lived most of his adult life in Wright City. He was an employee of Dierks Lumber and retired from Weyerhaeuser Lumber Company. He belonged to Hampton Chapel Methodist Church and his parents are buried there. He enjoyed fishing, hunting, boxing and stickball games. Robert served in the Armed Services, Army Air Corps of the United States from May 14, 1943, to Jan. 29, 1946. He served with Army Air Forces as ground crewman in United States, European and Asiatic Pacific Theater. He also served in North Africa, Italy, Philippines and India. He was responsible for placing bombs on bomb bays of aircrafts, which had Lucky Lady painted on the side of the plane. He was a World War II veteran. He enjoyed spending time with all his grandchildren. His children said he believed in the creator (God) and in Jesus Christ and was ready to go see our mom and our “Mafu” and granny. He was a full blood Choctaw tribal member.

His daughter Diane Thompson passed away in 2010, and his two sons, Harold W. Taylor and Leroy Thompson preceded him in death as well.

Surviving are his sons, Robert H. Thompson Jr. and Jayme Johnson of Wright City, Anthony and Judy Thompson of Arlington, Texas, and Dean Thompson and Sue Tait of Broken Bow; daughters, Corliss Dwight and David Jacobs of Broken Bow, Laverne Buckley and Jon Tiger, Debra Wolfmule, Phyllis Williston and Thomas Cummings, all of Tulsa; 20 grandchildren; 35 great-grandchildren; and three great-great grandchildren.



JoAnne Ashby

JoAnne Marie Ashby, 57, passed away on Oct. 23, 2012, in Ada. She entered this life on Oct. 21, 1955, in Oakland, Calif., born to Richard and Ruth (Alexander) Anderson. JoAnne married Neal Ashby on March 13, 1973, in Greenville, Texas, and they moved with their family to Durant in 1979. JoAnne was a faithful member of the Victory Life Church in Durant and she enjoyed reading, collecting antiques, beadwork and she dearly loved children. JoAnne was a loving daughter, sister, devoted wife, caring mother and grandmother and friend to many.

She was preceded in death by her parents and brother, Ricky Anderson.

JoAnne is survived by her husband of over 39 years, Neal Ashby of the home; children, Terry Ashby with wife Stacy of Gainesville, Texas, Chris Ashby with wife Holly, and Kimberly Ansel, all of Durant; grandchildren, Geoffrey Ashby, Kirsten Ashby, Sidney Ansel, Lucas Ashby, Nicholas Ansel, Zachery Ashby, Colton Burns and Miles Ansel; and siblings, Elaine Anderson, Wanda Lewis, Jerry Anderson, Joe Anderson, Bessie Carroll, Rusty Anderson, Elizabeth Stanford and Sharon Bowman.



Jonathon Wilson

Jonathon Wainwright Wilson passed away on Oct. 9, 2012, at his home in San Antonio, Texas. He was born Oct. 6, 1949, to Calvin Wilson and Bertha Jane Austin of Oklahoma.

Jonathon accepted the Lord as his Savior in July of 1971 at the age of 21. He began preaching the following year, in January of 1972. It was also in this year that Jonathon met Erlinda, “the only girl I ever introduced to my mother,” as he liked to put it, in Sunday School. Jonathon and Erlinda married on Feb. 14, 1975. They had four children, Clarinda Washington of Maryland, Joellen Wilkinson, Jon-Gabriel Wilson, and Gracelyn Wilson of Texas; five grandchildren, Ariana, Syrena and Ishmael Washington of Maryland, Devonte Duncan of Alaska and Luke Wilkinson of Texas; seven nephews and 16 nieces in California, Texas and Florida; and numerous relations in Oklahoma, California and Texas.

Jonathon was a fairly quiet man but full of love, affection, gentleness and humor. He loved to listen to Motown, watch old westerns and tell stories and jokes to his family and friends. His favorite sport was boxing, favorite football teams were the 49ers and Sooners, favorite preacher was D. L. Moody, and favorite foods were fry bread and pork chops. Most of all, Jonathon found joy in studying and teaching the Bible.

He looked forward to working with his youth group and Sunday school class, and spent most of his time at home studying and planning his lessons and sermons at the kitchen table.

Jonathon served the Lord alongside his wife faithfully and sacrificially, despite many years of illness and struggle. Jonathon will be greatly missed and remembered by the many lives he has touched. Let us be happy today as Jonathon is in the presence of his loving Savior.

He was preceded in death by his parents and wife, Erlinda Wilson of the Philippines.

He is survived by his brothers, Calvin Wilson Jr. and Maxx Wilson, both of California, and Anthony Wilson of Oklahoma; and sister Linda Wilson of California.

Paul Kerns Sr.

Paul Michael Kerns Sr., 64, of Middleburg, Fla., passed away on Oct. 13, 2012. He was born on Sept. 29, 1948, in Kilgore, Texas, to Ralph and Letty Ford Kerns. Mr. Kerns was a Vietnam War veteran, honorably serving his country as a United States Navy Seal. He had worked as a truck driver for the U.S.P.S. and had lived in the local area since 1986. He was a member of the VFW Post 8255, Disabled American Veterans and was proud to have been the Scout Master for Troop #193 in Gladewater, Texas. He enjoyed riding his Harley-Davidson and will be dearly missed by his loving family and friends.

Survivors include his wife, Nanali Kerns; children, Michelle Kerns-Morgan (Steven) and Paul Michael Kerns Jr. (Amber); brother, Robert Hall (Leslie); sister, Betty Lou Smith; and five grandchildren.



Christine Simes

Christine (Phillip) “Tukush” Simes, 86, passed away on Oct. 26, 2012, in Durant. She was born on May 13, 1926, in Boswell, the daughter of Bob Phillip and Ella (Frazier) Phillip, and was a lifetime resident of Boswell. Christine married Fleming Fred Simes, Sr. on May 21, 1957, at Goodsprings in Boswell.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband; a baby boy; siblings, Nadine Bobb and Etta Mae Stevens; and a great-grandson, Jose Alfredo Jimenez Jr.

She is survived by her sons, Fred “Sonny” Simes Jr. and Manuel Simes, both of Boswell; daughter Christine Marie Simes of Colbert; siblings, Lajuana Phillip of Boswell, and Edna Roberts of Bennington; 12 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren; along with a host of other family and friends.



Ronnie Jones

Ronnie Boyce Jones, 58, passed away on March 17, 2012, at his home in Wayne.

He was born on Aug. 8, 1953, in Purcell. His parents were Boyce Lee Jones and Margie Lee Edwards Jones. Ronnie grew up in Norman and attended Norman schools. He lived in the Lexington-Purcell area for many years and worked in the oil field. Throughout his life, Ronnie enjoyed riding and working on Harley Davidson motorcycles. He loved listening to music and spending time with his friends and family. Ronnie was proud of his Choctaw Indian heritage. He will be greatly missed.

He was preceded in death by his parents and his stepfather who raised him, LeeRoy “Pub” Evans.

He is survived by two sons, Jonathan Lee Boyce Jones of Lexington and William Bronson Jones of California; brother Billy Ray Evans of Guthrie; three sisters, Marilyn Berry of Norman, Tammy Pace of Slaughterville and Kim Evans of Lexington; aunt Kathy Carr with husband Donnie of Purcell; and several nieces and nephews.



Lezly Hodge

Lezly Eden Hodge, 22, of Bethel, passed away on Oct. 26, 2012, due to a battle with cystic fibrosis. She was born Sept. 13, 1990, to Wade and Darlina Hodge. She graduated from Battiest High School in 2009. She was valedictorian of her class and played basketball for the Lady Panthers for four years. Lezly graduated from UTTC of North Dakota in May of 2012, with a degree in nutrition and wellness. She was of the Christian faith and was a blessing and inspiration to all who knew her. She loved spending time with her family and her two dogs, Pransi and Polli.

Lezly was preceded in death by her brother, Lucas Hodge; maternal grandmother, Lenora Moore; and paternal grandfather, Gary Hodge.

She is survived by her parents, Darlina and Wade, of the home; sister Linsy Ward with husband Steven of Bethel; niece Braylee Ward; nephews, Brexton, Brynson and Britton Ward; maternal grandparents, Bob and Edna Moore of Battiest; paternal grandmother, Wilma Hodge; aunts and uncles, Cindy and James Hamilton and Deania Dowty, all of Battiest, Judy and Will Hensley and Bush Hodge, all of Bethel, and Brenda Cooper of Mesquite, Texas; cousins, Matt Hamilton, Hannah Hamilton, Shandy and Austin Smith, Teather and Dewayne Anna, Chance and Crystal Hensly and Vaden Hodge.



Walter Pharis Jr.

Walter “Sambo” Hamilton Pharis Jr., 63, passed away on Oct. 25, 2012, at his home in Hugo. He was born Jan. 25, 1949, in Houston, the son of Walter P. and Ethelene Hyletha Pharis. Sambo spent most of his life in Hugo, except for the years he spent in the army serving in Vietnam. Sambo married Aleeta (Vaughn) Pharis on March 3, 1982, in Paris, Texas. He worked in sales for his family’s produce business and other businesses until he was considered to be disabled through the military. Sambo was loved throughout; there weren’t many people who did not know him. He loved to see people and would always say “glad you got to see me.” He was a big man with a big heart. He enjoyed being with people and talking to everyone. He was loved by all. He also loved to play dominoes and play in poker competitions. Sambo was a member of Corinth Baptist Church, where his friend Bro. Bennie Hammons preached. He attended until his health prevented him from doing so. His family and friends were his life, especially his grandbabies.

Sambo was preceded in death by his parents; and sisters Bobbie Ann Stone and Hyletha Weber-Myers.

Survivors include his wife, Aleeta Pharis of Hugo; daughters, Samantha Ulan of Hugo, Shelle McMillan of Longview, Texas, and Patricia Fisher of Florida; seven grandchildren; and a host of other family and friends.



Idella Conner

Idella Conner, 80, of Vernon, Texas, passed away on Nov. 4, 2012, in Vernon. Idella was born on Aug. 7, 1932, in Johnson County, Okla. She was the daughter of the late Virgil Hinchey and Velma Standifer Hinchey. She married Donald Conner on Dec. 23, 1950, in Wheeler County, Texas. She had lived in Vernon since February of 2007. She was office manager, secretary and bookkeeper for Weatherby Real Estate and Construction Co., in Graham, Texas. She was a devoted preacher’s wife. She was a member of Second Baptist Church and a Sunday school teacher.

She is survived by her husband, Donald Conner of the home; son Larry Conner with wife Charlene of Canyon, Texas; daughter Donna Souza with husband Larry of Vernon; sister Virginia Seymour of Arapaho; grandsons, Donald Conner with wife Amanda of Brisbane, Australia, and Sean Conner with wife Amber of Amarillo, Texas; granddaughters, Penny Savory with husband Marvin of Altus, and Ginger Golden with husband David of Iowa Park, Texas; eight great-grandchildren; several nieces and nephews; and a sister-in-law, Juanita Hinchey of Sand Springs.

Richard Crow

Richard R. Crow, 64, of Eudora, Kan., passed away on Aug. 18, 2012, in Yukon. He was born on March 16, 1948, in Oklahoma City. He graduated form Shawnee Mission East High School, attended Baker University and Northwest Missouri State. He graduated form Southern Oregon University with a degree in communication. He previously worked as a radio broadcaster and in sales. He was proud of his Choctaw and Muscogee-Creek heritage.

He was preceded in death by his parents, James P. and Vivian A. Crow; and his brother, Bill Crow.

He is survived by his brother and sister-in-law, Mike and Marti Crow; nieces, Jennifer Crow and Emily Crow Crossman with her husband Craig; and nephew Bryan Crow.

Amos Taylor

Amos Taylor, 86, passed away on Oct. 20, 2012, in Ardmore. Amos was born on July 10, 1926, to Richard Taylor and Rody (Lewis) Taylor in Ardmore. Amos was called to serve his country during World War II and served in the U.S. Army in the Pacific Theater. He married Agnes Tubbee in February of 1944. He received an Honorable Discharge and relocated to Ardmore where he worked for Coca-Cola. In 1956 he received a position with Johnson and Johnson that required him to move to Dallas. When they opened a plant in Sherman, Amos relocated and worked there for 37 years until his retirement. After his wife’s death, he moved to Ardmore. Amos was an avid reader and read the state, local and Choctaw newspapers daily to keep up on the community and current events. He enjoyed playing the piano and singing in gospel quartets at family gatherings. Amos was the last surviving member of the group that he and his brother had formed, The Taylor Brothers Quartet. Amos was a Dallas Cowboy and University of Texas Longhorn fan and he enjoyed listening to the Texas Rangers games on the radio.

Amos was preceded in death by his parents; wife Agnes Tubbee; sons, Harold Taylor and Geno Taylor; granddaughter Robin Wallace; brothers, Morris Taylor and Odis Taylor; and sisters, Etta Taylor, Mattie Taylor and Helen Taylor.

He is survived by his children, Amos Taylor Jr. with wife Edna, Nancy Wallace with husband Lonzo, all of Sherman, Texas, Jerry Taylor with wife Margaret of San Juan, N.M., Johnny Taylor with wife Mildred of Tishomingo, Randy Taylor with wife Marilyn of Calera, Daryl Taylor with wife Sherri of Zuni, N.M., and Barbara Morgan of Red Oak; granddaughter who he helped raise, Terri Taylor, of Sherman; 26 grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren; four great-great-grandchildren; two sisters, Velma Zamorra of Lindsay, and Dorothy Burris of Madill; and a host of family and friends.





Ivy League and Friends 2012 a success, bringing in 40 schools, 100+ students

By **CHRISSY DILL**

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

This year marked the fifth anniversary of the Choctaw Nation’s large college recruitment event, Ivy League and Friends, and the event was a success.

“This is a special year for us,” said Senior Director of the Scholarship Advisement Program Jo McDaniel. “We have successfully hosted this event for hundreds of students and their parents to give them a sneak peek into the Ivy League and the elite college world.”

The Scholarship Advisement Program (SAP) has a number of productive staff members who work together to make the Ivy League event run smoothly each year, including peer advisors traveling from their own colleges.

A peer advisor’s goal is to increase students’ retention and help people have a good experience at the university, explained Bryce Rowland, who serves as SAP peer advisor at the University of Oklahoma. “I help students find scholarships and find specific services at the university. I’m essentially a resource for any Choctaw students that’s part of the Scholarship Advisement Program,” he said. “I need to know the university and the ins and outs of the administration and how things work there.”

This year was Rowland’s first experience with the Ivy League event.

“I was told to expect great things,” he said. “I got here and it blew those expectations away, with the level of professionalism from people from my own staff as well as the students.

“Everyone here is just so forward-thinking, and they have really big goals,” Rowland continued. “That is really inspiring to me and makes my job even better. I love what I do, and this makes me love it even more.”

Chelsea Porter, an SAP peer advisor at Oklahoma State University, gave a description of the recruitment event. “Ivy League and Friends is an event for recruiting Choctaw students for Ivy League schools, for graduate schools or just undergraduate.”

Porter said the four peer

advisors working this year’s Ivy League were in charge of running registration, helping out and making sure the event ran smoothly. “I’m here just to help the students know that they can go to school,” she added.

Besides Porter and Rowland, Erin McDaniel of Southeastern Oklahoma State University and Callie Grey of Eastern Oklahoma State College helped with the recruitment event.

Ivy League began at the Choctaw Conference Center, located inside Choctaw Casino and Resort, with concurrent breakout sessions, which

has been attending Ivy League and Friends for the past three years. “We’re lucky to be invited to talk to Choctaw students and their families about undergraduate admissions to the University of California, Berkeley,” she stated.

Zakaree Harris of Bowdoin College in Maine had been to the event two years ago, while he was working for Johns Hopkins University. “Bowdoin hadn’t been a part of this event before,” he said. “So when I got the job [at Bowdoin] I knew that we needed to be a part of this event. I’m continually impressed by all the students, their questions, how prepared their parents are, the college fair and the presentations we make throughout the day.

“This literally was part of my negotiation for taking the job,” continued Harris. “We need to come to the Choctaw event.”

Geri Nederhoff, of Harvard University Graduate School of Design, had previously been to the event with fellow Harvard representatives. “My first impression, and I think the rest of the Harvard groups would agree, that we were overwhelmed with everyone’s hospitality and their commitment and enthusiasm in terms of getting funds for needy students to go to college and to graduate school and to really expose them to all the possibilities,” she said. “It’s been an honor to be a part of the program.”

Not only did the many university representatives appreciate the event, the

to see how it will continue to grow. We had a great turnout and the energy level from the representatives from the colleges as well as the students and their families was just phenomenal.”

Janice Wells-White, a representative coming from the Consortium for Graduate Study in Management, attended Ivy League for her second time this year. “This is an amazing organization,” she said. “Passion and commitment are displayed by the group of organizers.”

The representative from the University of California, Berkeley, Bridget Neconie,

“This year’s event was the best yet.”
– Shauna Williams



A student signs in at the Choctaw recruitment event, Ivy League and Friends, on Nov. 10. This year marked the event’s fifth anniversary.



SAP peer advisors Chelsea Porter of OSU, Callie Grey of EOSC and Bryce Rowland of OU work the registration table at Ivy League and Friends 2012.

Photos by **CHRISSY DILL** | Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Maddison and Kim Po-teet listen to the SAP employees address the crowd before attending the Ivy League college fair.



Clark Ryburn and his mother, Shelly Ryburn, enjoy the meal before making their way to the Ivy League college fair.

students attending expressed gratitude for the recruitment opportunity.

Kresta Lofton and Katie Akerman brought a group of Chickasaw students to Ivy League and Friends.

“I think it’s great,” they said. “When else are they going to get the opportunity to talk with Ivy League school representatives? We are planning on coming again next year.”

Meg Scales of Wichita Falls, a 24-year-old SAP participant and student, was a political science major at Columbia and was working as a paralegal when she first came to Ivy League and Friends and met a recruiter from the Wake Forest University, Master of Arts in Management program.

“I had already begun to realize that law wasn’t for me,” said Scales. “I decided I wanted to go into more of the business route, so I looked into the Scholarship Advisement Program, and with Stephanie and Jo’s help, I was able to apply to the program.”

Scales said she now works in corporate finance at a large

company. “It was the best decision I’ve ever made,” she said. “With the help of the Choctaw Nation, I switched my career goals and I’m very happy where I am. I definitely wouldn’t have been able to do that otherwise.”

“With Ivy League and Friends being in its fifth year, it is exciting to see the students who attended our very first recruitment event now graduating from college and applying to graduate school or beginning their career,” said Gardner.

“The success our students have achieved in the past five years is incredible. It’s humbling to see everyone’s hard work come full circle.”

Ivy League and Friends brought in about 150 eager students this year, 400 attendees total including parents and visitors.

Gardner said she looks forward to the recruitment event each year because is not only gives students a once in a lifetime opportunity to connect with prominent universities, but it is often the first time the SAP staff meets students who they

have worked with all year over the phone and email.

“Students traveled in to the event from 15 different states, so we saw many new faces this year.”

“We are proud to say that several of our students are currently attending the schools represented at our event, some have graduated and have moved up to graduate schools, while others are studying abroad through some of these schools,” said Jo McDaniel.

“What a milestone this event represents to our program as well as our Choctaw heritage,” she continued. “We feel that our program is instrumental in the development of future leaders and educated, self-sustaining individuals who can and will pave the path for generations to come.”

SAP provides services such as college selection, test preparation, scholarships and grants, internships, summer programs and peer advisement and mentoring.

Anyone interested in learning more about SAP can visit choctawnation-sap.com.



Whether it’s “over the river and through the woods” or a long drive on an Interstate highway, your holiday trip is important to the Durant Police Department and the Choctaw Nation. We would like to remind you to

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A cultural awakening | Keeping Choctaw traditions alive

By **LARISSA COPELAND**
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

The rich and diverse culture and language of this country's Native American people is more than something to be put on display at weekend craft shows and expos or a hobby to pass the time – it's a livelihood, an identity. Unfortunately, for many tribes, pieces of that identity have been lost or have been faded throughout the generations, and the Choctaw Nation is no different.

However, the Choctaw Nation is taking steps every day to reconnect current generations with their ancestral roots, and the tribe has placed the revitalization of its culture on the forefront of its priorities.

"My long-term vision is that every generation in the future is more self-sufficient and successful than the generation preceding," says Chief Gregory E. Pyle. "To achieve this, it is important we understand the culture and history of the Choctaw people. It is vital that the traditions of our great tribe be sustained."

Leaders of the tribe wanted to give members from coast to coast the opportunity to learn about and experience this living, thriving culture for themselves...so they took to the road. "Choctaw Days" is a name that has become synonymous with experiencing the culture and heritage of the Choctaw Nation. Choctaw Days festivals are celebrations of Choctaw history, art, dancing, language, music, food, and more, put on display at various locations across the nation and are presented by the passionate teachers, artists,

“ My long-term vision is that every generation in the future is more self-sufficient and successful than the generation preceding. To achieve this, it is important we understand the culture and history of the Choctaw people. It is vital that the traditions of our great tribe be sustained. ”

CHIEF GREGORY E. PYLE | Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

dancers and craftsmen who make conserving Choctaw heritage a way of life.

In the past year, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma hosted the second annual Choctaw Days festival at the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C., held Choctaw Day at the State Capitol of Oklahoma, in San Francisco, Calif., Denver, Colo., Bakersfield, Calif., and many more cities across the nation and have a busy schedule slated for the next year.

A recent Choctaw Day event took place in Durant at Southeastern Oklahoma State University's "Native November" celebration on Nov. 26 at the Glen D. Johnson Student Union, and featured demonstrations of Choctaw culture – including dancing, visual artists, beadwork, flute making, Choctaw language, storytelling and stickball.

Also, the Choctaw Casino Resort's 8th Annual Pow Wow on Nov. 23-24 at the Choctaw Event Center in Durant is an event that has grown to become one of the largest pow wows in the nation and, along with the two days of dancing and vendors to visit, it was the setting for many enlightening cultural experiences for all seeking to learn about the tribe's rich heritage, including Choctaw social dance presentations by the Choctaw Employee Dance Troupe, which is a group of volunteers made up of tribal employees who perform and

teach the traditional dances. Additionally, the Cultural Services Department gave stickball presentations and two stickball teams played a stickball exhibition game across the street from the Event Center. The Historic Preservation Department was also at the two-day pow wow, giving demonstrations and about Choctaw pottery for all who would like to experience and learn more about the ancient art.

These actions are just a tiny snapshot of the huge picture; the efforts and undertaking the tribe is making to preserve its precious, priceless identity is vast and requires the dedication and hard work of so many.

All across the Choctaw Nation, classes, large and small, formal and informal, are being held to help pass down the traditional ways of life of those who came before us and instill in the children the need to continue to pass on this knowledge for generations to come.

From pottery and native art, to stickball and beadwork, the old ways of the Choctaw are making a comeback after being so close to becoming forgotten at one time.

One sacred element to the Choctaw culture is its language. The native language is spoken in the homes of many Choctaws, and has even earned the distinction of being named the first Native American language to be offered as a minor at Southeastern Oklahoma State University. It is offered as a distance learning language option in more than 40 high schools and three colleges in Oklahoma as well.

The Choctaw Nation School of Choctaw Language offers classes, which are taught by certified language instructors who are eager to preserve and perpetuate the language and culture of the tribe. At present, the school has approximately 50 certified instructors who teach the language in communities all across the Choctaw Nation and beyond. For example, at the Choctaw Community Center in Antlers, certified language teacher Dora Wickson teaches two classes every week. Her beginner classes are on Mondays from 6 to 8 p.m., and advanced Choctaw classes are on Wednesday evenings from 6 to 8 p.m. These classes are open to the public. The course is 16 weeks long and is taught in four phases.

"We just started up a new class and it's not too late to

join us," said Wickson. "We would love to have anyone that is interested in speaking the language to come out and learn Choctaw!"

The classes taught by Wickson and the numerous other certified Choctaw instructors are just one example of the numerous Choctaw language programs offered by the Choctaw Nation. To learn more, visit www.choctawschool.com.

Traditional Choctaw dance is being highlighted as well, most recently with the Choctaw Employee Dance Troupe. The group, organized by Choctaw Nation Marketing Director Lana Sleeper, is made up of tribal employees, all who volunteer their time, spending many hours each month practicing and perfecting the traditional dances they perform at community functions, such as parades, festivals or anywhere the group is invited to attend around the tribal area. "We do a short presentation," Sleeper explains, "telling the story of each dance, then explaining the steps. We then perform and we pull in people from the crowd and have them dance with us!"

The dance group came about as part of Chief Pyle and Assistant Chief Batton's cultural awakening initiative. "Only a small group of people knew these Choctaw social dances," Sleeper continued, "and we wanted to spread that knowledge so that all Choctaws could learn the dances."

Sleeper started a social dance program in 2009, but on a smaller scale – at the tribe's 13 Head Start centers, making weekly visits to the classrooms to teach the dances to the students. It was because of her experiences while teaching the youngsters that she was inspired to organize the employee dance troupe.

"It was then that I saw how many others wanted to learn the dances too," she says. Approximately 14 employees from various depart-

ments dance in the group, all dressed in traditional Choctaw clothing, all of which is handmade, from the Choctaw diamond shirts and dresses, to the intricate beaded collars and earrings. "I'm hoping in time we'll grow, with more employee volunteers joining the group and learning the dances," says Sleeper.

Also today, thanks to the nonprofit Chahta Foundation, the social dancing experience has been extended even to those unable to attend the performances or presentations. The foundation recently produced an instructional dance DVD utilizing the talents of the group.

"The Head Starts actually use the DVDs now too," says Sleeper, "The teachers lead the lessons and we provide the shirts for the children."

The Choctaw Employee Dance Troupe performed in front of their largest audience to date as they demonstrated the dances in front of hundreds of guests over the two-day span of the pow wow, and it was the first time for the social dancing to be featured at the Durant event.

Additionally, the Choctaw Nation Historic Preservation Department works adamantly to ensure the traditions of the tribe are not lost by doing its part to pass on the many trades and ancestral skills of the Choctaw.

One such craft is pottery. The department hosts bi-weekly pottery classes in Antlers and Durant, free of charge for anyone who wants to attend and learn the skill. The two classes, held on alternating Thursdays, meet at the Antlers Public Library, located at 104 SE 2nd St., and in Durant at the Choctaw Cultural Services Building, at 4451 Choctaw Rd., from 5-8 p.m.

Students of the classes, which are led by Director of Historic Preservation Dr. Ian Thompson, are taught the traditional Choctaw methods of digging clay, cleaning clay, and preparing the appropriate materials, such as sand or mussel shell, to mix with the clay. They also learn traditional methods for making different types of Choctaw pottery, the traditional designs used on the pottery, how to fire the pottery in a wood fire, and how to cook in and eat out of the finished pottery, according to Thompson.

The class is open to and welcomes anyone, from beginner to advanced students, who are interested in learning the art of pottery. "The teachers and experienced students can teach people with any level of experience," he says.

The department also teaches pottery at various locations around the area as requested.

In addition to the pottery classes, Historic Preservation and Cultural Services departments teach many programs throughout the year on the cultural ways of the Choctaw including moccasin-making, archery, bow-making, beading, medallions, and basketry classes.

"We can also give presentations by request on the food, history and life ways of the Choctaw people," says Thompson. More information can be found at www.choctawnationculture.com.

Employees of the Choctaw Nation have embraced the tribal heritage and the tribe has officially made the first Monday of each month "Heritage Monday" at all its office buildings. On that day, employees put forth a conscious effort to dress traditionally, greet guests in the native language and share the unique Choctaw culture through social dancing, history and storytelling, songs, crafts and traditional food.

No matter how large or small the endeavor, each act in this cultural awakening, this revitalization – this assurance that the history and characteristics that define who we are as a tribe and a people, are perpetuated, protected and maintained – will continue to be fuel in keeping the tribe alive and thriving for years to come and ensure a prosperous future generation of Choctaws.



Choctaw Nation: BRET MOSS

Joey Tom, center, runs between Lisa Reed and Reuben Marris while being chased in the Raccoon Dance. The dance is one of the many Choctaw social dances.



Choctaw Nation: LARISSA COPELAND

Dr. Ian Thompson digs up clay while pottery student Nita Kicniski of Calera cleans the rocks and debris from the pieces she's collected at a recent clay dig in Tom, Okla.

Thompson is one of the instructors who has taught many Choctaw pottery classes over the years, including two currently offered in Durant and Antlers. Recently, the classes joined up for a trek to Tom to dig for clay for their classes.



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Choctaw Nation: LARISSA COPELAND

Sturch holds poster signing

Choctaw artist Kathy Sturch held a poster signing on Nov. 9 at the Choctaw Nation tribal complex in Durant for "Weaving Together," a painting of hers chosen to be made into a poster. Choctaw employee Melanie Cole was happy to meet the artist and receive an autographed copy. Sturch's painting was chosen by the Natural Resources Conservation Service as the winner of its Native American Indian Heritage Month Poster contest.

Traditional buckskin

During November, deer hunters across Oklahoma are out in the woods morning and evening, hoping to take a nice animal. After a successful deer hunt, the meat is usually preserved for eating, but many hunters are left wondering what to do with the hide. Some sense an inherent beauty in the hide and find ways to use it. Nevertheless, every year thousands of deer hides go to waste. To our Choctaw ancestors, the hide was a wonderful material, almost as good as the deer meat itself. Deer hides were used for many things, but one of the most important was as the raw material in making buckskin.

For readers who have never handled traditional buckskin, or “tvlhko” in the Choctaw language, it is an amazing product; as soft as fleece, but stronger than any commercial leather. It is one of the warmest clothing materials available, but it still allows the skin to breathe. Freshly smoked traditional buckskin smells like smoked sausage, and unlike today’s commercial buckskin, it can even be eaten for food value in an emergency situation.

When looking at a cold, slimy, and perhaps bloody deer hide, it seems almost impossible that it could ever be metamorphosed into a product as wonderful as traditional buckskin. The process for creating buckskin is a complex art form that has been perfected by Native Americans for well over 10,000 years.

For at least the last 100 years, men have been the main hide-workers in Choctaw society, however women probably did more of it in the past. Producing buckskin began with skinning the animal, a process known as “lhuffi” in the Choctaw language (Byington 1915:253-254). After the initial skinning incisions were made along the belly and legs, the hide or “hakshup” (133) had to be pulled off of the animal by hand. Many hunters today remove the hide by using a knife to slice it free from the underlying meat. This unavoidably puts scores in the hide, which later in the tanning process, will rip out and leave big holes.

Choctaws traditionally used two different methods for removing the hair from a deer hide, a process known generally as “boyaffi” (96). One of these methods involved stretching the hide on a wooden hide frame, called “isht tikili” (207) (see Fig. 1). Holes were cut into the edge of the hide, a process called “hakshup a lukaffi” (255). Leather laces “lhibata” (251) were slid through the holes, wrapped around the frame, pulled



Fig. 1

tightly until the hide was taunt, and then tied to the frame. The hide was left until it dried into stiff rawhide, called “hakshup hishi iksho” (Watkins 1977:33 [1892]). After the hide was dried, a sharp stone-bladed scraper would be used to scrape off the hair, as well as the epidermis and grain



Iti Fabussa



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

layers of the underlying hide (Fig. 2).

While the above method was sometimes used, Choctaw hide-workers more often accomplished the same task using a tanning beam, or “ashaffi iti chito” (Fig. 3). The moist hide was laid flesh-side down on top of this beam, with the worker pinching the edge of the hide between his waist and the end of the beam. A two-handled, flat-bladed scraper called “isht shaffi” (Dana Masters personal communication) was used to scrape off the hair as well as the epidermis and grain layers of the hide (Fig. 4). A deer hide could be scraped on a beam as soon as it was removed from the animal. Alternately, the hide could be soaked in wood ashes and water for a period of several days. This killed any bacteria in the hide, and chemically changed the hide, making it much easier to soften later in the tanning process. After a hide soaked in wood ashes had been scraped, it had to be weighted down under water in a creek and left for a day to wash out the wood ash and return the hide to a neutral pH.

Choctaw traditional tanners used a group of chemicals known as emulsified oils to change stiff rawhide into supple leather. These oils came in the form of animal brains, egg yolks, and corn mush. A dry hide could be soaked in water and then rung out until it was just damp. Meanwhile, the brains, egg yolks, or mush were mixed with water, mashed up, and heated to the temperature of hot bath water. The hide would be soaked in this dressing solution for minutes to hours, or even beaten with the dressing solution in a wooden mortar and pestle. Thereafter, the hide would be wrung out. If bubbles didn’t emerge through the hide during wringing, it would be soaked in the dressing solution again.

In the Choctaw language the hide-softening process is known as “hakshup lhopushkichi” (c.f. Byington 1915:254). In order for a hide to dry soft, it had to be constantly stretched back and forth during the drying process. This caused the fibers in the hide to slide back and forth past each other, and helped the emulsified oils prevent natural glue bonds from forming between the fibers, which would make the hide hard and stiff. Contrary to popular belief, deer hides were not chewed to soften them, but Choctaw people did use several other techniques. The simplest was to stretch the hide with the hands and knees, constantly turning it and pulling it. Another, technique known as “bilhi” (91), involved lacing the hide back onto the hide frame, and using a pointed, paddle-like imple-



Fig. 4

ment to forcefully push into the hide, and then downward along its surface, repeatedly covering every square inch (Fig. 5). Another technique, involved firmly planting the softening tool in the ground, and then pulling the loose hide back and forth over the tool’s working edge. Whatever technique was used, softening was an extremely strenuous process, and it had to be kept up regularly for hours until the hide dried soft. If any part of the hide dried stiff, in had to be soaked in the emulsified oils and then softened again.

A newly softened piece of traditional buckskin is white like a sheet of paper. If it gets wet, it will stiffen back into rawhide. Choctaw people prevented this by exposing the buckskin to smoke (Fig. 6). Smoke contains resin and formaldehyde that chemically protect soft buckskin from getting stiff again; they also help protect it from bug damage. Dried corncobs were a favorite hide-smoking material for many Choctaws. Corncob smoke not only protected the hide but also turned it a pretty yellowish color. Other smoking materials could be used to make the hide other colors; oak bark made a dark brown, sweet gum seedpods made a bright yellow; alder bark made a reddish color. Smoked buckskin was sometimes also soaked in dyes made from plant materials like walnut hulls that are high in tannic acid. This not only gave the buckskin a dark color, but also made it less stretchy, less water absorbent, and completely unappetizing to bugs (Fig. 7). A finished buckskin could be made into a robe, moccasins, a breech cloth, a skirt for women, bedding, or any variety of bags and containers.

Today, a few Choctaw people process hides in this ancient way, and many people from other tribes process hides using basically similar techniques. The Ponca Tribe in Nebraska has gone as far as establishing a tribal business that sells hides tanned traditionally by tribal members. The amount of work involved in doing traditional hide work is tremendous. However, with all of the deer hides that get thrown away every year, with many people wanting to return to more natural processes and materials, and with traditionally tanned deer hides often selling for \$150 and up, more people are becoming interested in this ancient art.

For more information, or for a full 91-page article on Choctaw traditional Choctaw hide-tanning, please contact the Choctaw Nation Historic Preservation Department at 1-800-522-6170 ext. 2216.



Fig. 7

Chahta Anumpa Aiikhvna Lesson of the Month

Piki vba ish bininli ma,
Himak nittak a, nan achukma moma
ho ish pim atahali ka, e chi yakoke.

Nan abvnna aiyasha kvf, chi nan itti
hullo ya ish o fohobla chi ka e chim asil-
hha.

Chihowa ma, pim ish shilombish a, hi-
monachi micha chi hina ai vlpesha ho ish
pi halvlikma. Ish pi hullo fehna ka, e
chi yakoke.

Chi ushi i hohchifo alhopullichit e
ponaklo,
Emen

Our Father above,
This day, we thank you for all the
good things you provide for us.

We ask for your love to be
poured out upon those who need
you.

Renew our spirits, O Lord, and
keep us in your ways of righteous-
ness.

Thank you for your tender mer-
cies toward us.

We ask through your Son’s name.
Amen

The First Noel

Choctaw translation of a beloved Christmas carol

Stanza 1

Noel ämmona enchil vt achi tok
Chukfvlhpoba apesvchi im anoli.
Osapa ma okla kahmaya, hustula,
kapvssa ninak ma!
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!
Islail i miko vt vlpowa.

The first Noel the angels did say
Was to certain poor shepherds
In fields where they lay
On a cold winter’s night
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!
Born is the King of Israel!

Stanza 2

Okla vba pisat, fichik pisa tok.
Hvshi akochaka tohwekali tok,
Yakni ya pvla chinto imma,
Nittak micha ninak pvhanla tok.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!
Islail i miko vt vlpowa.

They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the East,
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!
Born is the King of Israel!

Stanza 3

Hatak kostini tuchinat vla,
Holitoblit hlipkvchi tok,
Vla itikba habenachi,
Tvli lakna, mvh, filakinsen.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!
Islail i miko vt vlpowa.

Then entered in those wise men three
Full reverently upon their knee,
And offered there in His presence
Their gold, myrrhh and frankincense.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!
Born is the King of Israel!

Reserve your 2013 Labor Day RV Site

In order to reserve an RV site with electric and water hookups for the 2013 Labor Day Festival, please mail the reservation request form below no earlier than Jan. 1, 2013. RV sites will be reserved on a first come, first serve basis. Please include a copy of your CDIB card. Also, include the length of your RV or camper and the number of slide-outs. **PLEASE DO NOT SEND ANY MONEY AT THIS TIME.** After the deadline, all reservations will be drawn randomly for RV sites. If your name is drawn, you will be notified by mail. At that time you will send in your cashier’s check or money order in the amount of \$75.00 to receive your confirmation and rules for RV camping at the Labor Day Festival.

No phone reservations will be accepted. Please only include one reservation per application. We will do our best to respect the requests for preferred RV pads, however, we cannot guarantee you will get the pad number requested.

Please watch the Biskinik newspaper for future articles or changes in parking, tent camping and tribal preferences for the 2013 Labor Day Festival.

2013 RV Space Reservation

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Daytime phone number _____

Alternate phone number _____

Email _____

RV camper description and length: _____

NO TENTS IN RV AREAS

Number of slide-outs _____

– Only one (1) reservation per application –
No reservations accepted prior to Jan. 1, 2013.

Please return to:
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
Attn: Margaret Jackson
P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702

**NO RESERVATIONS WILL BE
ACCEPTED PRIOR TO JAN. 1, 2013**

Players of the year are named

Players, families and friends gathered Nov. 17 to spend a day devoted to stickball. Practice began early on the Tvshka Homma field while preparations for a banquet were under way in the cafeteria. The votes were in and the tables were loaded with everything from smoked turkey and homemade pumpkin pie to Indian tacos. Head Coach Les Williston thanked everyone for team Tvshka Homma's great year which included several tournament wins. Men and women were awarded in several categories and the players in turn honored Williston for his dedication and guidance. Receiving awards were:

Wounded Warrior

Bobby Long

Most Improved

Ramsey Williston
Gennavie Tom

Up & Coming

Jalen Shomo
Macy Bohanan

Defense

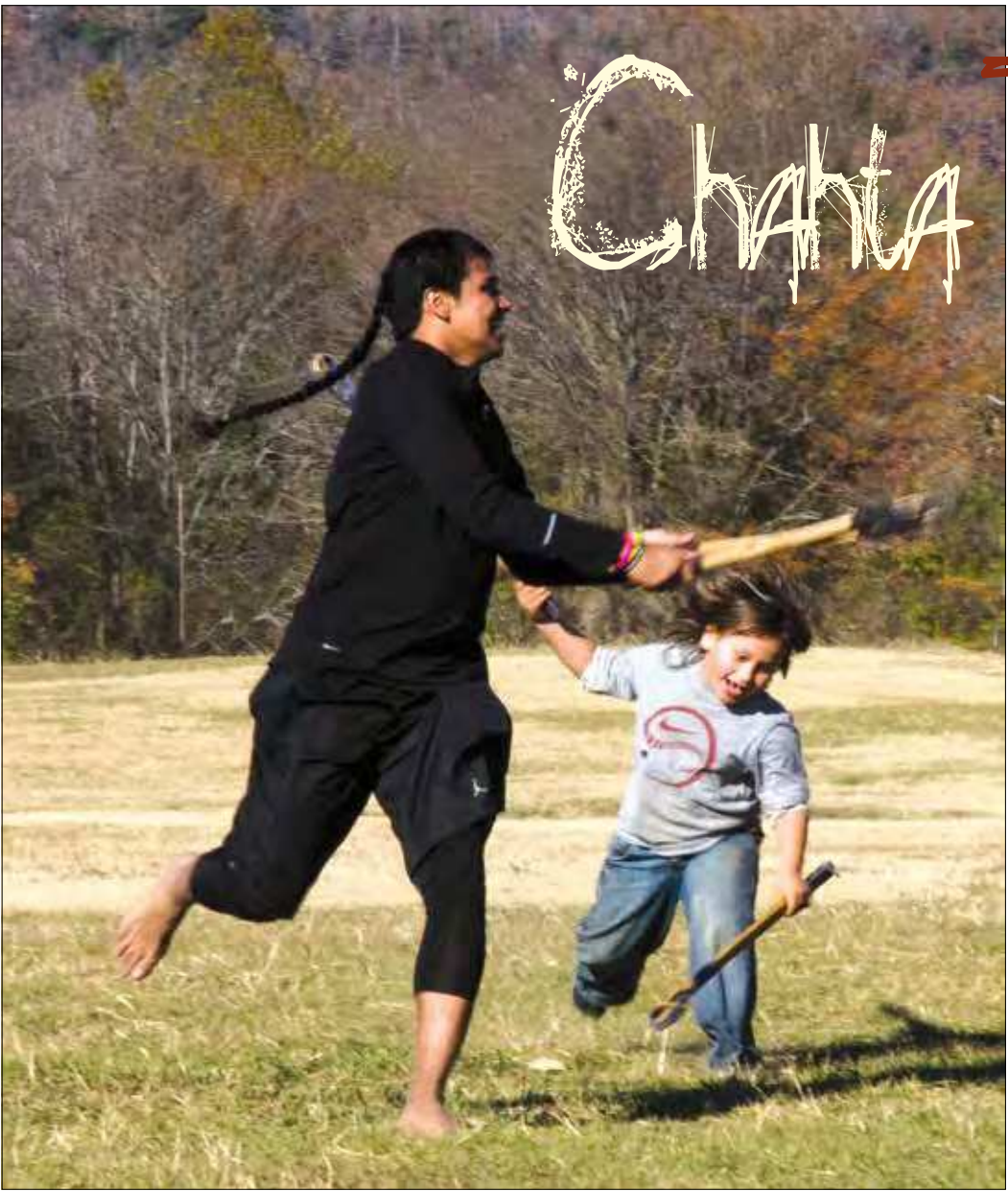
Bobby Baker
Shonda Shomo

Center

Will Parker
Beloved Sarah Sharp

Shooter

Billy Eagleroad
Valerie Watson



Stickball is a game of generations, a Choctaw sport or 'toli' that has been played for centuries. Some gather up sticks at the same age they learn to walk. At left, Jordan Eagleroad and Noah Baker are honing their skills on the field at Tvshka Homma during a team practice. Young boys and girls are encouraged to learn to play and at times there may be three generations of family members on the field at the same time.



Photos by Lisa Reed | Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Gathering in front of the cafeteria at Tvshka Homma are the honorees and team players: front row from left, Steve Jacob, Jared Tom, Beloved Sarah Sharp (holding Kvli Oka), Valerie Watson, Joey Tom, Gennavie Tom, Macy Bohanan, Shonda Shomo; middle row, Robert Baker, JJ Jacob, Robert Bohanan, Jalen Shomo, Josh Riley, Kielind Jim, Ramsey Williston, Billy Eagleroad, Bobby Baker, Jeremy Baker, Jerry Ludlow, Stanley Shomo; back row, Rick Miller, Bobby Long, Curtis Billy, Jordan Eagleroad, Tyler McKinney, Ryan Spring, Les Williston and Clovis Hamilton. Inset, Joey Tom presents an award to Les Williston as Honored Head Coach.



Players scramble to prevent Jennifer Shomo from throwing the ball during an exhibition game between players from different districts.

Thunder rolls in Durant

East met west in a stickball exhibition game Nov. 24 in Durant with Southeast Thunder rolling away with a 4-2 win over the west's Sintullo Lakna. The Cultural Events Department arranged for the intersquad scrimmage to coincide with the Choctaw Nation's eighth annual pow wow. Scoring for the Thunder were Jennifer Shomo with 1 point, Bobby Baker adding 2 and Joey Tom with 1. Sintullo Lakna scorers were Josh Alexander and Boomer Factor. Rules stipulate that players can't touch the ball with their hands and can't tackle below the waist. No hitting with the sticks, either. Otherwise, the game of

stickball is a fast-paced battle to the end. When hiloha and sintullo join as team Tvshka Homma, the warriors are hard to beat. The team triumphed in many games and tournaments this year, remaining victorious over all west of the Mississippi. They were undefeated in the Kullihoma tournament hosted by the Chickasaw Nation and in the Ala-Cous tournament at the Alabama-Coushatta reservation in Texas. They are looking forward to continuing their momentum in 2013 at these tournaments again, as well as with returns to the Jim Thorpe Games, the World Series of Stickball and as hosts of the third annual Choctaw Nation Labor

Day Festival tournament. "We improve with every practice, with every game," said Head Coach Les Williston. "Our players have heart." Their dedication extends beyond the playing field. Several of the coaches and players have visited local schools, participated in summer camps and held classes throughout southeast Oklahoma. Many have traveled with the tribe to cultural meetings in other states. They teach the traditions, the art of creating the ball and sticks, and the strategies of the game. The ancient Choctaw sport is once again becoming one of our most popular and exciting events.



Joe Jefferson guards the goal post for Sintullo Lakna.

Veterans Day 2012

Choctaw Nation honors those who served their country



The Choctaw Nation honored veterans on Nov. 10, with an annual ceremony hosted on the capitol grounds in Tvshka Homma. Hundreds were in attendance to show their support and respect for veterans.

This year's event featured the brand new war memorial, consisting of separate monuments for each war, and a walkway for patrons to travel along as they pay their respects to the memory of those on the wall.

Highlights of the day included speeches from Assistant Chief Gary Batton and retired U.S. Army Col. Ruth Lynn Hooper, presentation by retired U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Leroy Sisco, performance by the Choctaw princesses and a 21-gun salute from the Color Guard.



Assistant Chief Batton welcomes Arvin Smith who traveled all the way from Indianapolis.

Photos by LISA REED, JUDY ALLEN, KAREN JACOB and BRET MOSS | Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma



Rodney Holcomb and DeWayne Taylor.



Donnie, Air and Army National Guard, and Diana Hardwick of Oklahoma City go over the WWI memorial.



Joe Randall, U.S. Army Combat Engineer, views the Vietnam Memorial with Ruth Frazier and Jolie Tucker.



Guest Speaker Ruth Lynn Hooper, Col., U.S. Army-Retired.



The Choctaw Casino Resort's 8th Annual Pow Wow Grand Entry featured dancers of all ages who came from locations near and far. Hundreds of guests, including those from dozens of different nations, visited the two-day pow wow, which took place on Nov. 23-24 at the Choctaw Event Center in Durant.

8TH ANNUAL POW WOW



Kandace Folsom, Durant and her father, Eugene of Dallas, came dressed in traditional clothing.



Josh Riley and Seth Fairchild perform the 4 Step War Dance.



Choctaw Employee Dance Troupe members Mandy Lawson, Lisa Reed, Hope Tom and Lana Sleeper do the Raccoon Dance.

Photos by LISA REED, LARISSA COPELAND & KAREN JACOB Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma



Mike Scott and Judy Allen demonstrate Choctaw social dancing.



Laura Lucille Jamison, 91, attends the powwow with her great-granddaughter, Olivia Rolland, 13, and her great-great-granddaughter and the fifth generation, Kiersten Smith, 3.



Roger and Rhoda Scott with their dancing grandchildren, Jaiden Scott and Taloa Scott.



View more photos online by visiting the Choctaw Nation Facebook page: www.facebook.com/choctawnationofoklahoma, on Smug Mug: <http://choctawnation.smugmug.com/> or simply

SCAN THIS CODE WITH YOUR PHONE!

