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CHOCTAW NATION

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The Official Publication of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

December 2013 Issue

Tribal Council meets in regular November session

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

- Approve applications for Transitional Living Program, Maternity Group Homes, Promising Program Grant and Senior Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program.
- Approve the investment in Architect in Partnership Enterprises.
- Approve the grazing lease in McCurtain County.
- Approve to amend CB 31-12 allocating money to Boys and Girls Club of Durant.
- Approve the rescission of CB 30-2005.

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.

Over 18 years old? Don’t forget to update your membership card

If you have recently turned 18 or will be turning 18 within the next 60 days and have not yet obtained your Adult Membership card please complete a new Tribal Membership application and return to the Choctaw Nation Tribal Membership Department.

The application can be found online at choctawnation.com or by contacting the Tribal Membership office at 1-800-522-6170 or 580-924-8280.

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



Choctaw Nation: LISA REED

Chief Gregory E. Pyle holds the Congressional Gold Medal awarded to the Nation in honor of the Code Talkers of World Wars I and II. Joining him are, from left, Councilmen Ronald

Perry and Thomas Williston, Assistant Chief Gary Batton, retired Lt. Gen. Leroy Sisco, former Congressman Dan Boren, and Councilmen Delton Cox, Anthony Dillard and Bob Pate.

Congressional Gold Medals awarded in honor of WWI, WWII Code Talkers

By LARISSA COPELAND
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

The highest honor bestowed by Congress – the Congressional Gold Medal – was awarded to the Choctaw Nation, along with 32 other tribes on Wednesday, Nov. 20, in recognition of the bravery, honor and commitment of their Native American Code Talkers, who used their language as an unbreakable code for transmitting messages on the battlefield during World Wars I and II. Leaders of the U.S. House and Senate honored these Code Talkers in a Congressional Gold Medal ceremony held in Emancipation Hall of the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center in Washington, D.C.

Leaders of each of the tribes or nations of the Code Talkers, all but one of whom have passed away, were presented the gold medals at the ceremony. Chief Gregory E. Pyle accepted the gold medal on behalf of the Choctaw Code Talkers.

“It was an extremely humbling honor to accept the award on behalf of our brave Choctaw warriors,” said Chief Gregory E. Pyle. “Many people worked tirelessly to see our Code Talkers honored for their brave, gallant actions in battle. The Choctaw Code Talkers were the original group to use their native language as a weapon. That one small group of Choctaw men helped turn the tide during World War I and was so successful that their method of communications was repeated in World War II. I’m proud to see their courageous actions recognized.”

Speakers at the ceremony include House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH), Rep. Tom Cole (R-OK), Rep. Ron Kind (D-WI), Sen. Tim Johnson (D-SD), Sen. Jim Inhofe (R-OK), Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-KY), and Sen. Harry Reid (D-NV), as well as Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral James “Sandy” Winnefeld Jr.

In his opening statement, Speaker Boehner describes the Code Talkers as “the bravest of the brave.” He continued, “After they served with honor they did the honorable thing – they kept their service a secret, even to those that they loved.”

He thanked the families of the Code Talkers, saying because of them and their perseverance, “the deeds that may have been relegated to legend will now live on in memory and now heroes who long went unrecognized will now be given our highest recognition.”

He also thanked former Oklahoma Congressman Dan Boren, who was in attendance at the ceremony, calling him one of the original champions of the Code Talker legislation.

Pelosi remarked during her speech, “The Code Talkers, using their language, carried forward the hopes of their people, committed to the cause of freedom. Their sense of duty was never shaken – nor was their resolve. Their patriotism never wavered – nor did their courage. Their bonds of brotherhood were never broken – nor was their code.

“For their heroism and sacrifice, for the contributions that went unrecognized for too long, it is a privilege for Congress to award the Native American Code Talkers the highest honor we can bestow: the Congressional Gold Medal.”

Family members representing the 23 Choctaw Code Talkers – 19 from World War I and four from World War II – were presented medals at a separate Silver Medals presentation ceremony at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian.

One family member, Nuchi Nashoba, who is also the president of the Choctaw Code Talkers Association and granddaughter of Code Talker Ben Carterby, said, “It’s an exciting day for all of us because we waited so long for this to happen. I’m so thankful that we are able to experience this great, wonderful, historic event. As a descendent, it’s such an honor, such an honor, to be here.

“There are so many that walked the halls of Congress to get support to have the Code Talkers Recognition bill passed. It’s taken many, many years. It’s great to have our own government recognize our Code Talkers.

“As soldiers, they went to war; they didn’t brag, they didn’t boast about what they did,” she explained. “It was up to us to make this [recognition] happen and to brag on these people who went to war to keep us free.



Choctaw Nation: LARISSA COPELAND

The families of the Code Talkers were awarded silver medals in a separate ceremony at the National Museum of the American Indian.

See Page 3 for more photos from the Gold and Silver medal ceremonies

reference of where they fought,” D.G. said.

Many of the families have donated the silver medals to the Choctaw Nation to be displayed at the Code Talker exhibit at the Choctaw museum in Tvshka Homma.

The Choctaw Code Talkers during World War I were Joseph Oklahombi, Calvin Wilson, Robert Taylor, Ben Carterby, Solomon Louis, Albert Billy, Pete Maytubby, James Edwards, Noel Johnson, Tobias Frazier, Joe Davenport, George Davenport, Mitchell Bobb, Ben Hampton, Walter Veach, Otis Leader, Ben Colbert, Jeff Nelson, and Victor Brown. Those from World War II were Schlicht Billy, Davis Pickens, Andrew Perry and Forreston T. Baker.

Along with the Choctaw Nation, several Oklahoma tribes were also honored including the Comanche, Seminole, Cherokee, Pawnee and Muscogee Creek Nations, as well the Osage, Kiowa, Ponca, Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes.

Also, tribes from Alaska, Arizona, Montana, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wisconsin were among those awarded medals including Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe, Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of Montana, Ho-Chunk Nation of Wisconsin, Hopi Tribe, Oglala Sioux Tribe, Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin, Pueblo of Acoma Tribe, Sac and Fox Tribe of the Mississippi in Iowa/Meskwaiki Nation, Santee Sioux Nation, Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, Tonto Apache Tribe, White Mountain Apache, Yankton Sioux Tribe, Crow Nation, Fond Du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Laguna Pueblo Tribe, Lower Brulé Sioux Tribe, Menominee Tribe, Mohawk Tribe, and the Rosebud Sioux Tribe.

Bronze duplicate medals are available for purchase in two sizes from the United States Mint.

We’ve all become so close and so attached to this cause. It’s up to us to continue to tell their story. We do it in order to honor the men that went to war.

“I’m thankful to the Choctaw Nation and for the display they’ve created in Tvshka Homma,” she continues. “It will allow Choctaws for many generations to learn of their legacy, read their story and see their medals.”

Another family member, D.G. Smalling, great-grandson of Code Talker Calvin Wilson, said to finally have the medal was amazing. “We have a very unique situation with our family,” he said. “We’ve actually been to where they fought.

“The Argonne Forest in northern France,” said his mother, Janet Smalling, grandson of Calvin Wilson.

“It’s amazing to finally have this [medal] and to have the frame of

Long journey to see Code Talkers honored

From the Desk of Chief Gregory E. Pyle

World War I ended on Nov. 11, 1918. There were approximately 16 million deaths and 21 million wounded attributed to the four-year duration of the war. On Nov. 20 – 95 years later – the original group of Code Talkers whose tactics helped end the devastation of World War I were awarded Congressional Gold Medals along with World War I and World War II Code Talkers from the Choctaw Nation and 32 other Native American tribes. Each native nation had its own unique design and seeing them lined up, gleaming tributes under the lights, was one of my life’s greatest moments.

Our trip to the ceremony didn’t begin with a bus ride from the hotel on the morning of Nov. 20. It began decades ago. I sat in the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center’s Emancipation Hall with tribal leaders, family members and friends, remembering the journey leading to this momentous occasion.

Raising recognition of the Choctaw Code Talkers began as soon as their “secret” was revealed. The original group swore to not tell anyone so that their method of communicating could be effectively used again. Even after World War II and the repeated use of Code Talkers, several of the original group died without telling their families. They had given their word.



The Choctaw Nation’s commitment to honor these men increased with many, many trips to the Capitol to walk the halls of Congress. Hundreds of letters were written and calls made by tribal members everywhere. All of this was repeated, over and over again – the dedication to make it happen a driving force for us all.

A lot of the people who fought for the Code Talkers and were instrumental in planning the ceremony were also there

– former U.S. Rep. Dan Boren, U.S. Rep. Tom Cole, U.S. Sen. Jim Inhofe, U.S. Rep. Markwayne Mullin, Lt. Gen. Leroy Sisco, Assistant Chief Gary Batton, the Rev. Bertram Bobb and his son, Fred Bobb, Judy Allen, Tribal Council and family members. The excitement among the hundreds of people in the room was palpable. It was an honor to meet Edmund Harjo of the Seminole Nation, one of the last surviving Code Talkers.

There were several who couldn’t be there. One face in particular was missing, one who shared her story of “Papa” and the Code Talkers everywhere she went – Ruth Frazier McMillan. Ruth, the daughter of WWI Choctaw Code Talker Tobias Frazier, not only went to D.C., she visited schools and civic organizations, wrote the letters and called her Congressmen and anyone else she thought could help. She was a force all her own. Ruth passed away in October. She knew her dream had been realized and she was able to be with us in September at the Highway 3 dedication in Antlers for the WWI Choctaw Code Talkers. We will all miss her very much.

Family members of 16 of the 19 WWI Code Talkers and the four WWII Code Talkers were present – grandchildren, nieces and nephews. Ages ranged up to almost 90 years old and it was a wonderful experience to see their joy. A silver medal reception was held later just for the family. Edith Billy, the widow of Schlicht Billy, who was a Code Talker in WWII and the last of the Choctaw Code Talkers to pass away, was there and accepted the silver medal in memory of her husband.

The event is one of the Choctaw Nation’s greatest in history and I am thankful to everyone who was a part of it, and most of all to the Code Talkers for their unique contributions in protecting the land they called home.

Chaplain’s Corner

Filled with gratitude

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

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?”

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 bought 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 the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”

But Peace is not due until The Prince of Peace comes. What are we doing today? We are doing right the opposite – we 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, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.”

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

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

The joyful news is that Jesus Saves. “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all 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.

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



REV. BERTRAM BOBB
Tribal Chaplain

Choctaws have proud history of service

From the Desk of Assistant Chief Gary Batton

We are truly blessed to be able to celebrate our veterans. As I looked out over the audience during our Veterans Day ceremony at Tvshka Homma, I saw men and women of all ages who have fought for our freedom. There were close to 900 Choctaw veterans attending the event with members representing every branch of service. It’s always a stirring moment for me when I see the veterans proudly stand to the music of their respective anthem.

The Choctaw Nation has a glorious military past. On Nov. 9, I had the privilege to watch as Tony Burris was inducted posthumously into the Oklahoma Military Hall of Fame. Army SFC Burris is the only Choctaw to be awarded the Medal of Honor. He gave the ultimate sacrifice in 1951 on Heartbreak Ridge in Korea. Records say Burris’ company encountered intense fire, but Burris charged ahead throwing hand grenades and ultimately killing 17 of the enemy before he was mortally wounded.

Another historic event took place on Nov. 20 in Washington, D.C. – the long-awaited presentation of Congressional Gold Medals to World War I and II Code Talkers of the Choctaw Nation and 32 other tribal nations. Choctaw men were the first to speak in their language as a code and the group led the way for others to repeat the strategy in World War II.

As we honor our veterans, it is clear that they are the reason why we are able to hold our celebra-



tions. We have freedom to worship. We have the freedom to gather with our families on holidays. And, we have the freedom to help others.

Choctaw Nation’s services are available year-round but as we near the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, we remember that it is a season of giving and there are many who need our help. Outreach staff holds drives every fall and gathers shoes and coats to give to kids throughout the Nation. Food vouchers have been provided to 3,200 families to use for holiday meal items and a special Santa gift program is ensuring over 2,000 children have presents this year. Choctaw Nation employees work tirelessly.

The generosity of people warms my heart as I see the staff hold toy drives on Tuesdays and the way everyone hurries to put their names on Angel gift lists for Choctaw youth and senior citizens who often have no one else to buy them anything.

As I walked through the store shopping for my “Elder Angel,” I wondered if he was a veteran. The list was so simple, and humbling.

Yakoke, veterans, for your defense of our freedoms. **YOU** have given us so much.

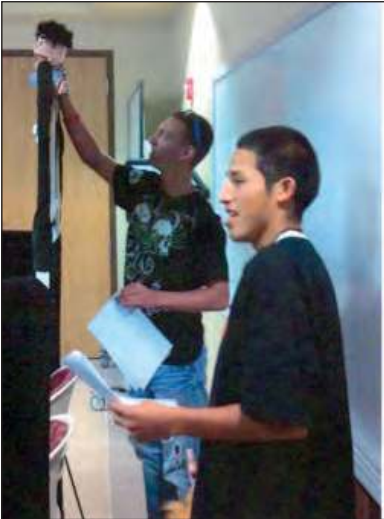
Youth of the Nation

YAB. What is it and who does it involve? Youth Advisory Board is a way of making a difference in the world, one step at a time! Youth Advisory Board is a group of students from across the entire Choctaw Nation with one goal in mind. The goal-to challenge the youth of this great nation to become the leaders of tomorrow! It works by empowering students to come together and work towards addressing community needs. They set goals to keep a positive future for the Choctaw Nation. Some of the issues addressed by Youth Advisory Board include: underage drinking prevention, dating abuse prevention, bullying prevention, tobacco use prevention and fitness/health awareness. YAB also organizes many community service projects such as canned food drives, school supply drives, student volunteer

work, town clean ups, and much more!

In September, six students from Jones Academy’s YAB attended the annual Project Falvmmichi Training Seminar held at the Pittsburg County Health Department in McAlester, Oklahoma. Students attending were: Sierra Billey, Dakota Guinn, Veronda Joaquin, Juaquin Ramirez, Lane Rust, and Brandon Thomas. These students represent Jones Academy and take Project Falvmmichi into the 1st and 2nd grade classroom where they perform anti-bullying and domestic violence prevention puppet skits each month.

Article submitted by Jones Academy YAB Sierra Billey, Dakota Guinn, Veronda Joaquin, Juaquin Ramirez, Lane Rust, and Brandon Thomas.



Photos provided
Lane Rust, left, and Brandon Thomas perform a skit about sharing for the attendees of the seminar.



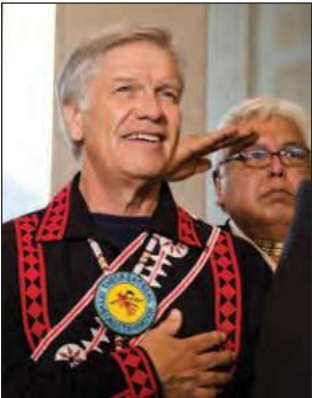
Adult YAB sponsor Shonnie Hall aides Dakota Guinn with a project, during the training seminar.

Gold and Silver Medal Ceremonies



Lt. Gen. Leroy Sisco (Ret.), Councilman Ron Perry, Assistant Chief Gary Batton, Congressman Tom Cole, Chief Gregory E. Pyle, Councilman Anthony Dillard, Councilman Bob Pate and Councilman Thomas Williston.

Photos by LISA REED | Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma



Chief Pyle at the Gold Ceremony.



Janet Smalling, granddaughter of Calvin Wilson, and Shirley Geller, granddaughter of Joseph Oklahombi, accept the silver medals.



Bruce Frazier, grandson of Tobias Frazier, and Abraham Jones, grandson of Ben Carterby.



Chief Pyle stands with others at ceremony.



U.S. Rep. Tom Cole of Oklahoma speaks at the Gold Medal Ceremony



The Silver Medal Ceremony at the Smithsonian National Museum of American Indian.

Veterans Day



Veteran Willie Walley stands during the Air Force song.



An attendee looks at the WWII monument.



Chief Pyle speaks at the veteran's day ceremony.



Attendees before the ceremony.



Council Speaker, Delton Cox presents a key to Veteran Adam Beard with wife Lynette and son Trenton for a new home sponsored by the Choctaw Nation through the Homes 4 Wounded Heroes program.



Justin and Mary Yearby, parents of U.S. Marine Lance Cpl. Hatak-Yuka-Keyu Martin Yearby, accept the posthumous award of the Oklahoma Gold Star Medal for their son who died May 14, 2006, while serving in Iraq.



Folsom White smiles for the camera.



Jim Bible presents a novel post from the original Council House to Chief Pyle during the ceremony.



Talihina band plays for the Veteran's ceremony.



Jack Bacon sits among the crowd at the ceremony.

Photos by DEIDRE ELROD | Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Choctaw Nation WIC encourages breastfeeding

Give Your Baby the Gift of Life...Breastfeed.

Christmas is a great time to think about the gifts that breastfeeding can offer both moms and babies. Besides creating a special bond between a mother and her baby, breastfeeding gives lifelong health benefits that a baby can't get from anywhere else.

Breastfeeding gives babies special protection by reducing the risk of diabetes, ear infections, respiratory diseases, obesity, and diarrhea and is easier to digest than formula. Breastmilk is the perfect food for babies and provides all of the nutrients that a baby needs to get a healthy start in life.

Mothers benefit from breastfeeding too! By breastfeeding their babies, moms reduce their risk for breast and uterine cancer and can help moms quickly return to their pre-pregnancy weight.

This Christmas, think about the healthy gifts that breastfeeding offers! Moms can give the gift of a healthy life by breastfeeding. Families can join in too by supporting breastfeeding moms and babies.

For more information about breastfeeding, please call 1-800-522-6170 extension 2507.

WIC
WOMEN, INFANTS
AND CHILDREN

Recipe of the Month



Easy Pumpkin Pie (A recipe from Splenda.com)

Ingredients:

- ¾ cup Splenda No Calorie Sweetener, granulated
- 2 tablespoons light molasses
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon (I also add 1tsp nutmeg, ¼ tsp ginger and cloves)
- 4 egg whites
- 1 (15oz) can pumpkin puree
- 1 ¼ cups nonfat evaporated milk
- 1 (9 inch) unbaked pie crust
- 2 cups fat-free frozen whipped topping, thawed

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350° F (175° C)
2. In a large mixing bowl, stir together Splenda Granulated Sweetener, molasses, salt, and cinnamon. When these

ingredients are well mixed, stir in the egg whites followed by the pumpkin and evaporated milk. Pour into the pie crust.

3. Bake for 1 ¼ to 1 ½ hours in the preheated oven, or until a toothpick inserted into the pie comes out clean. Cool then top with whipped topping before serving.

Nutrition Facts:

Amount per serving: 8 servings
Calories 220, Total Carbs 29g, Total fat 8g, Sodium 400mg, Fiber 3g, Sat fat 1g, Protein 7g, Cholesterol 0mg
I hope you enjoy this recipe and have a Merry Christmas and a healthy New Year! For further information you may contact:
Erin Adams, RD, LD Choctaw Nation Diabetes Wellness Center, 800-349-7026, ext.: 6959

Slow down and enjoy this time of year

December is a wondrous time of year. As we look around at all of the many blessing we have, all the young children wondering what Santa will put under the Christmas tree for them, wondering what to prepare for family Christmas dinner...and, oh yes, wondering why oh why did we eat so much so fast!?! More often we are putting so much thought into why we ate what we did and feeling guilty for these overindulgences that we are not enjoying the special holiday foods that typically come around one to two times a year. Yes, we will be tempted with an abundance of wonderful meals full of old family recipes and new, yet if we allow ourselves to truly enjoy the once a year treats we just might be able to avoid the overindulgence and look back at these special moments with wonderful memories.

- Here are a few ways to slow down and enjoy this time of year:
- Make a list of your typical holiday meal, divide into foods that taste best just placed on the table and foods that still taste good or better as leftovers. Then from the first list take off all the foods that you can have any time of year i.e., mashed potatoes. All the foods left, high in

- carbs, you can portion into three to four carb servings. Generally a carb serving is about ½ cup.
- Include a lot of non-starchy vegetables on your plate. Half of your plate should be filled with non-starchy vegetables, such as garden salad, broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, squash, tomatoes, green beans (not in a creamy casserole), etc.
 - Go for a family walk after the meal and before the dessert.
 - Wait two hours between the meal and dessert.
 - Portion desserts to have one after the family meal then save the rest to enjoy another serving the next day.
 - Drink plenty of water, just plain water. To enhance the flavor try adding sliced cucumber, berries and/or citrus slices to a pitcher of water.
 - Enjoy family conversation and memories while at the table, this can help to slow down how fast we eat.
 - And enjoy tasty recipes that will help to keep us healthy for the years to come.

CHOCTAW NATION FOOD DISTRIBUTION

<p>ANTLERS</p> <p>Market open weekdays Jan. 2-29, except for: Jan. 8: Idabel 9-11 a.m.; Broken Bow 12-2 p.m. (market open) Jan. 15: Bethel 9-10:30; Smithville 12-2 (market open) Closed: Jan. 1 for Tribal Holiday and Jan. 30-31 for inventory. Cooking with Carmen: Jan. 3, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.</p> <p>DURANT</p> <p>Market open weekdays Jan. 2-29, except for: Closed: Jan. 1 for Tribal Holiday and Jan. 30-31 for inventory. Cooking with Carmen: Jan. 9, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.</p> <p>McALESTER</p> <p>Market open weekdays Jan. 2-29, except for: Closed: Jan. 1 for Tribal Holiday and Jan. 30-31 for inventory. Cooking with Carmen: Jan. 13, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.</p> <p>POTEAU</p> <p>Market open weekdays Jan. 2-29, except for: Closed: Jan. 1 for Tribal Holiday and Jan. 30-31 for inventory. Cooking with Carmen: Jan. 16, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.</p>	<p>Open 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Monday thru Friday. Staff will take lunch from 11:30 to noon.</p> <p>WAREHOUSES & MARKETS</p> <p>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 Ave, 918-649-0431</p> <p>FOOD DISTRIBUTION SITES</p> <p>Bethel: Choctaw Community Center Broken Bow: Choctaw Family Investment Center Idabel: Choctaw Community Center Smithville: Choctaw Community Center</p> <p>In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, political beliefs, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Adjudication and Compliance, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call 800-795-3272 (voice) or 202-720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.</p>
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NURSERY NEWS

Beckett Eeds Podany

Beckett Eeds Podany was born at 7:53 a.m. on June 4, 2013, at the Norman Regional Healthplex to Matthew and Kari Jo Podany of Norman. Beckett weighed 6 pounds 15 ounces and was 18 3/4 inches long. Grandparents are Ray and Nancy Eeds of Elk City and Darla and Martin Podany of Idabel.



Carley Rena

Casey and Cara Paulk are excited to announce the birth of their daughter, Carley Rena. She was born at 3:43 p.m. on Aug. 24. She weighed 8 pounds and was 21 1/4 inches long. She is the great-granddaughter of Bobbie Hudson of Skiatook. She is also the granddaughter of Tommy and Wylene (LeFlore) Hudson of Skiatook and David and Debbie Paulk of Blanchard.



Gracie Joyce Lynn

Gracie Joyce Lynn was born at 12 p.m. on June 4, 2013, at Tampa General Hospital in Tampa, Fla. She weighed 9 pounds 10 ounces and was 21 inches long. Gracie was born to Miguel and Cortney Gonzalez of Land O' Lakes, Fla. Grandparents are Cecil and Bettie Sharp of Zephyrhills, Fla., and Brenda and Miguel Gonzalez of Ohio.



Piper Sage Baker

Piper Sage Baker was born on Sept. 26, 2013, at Choctaw Nation Health Care Center to proud parents Shawn and Melissa Baker and two very proud brothers, Ethan and Zander Baker of Battiest. She weighed 7 pounds 1 ounce and was 19 inches long. Grandparents are Debbie Davidson and Ray Baker of Battiest and Andy and Emmylou Sanchez of Holly Creek. Great-grandparents are Mary and Fred Pipping of Sobal, Melissa and the late Robert Bohanan of Bethel and Aaron and the late Jaunita Baker of Battiest. She has one uncle, three aunts, seven first cousins and many more family and friends.



Sophie Hood

Sophie Belle Hood was welcomed into the hearts of sister Cloë, brother Boomer and proud parents, Richie and Dawn Hood of Davis. Sophie was born on Feb. 28, 2013, and weighed 8 pounds 8 ounces and was 21 inches long. Grandparents are Richard and Linda Hood of Sulphur, Maxie and Lawana Phillips of Davis and numerous other family members. Sophie is a descendant of Choctaw original enrollee, Nancy Anderson.



Sean McGuire Jr.

Alliyah has a new brother. Sean David McGuire Jr. came into our world on Sept. 23, 2013. He weighed 5 pounds 12 ounces and was 18 ½ inches long. Parents are Sean McGuire Sr. and Torie Baker of Stigler. Paternal grandmother is Sherry McGuire of Stigler. Great-grandmother is the late Beatrice Marie Bonaparte Roy. Paternal uncle is the late Brian Long Pham Sr. Great-great-grandmother is Corrine Maxine Brammer of Keota. Maternal grandmother is the late Monette Baker. Great-grandmother is Cecelia J. Baker of Oklahoma city. Great-grandfather is Houston Baker Jr. of Stigler. We are truly blessed.



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
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CHOCTAW FARMS

About Choctaw Farms

Choctaw Farms was developed in partnership with House of Webster, which has been creating the very best in gourmet gift items including handcrafted jams, preserves and cheeses for over thirty years. Choctaw has partnered with House of Webster to bring these delicious, handcrafted products to guests.



The fine products from Choctaw Farms include:



- **2-Jar and 3-Jar custom assortment gift packs** including preserves, jellies, jams, marmalades, fruit butters, spreadable fruit, relishes, salsas and homestyle pickles.
- **Signature Meat & Cheese Gift Packs** with cheddar cheese, summer sausage and jalapeno stuffed olives.
- **Spiral-Cut Half Hams** that are hickory-smoked the old-fashioned way to bring out the sweet, rich flavor.

Choctaw Farms products appeal to a variety of people in a many situations, creating a special experience for both the gift giver and the recipient. Choctaw Farms products are available for purchase online or at one of our locations at: **Choctaw Casino Resort in Durant and Pocola.**

800.369.4641 www.choctawfarms.com

NOTES TO THE NATION

Code Talker’s family expresses appreciation for ceremony

The family of Choctaw Code Talker Benjamin Hampton wishes to express their sincere appreciation to the Choctaw Nation and former congressman Dan Boren for their persistence in getting the Choctaw Code Talkers recognized for their major contributions to World War I and II.

We want to thank Judy Allen and her staff for the many hours they contributed to make the gold and silver medal ceremonies an overwhelming success.

We especially want to express our appreciation to Chief Pyle for his assistance to make sure that family members of each Code Talker was able to attend the medal presentation.

The family of Benjamin Hampton

Thank you to Patient Relations

To the Nation,

I wish to express my gratitude to the Choctaw Nation for the help provided to me by Robin in Choctaw Nation Patient Relations. I was briefly and unexpectedly hospitalized in August. The resulting bills have been overwhelming and have caused me a great deal of stress and anxiety. Robin’s counsel, patience and assistance in helping to reduce the financial burden have been invaluable. She is a true asset to the Choctaw Nation. Thank you, Robin.

Sincerely,
Sean Mullins

Thank you to for the new roof

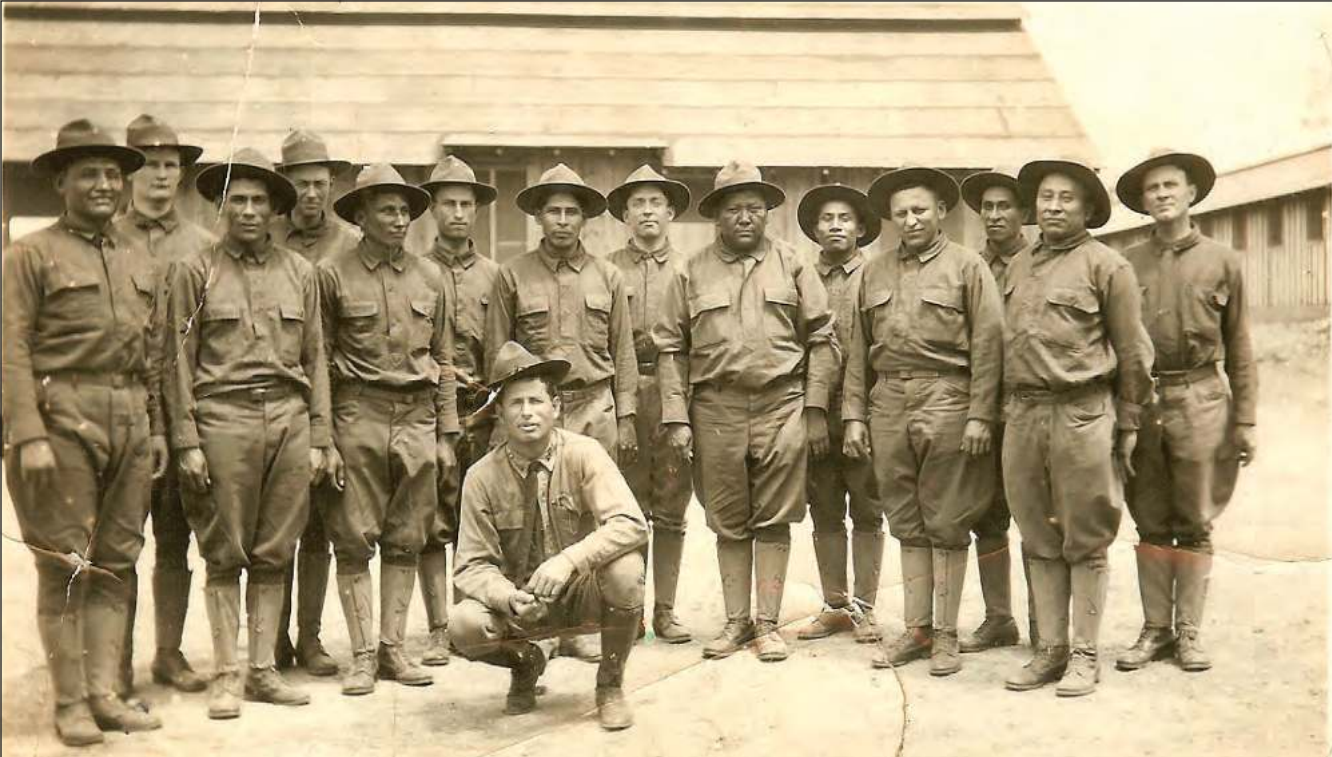
I would like to thank the Lord first, then I want to thank Delton Cox for making it possible for us to have a new roof put on our house. Then I want to thank the Choctaw Nation for having people like Delton Cox working for them and helping the people of the Choctaw Nation. God bless you all.

Dale and Doris Blaylock
Pocola

EVENTS

Church to begin monthly gospel singing

A monthly gospel singing will begin at 7 p.m. on Jan. 3, 2014, and repeat monthly on the first Friday of each month, at the Cornerstone Full Gospel Church, 316 N. Main, in Caddo. It is free admission and all singers and listeners are welcome. Concessions will be available. For more information, contact Bonnie Horn at 580-760-6127.



Seeking information on photograph

DO YOU RECOGNIZE ANY OF THESE MEN?

This picture was located in several places-The Allece Locke Garrard Manuscript Collection and an album put together by her aunt, Mary (Dollye) Locke Archer, owned by Francine Locke Bray. The man in the front center is Ben D. Locke, Captain of Company L. He was the father of Allece and sister of Dollye.

Company L of the First Oklahoma Infantry was organized in the year 1899 with John T. Stone, colonel, and Roy Hoffman, lieutenant-colonel. On April 19, 1910, they departed for San Benito, Texas, near the Rio Grande. Here they remained until Feb. 20, 1917, when they were ordered home, and were mustered out of the Federal Service on March 1. The Regiment was out of service just one month, when they were again mustered into the service of the United States. War had been declared against Germany and the regiment reported at Fort Sill, Okla., April 5.

In January 1912, Ben D. Locke enlisted as a private in Company L, Oklahoma National Guard. It is said that the company was composed entirely of Indians. That same month, he was made a corporal and the following month was elevated to the rank of sergeant.

March of 1912 Ben was commissioned first lieutenant and in August 1915 was raised to a captain and given command of Company L. It is said that they distinguished themselves

“extensively” during the Mexican border trouble.

Captain Locke and his company were ordered to Fort Sill April 6, 1917, the same day the United States entered the war against Germany. The remainder of 1917 and part of 1918 was spent at Fort Sill at Camp Bowie and at Fort Worth, Texas. In August 1918, Company L of the First Oklahoma Infantry was consolidated with the Seventh Texas Infantry.

We have a number of pictures of Company L which we will be posting as they are scanned. We also have a number of uncited newspaper articles which address the history of this company. However, other than members of the Locke family, there are no individuals identified in any of the pictures. It is believed that this group of 14, plus their captain, is what has been referred to as the Indian Brigade.

Michael Gonzales, curator of the 45th Infantry Division Museum in Fort Reno, in an email correspondence with Ms. Bray has indicated that “the enlisted men are wearing the 1902 leggings, but the remainder of their uniform is the post 1912 type.” He proposes that this pictures dates from the 1916 “Mexican Border” mobilization.

We are asking for help in identifying these individuals and their military service. If you know anything about Company L, the Indian Brigade, or any of these individuals, please contact Francine Locke Bray at email: flbray@iupui.edu or by cell: 317-409-6517.

Francine Locke Bray

Reserve your 2014 Labor Day RV site

In order to reserve an RV site with electric and water hookups for the 2014 Labor Day Festival, please mail the reservation request form below no earlier than Jan. 1, 2014. 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 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 2014 Labor Day Festival.

2014 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 _____ Width of slide-outs _____

– Only one (1) reservation per application –
No reservations accepted prior to Jan. 1, 2014.

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, 2014

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

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

The BISKINIK is a nonprofit publication of the Choctaw Nation.

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

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



BISKINIK 2013

Choctaw Nation can aid with loans

The Southeastern Oklahoma Indian Credit Association offers small business, home, home improvement and agriculture loans. To be eligible to apply, a person must reside within the 10.5-county service area of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and must possess a Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) from a federally recognized tribe. For more information, please contact Susan Edwards at 580-924-8280 or toll-free 800-522-6170.

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

Choctaw Nation Family Investment Center
210 B St. – Poteau
9:30-11 a.m. and 1-2 p.m.

Choctaw Housing Authority Affordable Rental Housing

Bokoshe, Red Oak and Quinton are accepting applications for: one, two, three and four bedroom income based apartments.

- Applicant must have a CDIB Card
- Applicant household must meet income guidelines
- Household members age 18 and over must pass OSBI criminal background check
- Household members age 18 and over must pass local background check
- Applicant must provide two previous landlord references including telephone numbers and addresses
- Applicant must have an income.

Elder Residential Housing

Hartshorne is accepting applications for income based one bedroom apartments which include: stove, refrigerator, central heat/air, washer and dryer.

- These units are designed for a single person or a person and their spouse.
- Each applicant must be able to live independently.
- Applicants must be at least 55 years of age.
- Age 62 and older receive preference.
- Tenant must be able to pay 15% of their gross adjusted income towards rent.

All applications may be obtained online at choctawhousing.com under services, Affordable Rental Housing or by calling Tracy Archey at 580-372-4091

Affordable Housing is housing that is affordable to lower income households earning no more than 80% of the Area Median Income. Tenant rent in the Affordable Housing Program is based on 15% of the gross adjusted income for the household.

The Housing Authority of the Choctaw Nation has 146 affordable rental units located within the Choctaw Nation boundaries.



PEOPLE YOU KNOW



A Salute

Serrano continues family tradition

Private 1st Class Dillon Serrano is on active duty with the U.S. Army. He completed his Basic Training at Fort Jackson, N.C., and AIT at Fort Lee, Va.

He is stationed at Fort Campbell, Ky., and is in Bravo Company 801st Airborne. He is currently serving in Afghanistan.

He is the grandson of the late Troy Cacy of McAlester, to whom he was extremely close. His parents are Danny and Paulette (Cacy) Pulido. His big brother is Josh Cacy. Dillon was born in Ada, and was raised for the early part of his life in Oklahoma until his mother went into active duty with the army. He then grew up in Killeen, Texas. He joined the military because he wanted to keep the family tradition of serving in the military. His grandfather was active duty with the U.S. Navy and served during Vietnam. His mom and dad were both served in the Army at Fort Hood.



Choctaw Pastor gives Thunder Invocation

Pastor Melvin Palmer of Cedar Baptist Church, located in Red Oak, was invited to give the opening invocation for the Oklahoma City Thunder on their Nov. 10 game against the Washington Wizards. Palmer was invited to participate in the ceremonies in the Thunder's recognition of Native American Heritage Month. The Thunder went on to win that game, 106-105.

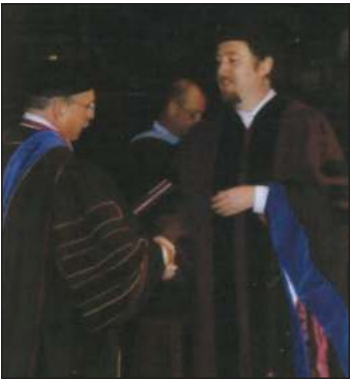
Photo provided by Vanessa Horner



Congrats Jeffrey Wilson

Jeffrey Wilson, son of Norman D. and Judy Wilson of Lubbock, Texas, graduated from Texas A & M University on Aug. 16, 2013. He earned a Ph. D. in genetics and plant breeding.

He is the grandson of T.N. Wilson and the late Delores Wall Wilson of Bokchito.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

CODY FITE

Happy birthday to Cody Fite, who turned 10 years old on Dec. 4. Cody is a straight "A" honors student and has been since beginning school. He is also active on the soccer and flag football teams.



Dr. Keith earns title

Dr. Susan E. Keith, a member of Angelo State University's kinesiology faculty since 1997, has been named dean of ASU's College of Graduate Studies, effective Jan. 1.

"Dr. Keith has served in various capacities across campus, including significant service in the College of Graduate Studies as well as the campus at large since her original appointment to the faculty. Her familiarity with and her commitment to ASU will help continue the college's record growth," stated Dr. Nancy G. Allen, interim provost and vice president for academic affairs.

Keith, a professor of kinesiology, joined the ASU faculty in 1997 as an assistant professor and was subsequently promoted to the rank of associate professor in 2004 and to the rank of professor in 2011.

During her 16-year ASU tenure, she has served as a member of the University Graduate Council, Graduate Advisory Committee in the Department of Agriculture, Physical Therapy Admissions Committee and Graduate Faculty Research Enhancement Program Grants Committee.

Keith has a record of extensive involvement in department and university-wide leadership and service, having chaired or served on 36 committees, including several presidential task forces. She was instrumental in the developing and implementing the M.Ed. in coaching, sport, recreation and fitness administration, a highly successful program in the Department of Kinesiology.

Keith holds a B.S. in office administration from Southwestern Oklahoma State University and a B.S. in physical education from the University of Central Oklahoma. She earned a M.S. in education from Baylor University with an emphasis in exercise physiology and a Ph.D. in health studies from Texas Woman's University.



Ashley accepted to BETA

Ashley Terry-Wright, daughter of Jennifer Terry of Hot Springs, Ark., and grandchild of Brenda Terry of Perryville, Ark., was invited to join BETA for the school year of 2013-14.

Members of BETA, the nation's largest independent, non-profit, educational youth organization, must have a GPA of 3.0 or greater to join. They must also be active in several community activities. Ashley is an 11th grade student this year at Woodlawn High. She has plans of enrolling into cosmetology classes in Hot Springs, Ark. The induction ceremony was held at the high school gym with presentation of the awards and pins. Her family would like to thank Ashley for her hard work and accomplishment. They encourage her to always remember that she will only get from the future what you put in to the present, and hope that she keeps God as the main thing.



LeFlore Golden Anniversary

Congratulations to Don and Rose LeFlore of Sherman, Texas, who celebrate their Golden wedding anniversary on Dec. 27.

The couple met in Dallas through a mutual friendship and were married in 1963 in West Allison, Okla. Those in attendance were the bride and groom's parents, brother of the groom, Charles, sister of the bride, Edna, along with family and friends.

Rose LeFlore was born in Calera, the daughter of Bill and Lucille Gibson. She graduated from Durant High School and retired from Texas Instruments / Raytheon after 35+ years of services. She spends her spare time running errands and being a caretaker of family and friends. She enjoys tending her gardens, participating in various church activities and sings with the Native Praise Choir, which embarked on a trip to England in 2006.

Don was born in Bentley, the son of Thompson and Carrie LeFlore. He attended Jones Academy / West Allison Schools and graduated from Tushka High School. He joined the Air Force shortly after graduation, then later, the National Guard. He retired from Oscar Mayer after 35+ years of services and briefly worked for the Choctaw Casinos. He enjoys reading, playing golf, long walkers and traveling the great state of Oklahoma and visiting family and friends.

The couple moved to Sherman in 1974 where they raised a family of two sons and a daughter. They have two grandchildren and are members of Grace Indian Baptist Church.

The family sends their love and best wishes for many more years of happiness.



Celebrating 50 years

Bobby and Ann Bryant of Coweta celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Nov. 2, at Northside Christian Church in Broken Arrow with their children. Family and friends were in attendance at the celebration from 2 to 4 p.m.

After Ann graduated from Central Christian College in McPherson, Kan., she returned home to Tulsa where the two met while Bobby was attending Spartan School of Aeronautics. On Nov. 2, 1963, they were united in marriage in Tulsa. They have two children, a son Robert "Bobby" Bryant with wife Beth Bryant of Mason, Mich., and daughter Debbie Johnson with husband John of Broken Arrow. They have two grandchildren, Clint Bryant of Coweta and Joe Bryant of Mason.

Bobby helped develop Green Country Soccer and served as youth commissioner for the Oklahoma Soccer Association. After moving to Coweta in 1974, he developed the Coweta Soccer Club.

Bobby retired from American Airlines in Tulsa in 2002 after 33 years. Ann retired from Nelson Electric in Tulsa in 1993 after 25 years. She then enjoyed working for Barry and Connie Henson at Hensons Restaurant in Coweta. At present, she is employed with Coweta Public Schools.



Mayfield 60th Anniversary

Bob and Esther Mayfield of Stigler celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Oct. 8, along with their family of two daughters, three grandchildren, 13 great-grandchildren, as well as their friends.



3rd Annual Veterans Day 15K Run winners

Winners of the 3rd Annual Veterans Day 15K Run in Talihina are, from left, Ryan Garner (Men's 3rd place) of Durant, Doug Werhane (Men's 1st place) of Hochatown, Christy Wilbourn (Women's 2nd place) of Howe, Cheyenne Wilbourn (Women's 1st place) of Howe (in front), Mary Ayn Tullier (Women's 3rd place) and Dr. Robert King (Men's 2nd place), both of Talihina.

The race is sponsored by the Choctaw Nation Bike Team with proceeds benefitting families of deployed soldiers and to help raise funds for the bike team's Trail of Tears ride from Mississippi to Oklahoma in May 2014.

Thank you to all who participated.

Choctaw Nation Vocational Rehabilitation January 2014

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

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



Choctaw Nation Head Start Policy Council holds meeting

The Choctaw Nation Head Start wants to welcome the policy council members this 2013-2014 school year. Head Start Policy Council serves as a link between the program, governing body, the communities served and the parents of children enrolled, in the planning and coordination of the Head Start Program in the Choctaw Nation service area.

The Policy Council members for the program are: Antlers: Lacey Greg, Atoka: Staci Pettigrew, Bennington: Dawn Roark and Kara Broome, alternate, Broken Bow: Erica Torres and April Warren, Coalgate: Jackie Horton, Durant: Mary Rivera, Marquita Hughes, and Franchesha Lozano, alternate, Hugo: Brandi Roberts and Michael Potter,

Idabel: Denessa Jordan and ShyNyce Jett, McAlester: Amy Loyd and Nancy Paxton, Poteau: Amanda Akin and Robert Warren, alternate, Stigler: Karen Sloan and Melba Wegert, alternate, Wilburton: Martina Adams, and Wright City: Melissa Williams.

Community Representatives: CBSW: Betty Jackson, John Vick, alternate, Oklahoma Parents Center: Sandy Love-Decker.

The first Policy Council Meeting and Training was Sept. 20 with 10 members present. Other Policy Council Meeting Dates are: Jan. 17, 2014, March 14, 2014, May 9, 2014 and July 18, 2014. Parent, Family and Community Engagement is the Success of a Head Start program and everyone's involvement is very much appreciated.

‘Iyyi Kowa’ : A Choctaw Concept of Service

With Christmas season and the coldest part of the year coming up, many are starting to turn their thoughts to helping people who are less fortunate. A willingness to help others in need, with no thought of getting something in return, is one of the more noble sentiments of the human heart. Serving others was very much a part of Choctaw traditional life. However, the original Choctaw way of serving was a little different from what we may see at Christmas time today, in that rather than being a special focus during a certain time of the year, this service was an innate part of the Choctaw lifestyle and culture, year round. This month’s edition of Iti Fabvssa presents a Choctaw concept of communal service, known as “Iyyi Kowa.”

In the Choctaw language “Iyyi Kowa,” literally means “broken foot.” This may seem like a strange name, but this term refers to those people who are injured, sick, or otherwise incapable doing essential activities. The implication of Iyyi Kowa is that those with “broken feet” will receive the assistance they need. Yet, Iyyi Kowa has roots that go far below the surface meaning, and are in fact as deep as Choctaw culture itself.

Up until around the turn of the 19th century, most Choctaw people lived in villages with family and friends, whom they saw nearly every day of their lives. Back in those times, there was no concept of land ownership or of wages or of financial debt, and there was no time clock to punch. Their mindset was such that rather than idealizing wealthy people, as we generally do today, they looked down on them as selfish individuals focused on themselves instead of the people around them. Such a person might be ridiculed as a “nan ihullo,” a “lover of things.” Choctaw insults don’t get much worse than that.

Rather than working to amass wealth, Choctaw people of this time period worked at the task of living itself, providing the food and materials that their communities needed to live comfortably. They often made their tasks more pleasant by working in groups with laughing, joking, and the work itself building camaraderie. They worked in such teams to build houses for



Iti Fabussa

neighbors, to build defensive works around villages, to prepare agricultural fields, to plant, tend, and harvest crops, and probably other things too. With this manner of working, everyone was a part of the team, and given a way to contribute in line with his or her resources and abilities. With group work, community members who needed extra labor assistance could get it without being looked down on. Similarly, because sharing was viewed as better than possessing, community members in need of material items would likely receive them. All of this might seem like a lot of trouble, but in reality, when the needs of every family in the community had been met, our ancestors were still left with far more time for leisure, artwork, exercise, and fun than our “advanced” society allows us today. At the time, there may not have even been a specific name for this concept of communal work and service. It was probably just taken for granted as a normal behavior.

When Europeans came, they brought the teachings of Christianity, but also brought and imposed their own concept of being separate from one’s neighbor. As early as the late 1700s, the U.S. agent to the Choctaws began to encourage Choctaw families to move out of the ancient villages and start setting up separate homesteads, as Europeans did. By the early 1900s, when Choctaw lands were broken up and allotted to individual people in dispersed areas, the Choctaw concept of community was dramatically changed to fit the European concept. Now, instead of seeing and

working with neighbors every day, families had to be self-sufficient.

Self sufficiency had its advantages, but also meant that an injury to a key family member during the wrong time of year might mean that family couldn’t plant or harvest the crops needed for its survival, or that it couldn’t butcher and preserve meat for the next year. Then of course, there was always the threat of an unexpected catastrophe, like a chimney fire that could literally leave a family out in the cold.

When families of the early 1900s came into serious need, the Choctaw community would take a step back in time, to the original Choctaw concept of community service and organize an “Iyyi Kowa,” On an appointed day, the community would get together and bring the needed workforce and materials to help the family meet its needs. At Iyyi Kowa, everyone had a job, from doing the work itself, to cooking for the workers, to keeping the cooking fire going. It was a time of good spirit and friendship, where people worked hard, but also laughed and upheld the other people working with them. In the end, the work would be done; the family would have its need met, and the community bonds would be stronger. Through Iyyi Kowa, just as in the old Choctaw way, people did not look down on those who needed help, making them feel ashamed. Rather, they showed them that they were valued members of the community, and, by getting them back on their feet, empowered them to help others.

Olin Williams, today a part of the Choctaw Nation Historic Preservation Department, grew up in the Tiak Hikia community in Mississippi, in the 1950s and 1960s, when Iyyi Kowa were still regularly hosted there. He participated in them on a monthly basis as a child and

considered them one of his favorite things to do. The following interview with Mr. Williams presents some of his memories and thoughts:

What was Iyyi Kowa like? To me, it was the only event that I looked forward to because it meant that folks were going to be generous, not just with things but in labor. You saw the best in people come out. Just Choctaws being Choctaws.

What did you do at Iyyi Kowa? I did tasks that helped out the adults in what they were doing. If they needed fire, I got the wood. If they needed water, I’d get it from the well. Usually, the men worked outside. I’d help them and then get the stove wood for the ladies. In between the chores, we’d play a game of stickball or tag. If it was a hog killing, our job was to make sure the fire and the water were supplied. Hog killing was done on a cold day, so you had to be ready.

How did it make you feel? I felt useful. I felt like part of a unit. I felt like I was contributing to my own reward. I felt like that was the highest form of Choctaw social life because it brought out the best in everyone.

How could we go about bringing back the spirit of Iyyi Kowa today? I think first, we have to educate about what Iyyi Kowa means. Then, as cultural people, if we can do the service ourselves, we can recapture some of our cultural ideals. It would help bring pride back, along with a sense of community and family. Iyyi Kowa is vital in preserving our culture.

Today, many of the services once provided by Iyyi Kowa are provided by programs offered by Choctaw Nation, to Tribal members as well as the community at large. This organized system does a great deal of good, however, we should never use that as an excuse to be complacent in helping people in need on a family to family basis. There are opportunities all around us not just in December but also throughout the year. In such communal service, we have the opportunity to uncover the core of Choctaw culture in a timeless way because the value of service is the same yesterday, today, and forever.



Chahta Anumpa Aiikhvna

◆◆◆ Lesson of the Month ◆◆◆

The Christmas Story

Luke Chapter 2

7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger: because there was no room for them in the inn.

8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

11 For unto you is born this day in the city yvmmvt of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

12 And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

Scriptural text taken from the English-Choctaw Parallel Bible

www.choctawschool.com

Nittak Hullo Chito Isht Annoa

Luk Chapta 2

7 Mihmvt ishi ahpi kvt vlla nakni osh in tola cha, yvmmak ash na hlilahli o a bonulli mvt, aboha anuka yano ai asha yvt iksho hoka, issuba aiilhpita yo fohkit bohli tok.

8 Yohmi ma yakni yvm-mak inli ka chuk fvlhpoba aspesvchi vhleha hvt vlh-poba apesachi hosh ninak a haiaka yo ai asha tok.

9 Yvmohmi tuk o CHI-HOWA im enchil vt ayvt im vla na CHIHOWA im a tohwekali chinto kvt ai on tommit talaia ma, okla nukshopa fehna tok.

10 Mihma enchil ash ot, Hvchi nukshopa na; vno vt anumpa na yukpali a chinto fehna okla moyuma ka im aya he mak o isht hvchim aya li hoke.

11 Himak nitak a nan okchalinch, Klaist Chitokaka mak osh Lewi in tvamaha ha a hvchim ai vtvshke.

12 Yohmi ka atokowa kvt ilvppak o yak ohmi ha chi hoke: Vllqsi vt na hlilahli o a bonunta hosh, issuba ai ilhpitta yo foh kvt itonla ho ont hvsh pisa chi hoke, im achi tok.

Artist Bazaar held at monthly Heritage Day celebration

By BRET MOSS

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Culture flowed strong at the headquarters of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Dec. 2, as the staff and guests celebrated the monthly event, Heritage Monday.

This event, hosted the first Monday of each month, serves as a beacon of the Choctaw history, essentially turning the tribal complex in Durant into a cultural center for the day.

December’s Heritage Day marked a new milestone for the event, introducing “Artist Bazaar.” In addition to the usual demonstration of culture, such as employees wearing traditional clothing, Choctaw dance lessons and craft lessons, Choctaw artists specializing in various mediums were invited to set up displays throughout the three-story complex.

“I’m thrilled to be here,” stated Laurretta Newby-Coker, who displayed her stained glass creations.

Newby-Coker was just one of over a dozen artists who filled the venue for Artist Bazaar. Talents varied from beadwork and pottery, to traditional dressmaking and painting. All the crafts were for sale, making the event a great opportunity for those seeking unique Christmas gifts reflecting native culture.

Lana Sleeper, coordinator of Heritage Monday, spoke of the results of Artist Bazaar with great hope, mentioning that this is something that can give artists a chance to publicize their work and circulate their name in the community.

The partnership between the Choctaw Nation and the artists is mutually beneficial, in that it promotes heritage and culture in a physical and appealing way, all while supporting those who keep the history alive through their skills.



Choctaw Nation: BRET MOSS

Newby-Coker displays her work.

It is Sleeper’s hope that youth will recognize the financial viability of these trades as the artists of today market their work, and in turn, become motivated to continue nurturing cultural talents in the future. “It’s not just a hobby,” stated Sleeper.

Newby-Coker, an art teacher at Longfellow Middle School in Norman, shares a similar sentiment. It is her hope that her work will live on, inspiring others to become involved in the art forms of their heritage.

Newby-Coker, with only a year of experience, has created a large number of stained glass pieces. However, she has been involved in painting, ink and coffee washes, and scrimshaw for many years, her interest in art sparking in high school.

If you are a Choctaw artist and would like to be contacted for events such as Artist Bazaar or cultural gatherings, please become a part of the Artists’ Registry by calling 800-522-6170 ext. 2347, or visit choctawnation.com.



Employees dressed in traditional attire browse the selection of art from Martha Dewitt.

Happy THANKSGIVING



Councilman Anthony Dillard, Niva Loudermilk, Kathryn Hayes and Chief Pyle visit at Atoka.



Alice Hutson and her nephew, John Bursleson, from Daisy.



Wanda Lytle poses with Chief Pyle, Carolyn Jackson and Floyd Shields.



Elizabeth Smallwood, Lynn Smallwood, Tony Frazier and Nancy Taylor chats before the dinner begins.



Margaret Billy, 92, and daughters Doreen, Mona, Naomi, Darlene and Mary and granddaughter Audrey Cusher.



Lori Martin and 3-year-old daughter Miakoda.



District 2 royalty – Sr. Miss Gennavie Tom, Little Miss Kylie Himes and Jr. Miss Calen Brown.



Marcy Gonzalez, 5, of Broken Bow.

Councilman Tony Messenger thanks the Broken Bow Head Start students and their teachers for the entertainment they provided by singing at the Broken Bow Thanksgiving dinner.



District 2 Councilman Tony Messenger grabs a photo with Wanda Bohannon and Leyvice Ludlow.



Lora Tom and Alma Lamb at the Antlers Thanksgiving dinner.



June Greenwood, Mildred Green, James Frazier and Billie Redden having a conversation during the Coalgate lunch.



Louis Daniel shows Assistant Chief Batton pictures of this season's deer.



Left, District 2 Councilman Tony Messenger with Elfreda Willis and Lillie Willis.



Becky Pickens, Tina McKeen and Mary Ingram serve lunch to the seniors at the Coalgate Thanksgiving lunch.



Below, YAB students show Chief Pyle the table decorations they made for the Bethel Thanksgiving dinner.



Lori Wilcox and Connie Hardy speak with Councilman Frazier about their sons in the military. Lori's son is Army Spec. Kaleb Swboni and Connie's son is Air Force Tech Sgt. Richard McIendez.



Kyra Wilson, Pam Wilson, Eleanor Caldwell and Chief Greg Pyle at the Event Center in Durant.



Junior Miss Choctaw Nation Kayleigh Powell and Little Miss Isabelle Cox are pictured with Willie Walley and Eddy Walley in Durant.



Wanda Billings and Anna Miller, both of Eufaula, enjoy the Thanksgiving dinner in Crowder.



Concetta Gragg, Councilman James Frazier, and Lucille Jameson at the Crowder Thanksgiving dinner.



Councilman Ted Dosh, Chief Greg Pyle and Kaden and Connor Brown enjoy District 9's community dinner in Durant.



Buck and Jane Davenport with their granddaughter, District 8 Little Miss Choctaw Savannah Herndon, 12.



Ninety-eight-year-old Elmer Dee Crews and Mary Lee Hardage with Hugo's Councilman Perry Thompson.



Josephine Baker, Lorene Lajeunesse and Buck John are credited with preparing the evening meal.



Ernest and Linda Oakes of Sawyer at the Hugo Thanksgiving lunch.



Lab Tran has a good time at the Hugo dinner.



Chief Pyle and Assistant Chief Batton meet April Burris and the Jefferson family: Jordan, Brock and Brock Jr., Elijah, Amya, Brianna, Truman and Bertha.



Lodean Starr, Deloris Dye and Anna Carline take time to take a picture with Kenny Bryant



Harry and Carol James of Talihina.



Kayla Ward sings "Jesus Loves Me" in Choctaw.



Gilbert Smallwood, James Robison and Jimmy Miller play dominoes before the Talihina Thanksgiving dinner.



Councilman Williston is proud to introduce his aunts, Aline Johnson and Mary Williston.



Margaret Vaughn and Assistant Chief Batton.



Volunteers make plates for the McAlester seniors.



Jack Thurman and Diann Massey are pleased to join fellow Choctaws at the Poteau Thanksgiving lunch.



Miss Choctaw Nation Callie Curnutt gets a warm greeting from her little friend, Vivian Cole.



Cheryl Lovell, Leona Qualls and Connie May join their aunt, Camelia Luman, who is 90 years young. Camelia, seated, is the daughter of original Choctaw enrollee Dain Eliza White.



Ruth Castor and Susan Roberts talk with Warren Austin about special trustee for American Indians at the McAlester Thanksgiving dinner.



Joesphine Harjo, Deloris Cox, Cletha Hodge and Mary Kelly enjoy each other's company in Spiro.



Councilman Bob Pate addresses his tribal members in McAlester



LeeRoy Heavener and Council Speaker Delton Cox are joined by Choctaw royalty at the Poteau Thanksgiving lunch.



District 3 Councilman Kenny Bryant speaking with tribal members Delton Carney and Eugene Ludlow.



Juanita Gonzalez and Councilman Ron Perry are joined by Evelyn Kasworm, a Southern Cheyenne from Greenwood, Ark. Evelyn dresses in her traditional attire as she travels to schools and teaches about Native American heritage.



Patricia and Curtis Wilhite are pleased to join fellow Choctaws in Spiro.



Evelyn Ludlow and Christine Ludlow enjoy talking to the Assistant Chief Gary Batton.



Ashely Artigues, Bryn-nen City, YAB specialist Nicole Norris, Lorenzo Gonzalez and Kelly Artigues proudly represent the Stigler YAB chapter as they lend their help in serving lunch.



Haley, Elizabeth, Michael and Michael James greet Chief Pyle and Councilman Ron Perry for a Thanksgiving lunch in Stigler.



District 7 Councilman Jack Austin speaks to his district members, Dee King, John and Lucille Hoosier.



Geraldine Isabell and great-granddaughter Sere-nade Parker.

Photos by JUDY ALLEN, LISA REED, MELISSA STEVENS, LARISSA COPELAND, KAREN JACOB, BRET MOSS, and DEIDRE ELROD
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma



Assistant Chief Gary Batton with his family and friends, Jeffrey Bell, Alexa Coley, Brenda Wilson, Elizabeth Williams, Abbie Wilson and Dolly Batton.



The Coley Family – Diane, Heather, Roger, Mary and Joe.



Jaxon Vester with mom Natia Vester and great-grandpa Al Harley. Al is this year's Outstanding Male Elder.



Councilman Jack Austin wrapping up his Thanksgiving dinner and talking with Isaac Jacob.



Choctaw Nation Outreach employees hand out bags and T-shirts to tribal members.



Councilman Joe Coley, Dale and Judy Morris, Martha Battiest, Laura Mackey and Mary Coley. Laura is the Choctaw Nation's Outstanding Female Elder for 2013.



Brothers Homer Noley, Marvin James and Grayson Noley



Choctaw means business

The Extended Tribe: Ways to Give Back

Known as one of the “Five Civilized Tribes” in the 19th century, the Choctaw Nation has a deep tradition of self reliance and innovation. Long before the Spaniards made contact, Choctaws built a thriving society that revolved around the core values of stewardship of the land and its people, a commitment that continues to this day. The Nation has been a powerful force in shaping history while keeping its values and traditions intact. An important aspect of the Choctaw culture is trade and other business ventures. The Nation is currently one of Oklahoma’s largest employers, operating 19 major businesses and employing thousands of people.

The historical seat of the Nation’s government is located in Tvshka Homma, while the current government is headquartered in Durant. However, the Nation extends far beyond the borders of Oklahoma into every state in the Union. Many members of the Nation have found success through education, business and entrepreneurship but rarely learned the Choctaw language or traditional culture. These members, however, are very interested in deepening and maintaining their connection to their Choctaw roots, regardless of whether these members actually reside within the Nation’s territory.

Recently Chief Gregory E. Pyle commissioned the Choctaw Business Development Center (CBDC) as one of several initiatives to harness the enormous potential of the Nation to deliver

sustainable businesses and opportunities for the Choctaw people.

According to Chief Pyle, “One of the primary questions I hear from Choctaw Nation members almost everywhere I go is ‘How can I give back to the Choctaw Nation and what is the best way to do that?’”. This is one reason I commissioned the Choctaw Business Development Center.” Chief Pyle continues, “Job creation, economic growth, diversification and sustainability of the Choctaw people and our heritage are paramount to my administration.”

“We see the CBDC as totally focused on sustainability - a sort of self-perpetuating Choctaw business machine,” says Bill Wimberley, the Choctaw Nation’s Chief Business & Economic Development Officer. “The CBDC is a catalyst for business creation and advancement for Southeast Oklahoma. A crucial component of the CBDC is providing ways for Choctaw tribal members living outside the area to connect with and contribute to the ongoing business success of the Nation.”

The CBDC is headquartered in Durant but it is designed to have a virtual connection to all 10.5 counties of SE Oklahoma and give far flung tribal members of the Choctaw Nation opportunities to directly impact economic development through mentoring, coaching, consulting, encouraging, and, soon, investing in Choctaw businesses in SE Oklahoma.

“I have talked with scores of tribal members outside of the

Nation’s territory and all of them are highly motivated to participate in, and give back to, the Nation in SE Oklahoma,” states Wimberley. “They have a passion for their roots in the Nation and, until recently, did not see a clear path to contributing. We are giving them that path!”

More than just a business creator, the CBDC will provide a complete “eco-system” for qualified Choctaw entrepreneurs and business owners in SE Oklahoma. As envisioned, the CBDC goes beyond traditional business “incubators” by providing a complete infrastructure for aspiring Choctaw business people, and this infrastructure will include supporting origination, incubation, acceleration, and assimilation of businesses, as well as business relocation, if needed.

The CBDC is developing a comprehensive strategy to identify specific opportunities in areas such as retail, technology, food production and cultural arts. The CBDC is designed to give new and existing businesses a greater success rate, which greatly depends upon aligning the mission and goals of the CBDC with the specific needs of the region’s entrepreneurs and business owners.

The tradition of the Choctaw business is long established. “Business is the way to showcase Choctaw tradition, culture and values to the world,” says Ruth Glendinning, Creative Director for the CBDC. “One of the core values of the Nation is to be stewards of the land and its people. We

believe that businesses that are inspired by the past and strengthened by core values are the pathway to a sustainable future.”

For the members of the Nation who are located outside Oklahoma, the CBDC offers a unique opportunity to have a significant impact on strengthening the economic future of the Nation. Many of the Nation’s extended membership operate successful businesses throughout the country and even the world. It is this experience that can be extremely valuable to both budding entrepreneurs and seasoned business people in SE Oklahoma.

“The experience gained outside Oklahoma is a rich resource of knowledge that we should give to those within Oklahoma who desire a better life and more successful careers,” states Wimberley. “From artisans to high tech entrepreneurs, we are providing a platform to maximize and engage every possible advantage to ensure success - both in the immediate time frame and in the future.”

“The greatest strength of the Choctaw Nation is our people,” says Chief Pyle. “It is of utmost importance to our future that we support the CBDC by participating in its development. I have requested that every Choctaw member take ten minutes to complete a survey to help us focus our efforts on the best ways to move forward.”

To participate in this important survey go to: www.ChoctawNationSurvey.com.

Giving Back To The Choctaw Nation

Are you running a business currently or have a vision for starting a business?

Do you feel like you need support to make your vision become a reality?

This is your opportunity to share your experience and have your voice heard.

Chief Gregory R. Pyle has commissioned a ten minute survey for Choctaw members to share their interests, aspirations and vision with the Choctaw Business Development Center.

The survey will ask questions about your education, skills, hobbies, jobs and business interests. It will also offer ways for you to strengthen your connection with the Choctaw Nation in Southeast Oklahoma.

Every CDIB holder who has a Membership Card number can participate in the survey.

Please help others in your household or your community fill out their survey online if they are having any trouble.

As a way of showing our gratitude for effort, you will be eligible to win a free iPad.

www.ChoctawNationSurvey.com

OBITUARIES

Betty Sue Maxwell

Betty Sue (Kennedy) Maxwell, 66, passed away on June 15, 2013, at Oklahoma City. She was born in Brooken on July 31, 1946. Her grandmother Lanora (Autry) Green was of Choctaw heritage, which Betty held dearly to her heart. Betty worked for 30 years, then became a homemaker and used her kindness for her family, neighbors and everyone she met. Her loss will be endured in our hearts forever.

Preceding her in death is father, H.R. Kennedy; mother, Lela (Green) Kennedy; three brothers; two grandfathers; two grandmothers.

Survivors include her husband, Charles Maxwell of the home; daughter, Autumn (Langford) Dehart; grandsons, Kobe Dehart and Joaquin Damian; three stepsons; one step-daughter; one brother; and two sisters.

Calvin Battiest

Calvin Battiest, 83, was born Nov. 10, 1929, near Bethel to Willie Battiest and Sallie Lowman Battiest and passed away on March 18, 2013, in Tulsa.

He attended grade school at Bethel and Chilocco School during his younger years. In 1955, he moved to Los Angeles where he lived 17 years before returning to Wetumka. While in California, he worked for McDonald-Douglas Aircraft and attended the Bright Day Church in Watts. After returning to Oklahoma he worked at the Big Yank Sewing Factor in Wewoka as a heavy equipment operator and also for the City of Wetumka. He also was a softball umpire and umpired for many Indian softball tournaments. He had a special gift of playing the piano and enjoyed gospel singing with different singing groups. He enjoyed Choctaw traditional hymns, "The Lighthouse" and "This World is not my Home." He was full blooded Choctaw.

He was preceded in death by his son, Calvin Leon Battiest, Jr.; a brother, Marcus; and sisters, Sarah, Kathryn and Louisa.

Survivors include three sons, Clifford Wilson and Rufus Battiest of Tulsa and Melvin Battiest of Granite; four daughters, Rebecca Battiest of Tulsa, Carol Red Buffalo of Oklahoma City, Yvette Powell of Wetumka and Ramona Barcus of Broken Arrow; 28 grandchildren; 48 great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren; along with several nieces and nephews, other relatives and many friends.



Cecil M. Sharp

Cecil M. Sharp, 72, passed away on June 13, 2013, in Zephyrhills, Fla. He was born Nov. 11, 1940, to John F. and Dona V. Sharp in Fort Bragg, Calif.

He is survived by his wife, Bettie Sharp; daughters, Marsha with husband Ray Dumas, Dona with husband Gilbert Sanchez, Christan (Cricket) Ferruan, Courtney (Stormy) and Miguel Gonzalez; son, John with wife Tammy Sharp; sister, Irene with husband Ed Fulfer; 14 granddaughters; and four grandsons.



Coopy White

Coopy White, 62, of Poteau passed away Oct. 15, 2013, in Tulsa. Coopy was born Aug. 18, 1951, in Talihina. He owned and operated Coopy's Body Shop.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Emmett and Martha Hill; and brother, Dennis White.

Survivors include his daughter, Brandy White of Norman; grandchildren, Kyle and Alexis Kirkpatrick; four brothers, Jimmy and Richard White of Talihina, Bill White of N.C., Alvin White of Catoosa; sister, Cindy Williams of Catoosa; numerous nieces, nephews, other relatives many beloved friends.



Debra Sue Werner

Debra Sue Werner, 61, of Altus passed away Oct. 7, 2013, in the Jackson County Memorial Hospital. Debra was born Aug. 6, 1952, at Comanche the daughter of Joe and Ratta Mae (Tom) McDonald. She graduated from the Comanche High School in 1970. She and Kirk Werner were married at Duncan on April 23, 1971. She was a homemaker who enjoyed spending time with her family especially her grandchildren. She enjoyed going camping and watching OU football.

She was preceded in death by her father; two nephews; and her father-in-law Bob Werner.

Survivors include her husband, Kirk Werner of the home; two sons, Travis Werner of Corpus Christie, Texas and Joe Bob Werner with wife Tiffany of Castroville, Texas; four grandchildren, Cheyenne Werner, Steven Werner, Dalton Werner and Cailey Werner; mother, Ratta Mae McDonald of Duncan; two sisters, Becky Robertson with husband Troy of Duncan and Wanda Rasberry with husband Robert of Comanche; brother, Thomas McDonald with wife Jeana of Comanche; mother-in-law, Beth Werner of Duncan.



Linda Sue Littell

Linda Sue Littell, 60, of Lebanon, formerly of Sweet Home, passed away on Sept. 3, 2013, at Samaritan Evergreen Hospice House in Albany. She was born July 27, 1953, in Santa Rosa, Calif., to Liston and Shirley Ann (Watson) Beal, the eldest of five kids. She was a spiritual Godly person. She loved God and was known for delivering Bibles and bread for churches in Vacaville, Calif., even when her car was breaking down.

Linda was a proud Choctaw Indian and a humble God fearing Christian. She sacrificed herself for others unselfishly. She was a great mother, daughter, sister, aunt, niece, cousin and wife. She was Damon's best friend and a friend of Jesus. She was poor in money but rich spiritually in every way that matters.

She was preceded in death by her son, Steven Michael Leeper, in 2004.

She is survived by sons, Damon Matthew Littell, of Albany; Jason Wesley Leeper of Orangevale, Calif. and Raymond Wayne Littell of Sweet Home; brother, Larry Beal of Sacramento, Calif.; sisters, Karen Beal of Illinois, Diana Beal of Pollock Pines, Calif. and Marilyn Bauer, of Perry, Ga.; grandchildren, Nicole Leeper of Yuba City, Calif., and Jacob Leeper of Texarkana, Texas; several nieces, nephews, cousins, aunts and uncles.

Elizabeth Josephine "Betty" Shadle

Elizabeth Josephine "Betty" Shadle, 89, passed away on Oct. 28, 2013, at the Hawthorne House, Westminster Place in Longview, Texas, after a long battle with Parkinson's disease.

Mrs. Shadle was born on Aug. 16, 1924, in Atoka to Mary Lou (Burlison) and W. F. Rogers Jr., a prominent local rancher and original enrollee. Her Choctaw heritage was a source of pride throughout her life.

After briefly attending Oklahoma State University she married her high-school sweetheart Jack Miller Shadle (USN) in 1945. She spent the following decades as a mother and homemaker, as well as serving as a volunteer for educational and civic organizations in Ardmore and Tishomingo and later, Greeley and Boulder, Colo. In particular, she befriended and entertained scores of international students, who delighted in her warm hospitality. A committed, broad-minded Christian, she was a lifelong member of the Southern Baptist faith. After having raised two sons, she worked in a managerial capacity at the family business, Plaza Drug Mart, in Boulder. Most of her retirement years were spent in Norman, where she pursued her passion for gardening.

Mrs. Shadle is survived by her devoted husband, Jack Shadle; sons, Jack Shadle Jr. with wife Ann and Charles Shadle; grandsons, Jeffrey Shadle and Kyle Shadle; and great-granddaughter Lauren Shadle.

Elmer Norris James

Elmer Norris James, 62, of Oklahoma City passed away on Oct. 23, 2013, at his home in Oklahoma City. He was born Aug. 24, 1951, in Talihina, the son of Isaac and Alice (Billy) James. Elmer enjoyed playing basketball, fishing, hunting and detailing vehicles. He served his country in the United States Army.

He was preceded in death by his parents; son, Jason Lee James; brothers, Manuel, Neil and Baby Boy James; sisters, Annece and Hazel; nephews, Howard Forbit and Ted Michael Strain; grand-daughter, Kyleigh Rayanne James.

He leaves to cherish his memory his wife of thirty years, Patricia Harris James of the home; five sons, Jerrod with wife Laura James of Ada, Michael James with wife Haley of Talihina, Michael Alan James of Ft. Worth, Texas and Brian James of New York; one daughter, Janel Noah with husband Kendall of Broken Bow; brothers, Dalton James and Neil James; sisters, Evelyn Tims of Oklahoma City, Cledith Harding with husband, Doug of Okmulgee; grandchildren, Emery, Kambrie, Jocelyn, Sarah, Abigail, Elizabeth, Kyler, Michael J. and one on the way; brother-in-laws, Mike and Alfred Harris of Wright City, Gilbert Harris with wife Sandra of Idabel, Gary Harris of Hollycreek, Wayne Harris with wife Priscilla of Valliant; mother-in-law, Mary Harris of Valliant; a host of nieces, nephews, family and friends.



Emiline Waggoner

Emiline Waggoner, 78, of Atoka was born on Dec. 23, 1934, to Durant and Emily (LeFlore) Williams at Bentley. Emiline passed away on Oct. 29, 2013 at Coalgate.

Emiline attended West Allison and then Atoka High School. She was a housewife and nanny, and worked as a home health provider and nurses aid. Emiline married William E. Waggoner on July 13, 1966, in Tishomingo. She was a member of the Melba Avenue Church of Christ. Emiline was a member of the Choctaw Nation and had tribal lineage to the Alabama Coushatta Tribe of Texas. She also enjoyed beating her grandkids playing rummy and monopoly, sewing, baking, going to yard sales, watching westerns and OU football.

Emiline was preceded in death by her parents, Durant and Emily (LeFlore) Williams; siblings, David Williams, Charles Gipson, Harold Gipson and JoAnn Gipson; very special cousin and best friend, Virginia Williams.

Emiline is survived by her husband, William Waggoner of Atoka; children, Sharon Rowton with husband CR of Tushka; grandchildren, Johnny Rowton of Krebs, Lori Rowton with fiancé Shannon Walker of Nashville, Chris Rowton with fiancé Kim Daffern of Coalgate, Emily Rowton of Durant; great-grandchildren, Luke and Brody Rowton of Coalgate; siblings, Christine Dillard with husband Glen of Caney; in-laws, Sharon Gipson of Wright City, John Waggoner with wife Lois of Moore, Billy Charles Waggoner of Tenn.; along with numerous nieces, nephews, other relatives and many friends.



Helen Cummins

Helen Cummins, 95, went to be with her Lord and Savior on Sept. 27, 2013. Helen was born on Jan. 26, 1918, in Caddo to parents Jim and Bessie (Folsom) Betts, the fourth of six children.

At the tender age of five, Helen traveled by covered wagon to the Texas Panhandle, where she lived for most of her life. In 1955, Helen married Charlie Cummins, who preceded her in death in 1985.

She was a long-time member of Central Baptist Church of Lubbock, Texas and one of her great joys was in teaching a women's Sunday school class for many years. Helen was a regular Rosie the riveter, rebuilding planes for the Civil Service during World War II and farmed for over 40 years. Before the war she worked for Pinson Drug and Cloverlake Company and after the war worked for Walgreens and for many years at Mrs. Camps' Bakery of Lubbock, Texas.

Helen is preceded in death by her two infant girls, Rama Jo and Katy Maxine, both lost at childbirth; and siblings, James Betts, Arva Jean Akin and Edward Betts.

Helen is survived by sister, Kathryn Pendleton of Lubbock; brother, Doyle Betts with wife Georgia, of Lubbock, Texas; as well as nieces, nephews, great-nieces and nephews, and great-great nieces and nephews.

Glenna Sue Leighton

Glenna Sue Leighton passed away on Oct. 27, 2013, and is re-joined with her beloved husband, Don, in heaven. She will truly be missed by all who knew her. She was the most compassionate wife, mother, grandmother and friend and very proud of her Andrews and Kaneubbe heritage.

Survivors include her daughters, Anita Harcourt and Robyn Killingsworth; grandsons, Colby Killingsworth and Austin Harcourt; sister, LeAnne Andrews Katz; and brother, Howard Nixon Andrews.



Homer Cantrell

Homer Cantrell of McAlester passed away August 21, 2013, after living a long happy life. He was born Feb. 4, 1929, in Carbon to Charlie and Margaret Callie (Wade) Cantrell. He lived all of his life in Pittsburg County and married Charlotte Manschreck in 1953 in Poteau. He was a rancher and was a member of the Pittsburg County Cattlemen's Association. He was also a member of the Harrison-Powers American Legion Post #79 and the Robert B. Thomas VFW Post #1098. After serving in the Korean War he returned to McAlester and worked for Hatter Feed Mill as a long distance truck driver. He also worked at the McAlester Stock yards and in 1974 became the Ranch Foreman for Harper Cattle Company until he retired. Homer was an avid team roper, Dallas Cowboy and Texas Ranger fan. He loved watching his kids and grandkids rodeo and play various sports. Southeastern Oklahoma lost one of the last, great American Cowboys. Until his health declined his work day began shortly after dawn, 365 days a year, dressed in his boots, chaps and spurs feeding and checking his cattle and horses.

He was preceded in death by his parents; brother, Butch Cantrell; sisters, Wilma Tate and June Browne; granddaughter, Jackualine Wiseman.

He is survived by wife, Charlotte Cantrell of the home; daughter Leah (Jack) Wiseman of McAlester; son Leroy (Cindy) Cantrell of Oklahoma City; grandchildren, Colby (Nicole) Stufflebean of McAlester, Jordan Wiseman (Brittney) of Union City, Connor (Kimberly) Cantrell of Denver, Colo., Mallory Cantrell of Oklahoma City and B.J. (DeDe) Wiseman of Kilgore, Texas; great-grandchildren, Taylor Stufflebean, Alexis Stufflebean, Jade Wiseman, Stormi Lebus, Tyler Spears, Taryn Tipton, Sierra Wiseman and Slate Wiseman; and great-great-granddaughter, Jaclyn Lebus; brothers, Bob (Loretta) Cantrell, Dale (Linda) Cantrell, Dennis (Dena) Cantrell; sister, Gale (Dale) Painter; brothers-in-law, Dr. Chris Manschreck, Jim Malone; sisters in-law, Jonnye (Buddy) Workman, Lou (Eddie) Harper; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Joseph Ben Carnes Jr.

Joseph Ben Carnes Jr., 49, of Calera passed away in Durant on Nov. 11, 2013. He was born in Talihina to Joseph Ben and Pearlyne Carnes, Sr. on Nov. 2, 1964. J.B. was married to Lachelle Mercado who passed away in 2011. J.B. was a machine operator at CMP manufacturing for many years. He enjoyed working in his yard and was proud of his Choctaw heritage. J.B. loved to tease his grandchildren and considered his time with them a blessing.

Mr. Carnes was preceded in death by his father, Joe Carnes (2003); wife, Lachelle Carnes (2011); brother, Hubert Sonny Homer (2010); grandfather, Simpson Carnes (1985); nephew, David Carnes (1994).

J.B. is survived by his daughters, Heather Price with husband Elvin Gordon of Colbert, Ashley Henderson with husband Freddy of Calera, Rhoda Carnes of Calera and LaNaya Allen of Tupelo; son, Michael Mercado with wife Teari of Moore; mother, Pearlyne Carnes of Durant; brothers, Gerald Ludlow of Durant and Eddie Homer of Durant; sisters, Linda Hornsby of Calera, Ramona Swilling of Grant, Sheila Carnes of Las Vegas, Nev. and Jennifer Carnes of Durant; grandchildren, Jayda Henderson of Calera, Kaylee Price and Isaiah Mercado of Durant, Bentley Gordon of Colbert, Abiel Mercado of Moore and Malachi and Aiden Perez of Tupelo; numerous nieces and nephews.



Judith Stephens Henry

Judith Stephens Henry, 85, of Muskogee passed away on Sept. 17, 2013, in Eufaula. She was born Aug. 27, 1928, to Roscoe Conklin Stephens and Jewel Francis (Emerson) Stephens in Pontiac, Mich. where she grew up and graduated from Pontiac High School. In 1946, she came to Muskogee to attend Bacone College where she met and married David Henry who had recently returned from service in Europe during World War II. In 1964, she returned to Bacone and graduated in 1966. She continued her education at Northeastern State University graduating in 1968. She obtained her Master's degree from Northeastern in Education in 1971. She taught at Oklahoma School for the Blind (Parkview) from 1969 to 1990 where she served as the Reading Specialist. Judy enjoyed traveling with friends, reading, and a good crossword puzzle. She served as a Sunday school teacher for children and adults and as a voluntary tax preparer at the Muskogee library.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband, David E. Henry; and sisters, Marie Clark and Sybil Caspers.

Judy is survived by her daughter and son-in-law, Karen and H.C. Franklin of Eufaula; son and daughter-in-law, David and Toby Henry of Houston, Texas; grandchildren, Byron Cook, Cydney Anderson, Brynn Page, Tabitha Olenick, Cadence Larson, David Henry, Rachel Henry, Rachel Martin and Jessica Driver; and 12 great-grandchildren.



Roy Robinson

Roy Edmond Robinson, 71, of Velma passed away on Oct. 19, 2013, at his home in Velma. Roy was born on July 24, 1942, in Doyle to Alex Edmond Robinson and Opal Ilene Robinson (Walker). Roy graduated Pernel High School in Pernel. He worked in the oil and gas fields for Southerland Well Service, Mack Oil Company and several others until poor health caused him to retire. He had devoted his life to his sons, nieces and nephews and his dog, Apple. He enjoyed to talk and visit the stores in Velma daily; His best saying was "If they want to be a friend, I'll be their friend," and he had many. Roy was a member of the Velma Assembly of God Church. He enjoyed going to church and never missed a Sunday unless he was too ill. He spent his time drawing and painting.

Roy was preceded in death by his parents; brothers, Preston and Ricky Robinson; sister, Opal Faye England.

Roy is survived by his sons, Alex Robinson with wife Emily of Ada, Daniel Carter with wife Davina of Temple; sisters, Mildred with husband Joe Work of Norman, Johnnie with husband Temple Grundy of Velma, Jenny with husband Jim Cox of Bellmead, Texas, Audene Robinson of Velma, Pam Orum of Norman; grandchildren, Aiden Robinson, Morgan Cheek, Kyndal Cheek, Mallory Cheek, Sarah Carter and Danielle Carter.



OBITUARIES

Ruth Frazier McMillan

Ruth Frazier McMillan passed away on Oct. 9, 2013. She had a big lovely infectious smile. She liked people and people liked her. I don't think she ever met a stranger. She grew up during the Great Depression and had many memories of how her mother, Hazel Kerr Frazier Cockran, had to work so hard and long to take care of her and her brother, Bill Frazier. Her mother was her guiding light all of her life.



Ruth loved to travel by RV and did for 250,000 miles. She found a cause in her 60s and that was to help Choctaw children to understand their heritage and she did this by working to get recognition for the Choctaw Code Talkers of WWI, of which her father, Tobias Frazier, was one. She talked about it whenever she had the opportunity and helped establish memorials at the Texas Military Museum and the WWI Museum in Kansas City. She went to Washington D.C. with the Choctaw tribal leadership and petitioned congress to recognize these Native American warriors and this has come to pass, with medals that were given on Nov. 20, 2013.

She had a dream of naming a section of Oklahoma highway that many of the Code Talkers rode or walked in during their lifetime. This dream was realized on Sept. 6, 2013, when 55 miles of Highway 3, between Antlers and Broken Bow, were renamed the WWI Choctaw Code Talkers Highway. Even though Ruth was very sick with liver cancer, she was able to attend this ceremony and smiled throughout. She was able to stay with her Aunt Betty Kerr and see most of her relatives and friends.

Cecil Ray Wade

Cecil Ray Wade, 68, of Noble passed away, Oct. 7, 2013, at his home in Noble. He was born Aug. 9, 1945, in Battiest, the son of Carlo and Esien (Cobb) Wade.



Cecil attended Battiest School, after graduation he moved to California in 1967. He worked at Northrop Aircraft for 12 years in Hawthorne, Calif. In 1980, while playing softball on the Indian reservation at Pechanga in California, he met the love of his life, Adrienne, and they soon married. In 1990 they moved to Noble where they made their home. He was a member of the AIAA (American Indian Athletic Association) for 20 years and served as president for four years. He played basketball and softball, he coached youth basketball and enjoyed working with the youth. Cecil enjoyed hunting, fishing and teaching.

Cecil was a true man of honor and loved his family, and he looked forward to attending his family reunions at Pine Creek. He was proud of his Native American culture. Cecil was a true man of God and always kept his Choctaw Bible close. He loved listening to Choctaw hymns.

Cecil leaves to cherish his memory his wife, Adrienne Wade of the home; two sons, Jason Wade of Noble and Shaun Cullens with wife, Marie of LaHabra, Calif.; one brother, R.C. Wade with wife, Dona of Las Vegas, Nev.; sisters, Minnie Spearman with husband, Larry of Gardenia, Calif, Nancy Smith with husband, Ron of Lexington, Matilda Paxton with husband, Jimmie of Valliant and Marilyn K. Thomas of Battiest; one aunt, Leona Rivers; one uncle, Jerry Ingram with wife Sally; grandchildren, Kenneth, Lauren, Alexandra, Miranda and Christina Cullens, all of California; numerous other family members and friends.

Melvin Roebuck

Melvin Roebuck was born Oct. 31, 1924, in Lakeview, Texas, to Oscar and Inez (Culbertson) Roebuck, and he departed this life on Sept. 2, 2013. He married Ina Fay Claborn on Nov. 15, 1944, in Durant. They were married for 49 years and resided in Soper.



Melvin resided in Soper and retired from the Oklahoma State Highway Department as a foreman after 20 years of service. He also worked for several years at George Bonds Service Station and Brindley's Furniture Store in Hugo. Melvin enjoyed gardening, visiting with friends at the Soper coffee shop and spending time and attending Soper First Baptist Church with his good friend, Mary Wynn.

Melvin was preceded in death by Fay; parents, Oscar and Inez Roebuck; brothers, Roy, Elvis and Fred Roebuck; daughter, Alice Fay (Roebuck) Gentry; grandson, Bill Moore with wife Jade.

Survivors include a daughter, Shirley Moore with husband Eddie of Soper; grandsons, Anthony Moore of Irving, Texas, Chad Moore of Hugo, Eric Gentry with wife Julie of Princeton, Texas, and Chris Gentry with wife Sylvia of Ponca City; and eight great-grandchildren, Candrick, Christian, Caleb, Corey, Stephanie, Emilee, Hannah and Madison.

Truman R. Heron

Major Truman R. Heron, USAF ret., passed away on Oct. 14, 2013, in Sherman, Texas. He was born on Aug. 3, 1923, near Scipio to Charles Franklin and Della B. (Bowen) Heron. He married Mary Jo Dickson on April 20, 1944, in Grant. He graduated from high school at Grant. He retired after 21 years of active service in the USAF, the first 10 years as a pilot of fighter planes. He flew 100 combat missions in a P-47 plane in WWII. The last 11 years he spent as a Command Pilot of a number of 4 engine cargo and passenger planes.



After retiring from the USAF, he and his family moved to Durant in 1963. He received a master's degree in elementary education from Southeastern Oklahoma State University and taught school in Durant for 24 years. He was a member of the Choctaw Nation and in 2005 he was selected as the Outstanding Choctaw Elder of the Choctaw Nation. He was a retired farmer and rancher. He was also an active member of the First United Methodist Church, President of the United Methodist Men and taught Sunday school for many years.

He is preceded in death by his parents; and a brother, C.A. Heron. He is survived and loved by his wife, Mary Jo Heron of the home; sister, Marieda Jobe of Grant; daughters, Linda Jo Thoms with husband Richard of Sherman, Texas and Janet Ramey of Garland, Texas; grandchildren, Connie Jo Vandergriff of Carrollton, Texas, Simon and Julie Vandergriff of Plano, Texas and Christopher Ramey of Garland, Texas; and many nieces and nephews.

Junior David Billy

Junior David Billy passed away on Nov. 8, 2013. He was born May 21, 1928, in Corrinne, the son of Wesley Billy and Nellie (Charley) Billy and they preceded him in death.



Junior married Mary Autrey on March 6, 1993, in Ringold. Junior liked gardening, hunting, fishing and spending time with family. He also liked to sing and cherished his dogs. He retired from Weyerhaeuser in Wright City and was a member of the Choctaw Nation.

He is also preceded in death by one son, Harold Taylor; daughters, Wanda Hammons and Ruby Lancaster; brothers, Solomon Billy, Edwin Billy and Byington Billy; and one sister, Delores Taylor.

Survivors include his wife, Mary Billy of Fort Towson; son, DeWayne Billy of Ringold; daughters, Barbara Park, Eliza Young and Dinna Trusty all of Ringold; stepsons, DeWayne Huskins, Raymond Huskins both of Valliant, Tony Huskins and Kenneth Huskins both of Wright City; step daughters, Betty Huskins of Holly Creek, Sue Mote of Ft. Towson and Peggy Bell of Wright City; sisters, Hazel Taylor and Versa Crow both of Sobol; numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren and along with a host of other family and friends.

Corrine Brammer

Corrine M. (Chubbee) Brammer, 91, of Keota was born April 9, 1922, in Hawthorne Community Willis and Maud Ann (Folsom) Chubbee and passed away Nov. 4, 2013, in Fort Smith, Ark. Corrine attended Goodland Academy, and spent most of her life in Haskell County. She was a member of New Hope Indian Baptist Church.



She is preceded in death by her parents; children, Beatrice Marie Roy, Benjamin Louis Bonaparte Jr. and Florence Elaine Treadway; brothers, Austin, Joseph, and Walter Chubbee and Pete Carney; and sisters, Carolyn Bonaparte, Anna Noley and Lealar Kemp.

She is survived by her daughter, Melvina with husband Dale Hooker of Keota; sons, Joseph Bonaparte with wife Anita Jo of Watts, Ricky Brammer with wife Juanita of Alva and Jerome Bonaparte; and numerous grandchildren.

Margaret Winfrey

Margaret Winfrey, 84, passed from this life in Choctaw on Oct. 3, 2013. She began her life's journey on Oct. 14, 1928, in El Dorado, Ark., born to James Oliver and Irene (Marti) Thomas. Her family relocated to Noble where she met a young Marine by the name of Melford Eugene "Gene" Winfrey, a true love story began when they married on Friday, June 10, 1949, in Lexington.



Margaret gave life to two children, a girl and a boy that she cherished dearly. The love story between Margaret and Gene never diminished over the years, it only grew stronger, and it continues to be a beacon for their children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and all those who know them.

Margaret was active in her love for Jesus Christ, reading his word was a daily pleasure for her. She enjoyed to garden, crochet, read, cook, bake and tend to her family. After 64 years of marriage she went ahead of her husband and family and entered into the arms of Jesus. Margaret was a gentle, kind soul but she had spunk and spirit and will be missed dearly reunited in our Saviors Heaven.

Mrs. Winfrey was preceded in death by her parents, James Oliver and Irene Thomas; sister, Katherine January/Whittaker.

Mrs. Winfrey is survived by her husband, Gene Winfrey of Choctaw; daughter, Janice Kester with husband Calvin; grandson, Mark Milburn and wife Melissa and great-grandsons, Mason and Maddox; grandson, Paul Milburn with wife Richelle and great-grandson, Davis Eugene; son, Mike Winfrey with wife Melody; granddaughter, Jennifer Carter with husband Joe and great-grandsons, Jett and Jagger; grandson, Matthew Winfrey with wife Marcie; sisters, Ruth Evans and Sue Southard.

Virginia (Wiley) Cottongim

Virginia (Wiley) Cottongim passed away on July 1, 2013. She was born Nov. 26, 1930, to Eugene and Violette Brogdon Wiley. She married Billie Joe Cottongim, of Stillwater, in 1954 at the First Baptist Church in Pryor. She graduated from Pryor High School in 1950. She was editor of the Pryor Tiger, photograph editor of the annual and Blue and Gold Queen. She was voted "best all around" her senior year of high school. She attended nursing school at Methodist Hospital in Dallas, Texas, and became a registered nurse. She worked many years in the emergency room at Richardson Hospital and as Assistant Director of Nurses. She volunteered at a migrant workers camp and on several occasions took children into her home and nursed them through illness.



Virginia was preceded in death by her parents; grandparents, Perry and Mary Wiley and James and Pearl Brogdon; and sister, Joyce Gaither.

She is survived by her husband, Billie Joe Cottongim of the home; son, Gene Cottongim and Jeff Cottongim with wife Laura of Richardson, Texas; daughter, Jayne Langdon with husband Mike of Wylie, Texas; grandchildren, Shelly, Ross, Casey, Violette and Vicky; sister, Dorothy Roy; brother-in-law, Haskell Gaither; numerous nieces and nephews.

Mary Jo "Jo Jo" Sanbranno

Mary Jo "Jo Jo" Sanbranno, 85, of Lawton passed away on Oct. 15, 2013. She was born Jan. 12, 1928, in Ringling to Ollie L. and Amanda (Benton) Washburn. She grew up in Apache and graduated from Central High School in Oklahoma City. She worked for Southwestern Bell Telephone Company until her retirement plus one day. After retirement she attended many softball games and took care of her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.



She was preceded in death by her parents; brothers, Jacob Washburn, Ed Washburn, Kenneth Washburn; sister, Susie Basse.

She is survived by her daughters, Lou Ann Lucero of Madill, Donna J. Berry with husband Bill of Lawton; grandchildren, Tennyson Berry II, Amanda Michelle (Shell) Berry, Kelly Duane Berry, Brandon with wife Brandi Isom; great-grandchildren, Oakley Kade and Hailey Rece Isom of Lawton. She is also survived by numerous nieces, nephews and loved ones.

Morrell W. Fitch Jr.

Mo Fitch, born Morrell W. Fitch Jr. was born April 18, 1937, at home in Westminster, Calif. He lost his courageous battle with pancreatic cancer June 28, 2013, surrounded by friends, family and firefighters. Mo always saw the positive side of life, even through his toughest battles, making all around him smile, cracking jokes, loving people. He enjoyed to dance, sing and play it was his nature. Mo loved life and his family, friends and his Heavenly Father. He seemed to exist to serve others. At age 17, Mo won Field N Stream Northern Division Bass Tournament 1st Place Irvine Lake for catch of a 12-pound large mouth bass. At 17, he joined the United States Navy, served on an LST in the Pacific during the Korean War. July 1, 1957, 10 days after discharge, Mo was employed by the California Department of Forestry in Orange County, Calif. Mo attended Chaffey College, Fresno State and U.C. Berkeley. After many years of attending colleges, on his off duty time, he achieved his Bachelors of Science degree with a major in Fire Administration. Mo married, had five children, and continued in the Fire Service, working for city and state fire departments for 30 years, such as CA State Fire Marshall's Office, training and developing fire standards and instruction manuals, the Office of Emergency Services as an Assistant Fire Chief assisting in the management of major disasters such as wild fires, floods, earthquakes, and mudslides. In 1987, Mo retired from the Office of Emergency Services going on to Mt. San Antonio College, Southern California as an educator and Fire Science Coordinator. Wanting to move away from the traffic, smog and hustle bustle of Southern Calif., Mo was approached by a headhunter to work as Fire Chief in Sonoma County, which he accepted. Mo remarried in 1994 to Sherry L. McCleary. In 1995 Mo was hired as the first paid Fire Chief for Upper Lake Fire District. In 2000, Mo retired and went on to encourage the local colleges to start a Fire Science program, which after a few years was instituted. Mo taught these classes, along with certification classes at Yuba and Mendocino Colleges. During Mo's career he built and taught large Oil Fire Schools throughout the state, burned up several city blocks in Burbank as a fire training exercise, making way for the World Fair to take place there, participated in developing California Standard Certification programs and Fire Officer Programs, and delivered 13 babies. Up until this season, Mo had been a part-time lookout for the U.S. Forest Service in the Mendocino National Forest on Highglade Lookout for several seasons consecutively. In May of 2009, Mo was diagnosed with a terminal disease, pancreatic cancer. March 1, 2011, Mo was awarded a Proclamation by the Lake County Board of Supervisors for his "body of work." Mo continued his involvement in his community, serving as a member of the Upper Lake Town Council since 1995 and was also on the Board for the North Shore Fire Protection District. Mo was very proud of his Choctaw heritage and even took language classes online. Mo Fitch will always live within us, for the gifts of himself that he gave us, the lessons and example he was to us all.

Mo leaves behind his "bride" of 19 years, Sherry; children, Michael Fitch, Marshall Fitch, Mo the 3rd, Michelle Allen and Mona Gaskins; stepsons, Kip McCleary and Kirk McCleary; 24 grandchildren and one great-grandson.

Dora Lee Rampone

Dora Lee Rampone, 82, passed away July 23, 2013. Dora was born March 19, 1931, in Hot Springs, Ark. to Isophine and Theodore Hecke. She was proud of her Choctaw heritage. Dora's grandchildren and great-grandchildren brought a special joy to her life. She enjoyed to gamble, do ceramics, puzzles and do arts and crafts.



She was preceded in death by her husband, Thomas Rampone; son, Robert Eugene Rampone; mother; five brothers; and two sisters.

Survivors include daughter, Dana Clark; sons, Tommy Rampone, Larry Paul Rampone and Jon Jon Rampone; eight grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild; sisters, Judy Jalalat and Phyllis Petrella; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Pauline Prior Robertson

Pauline Prior Robertson, 95, former Durango, Colo., resident, passed away Oct. 23, 2013, at the Valley Inn Nursing Home in Mancos Colo. Pauline was born to Virgil (an original Choctaw enrollee) and Pearl (Kelley) Labor on July 14, 1918, in Bennington. In 1937, she married Dale Prior in California. They moved to Durango from Nucla, Colo., in the early 1960s when Dale was transferred there by the Vanadium Corporation of America. He died in 1968 at the age of 52. Paula worked at the City Market Bakery after her husband's death.



In 1973, she married Bill Robertson. They lived in San Fernando, Calif., until his death in 1991. She eventually moved to Bayfield, Colo., until her move to Mancos, Colo., in 2013.

Mrs. Robertson was preceded in death by her first husband, Dale Prior; second husband, Bill Robertson; and a great-granddaughter, Kayla Lower.

She is survived by her children, Don Prior of Waxahachie, Texas, Jackie Adams of Castle Rock, Colo., Butch Prior of Bayfield, Colo.; brother, Virgil Labor of Bloomington, Calif.; nine grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild and numerous extended family members.

Tommy Dale Dancer

Tommy Dale Dancer, 67, of Perry passed away on Oct. 1, 2013, at his home. Tommy was born on Feb. 16, 1946, in Boswell to the late Alton Lee and Mable "Ruth" (Bryan) Dancer. He grew up in Sulphur and attended Sulphur High School where he received his diploma in 1964. After graduating high school, Tommy enlisted in the Army National Guard, where he honorably served his country for six years. Following his honorable discharge, Tommy returned to Sulphur to work as a diesel mechanic and truck driver. Tommy relocated to Perry where he worked for Smith Trucking, R. L. Frailey's, Morrow's Concrete/ Perry Ready Mix, H.E.W., and the Debord Farm. Tommy was a hard worker and received many awards for his truck driving abilities. Tommy was known in the trucking community for having the cleanest truck and was always willing to fit into a tight space to make repairs on his friends' trucks. Tommy took great pride in sharing his cab with his best friend and pet Lil Bit. Tommy was a laid back, easygoing guy who would spend time at the lake with friend Leonard Emmons and Lil Bit. Tommy and Leonard would spend many afternoons reliving old times and talking about the good old days. When they couldn't get out to the lake, Tommy and Lil Bit would stay in and watch the western channel or old western movies.

He was preceded in death by his wife JoAnn; parents, Alton Lee and Mable "Ruth" (Bryan) Dancer; stepdaughter, Nancy Smith; stepson, Kenneth Nida.

Survivors include his children, Cheryl Jeter of Perry, Shirley Battles with husband Mark of Blackwell, Junior Nida with wife Kathy of Perry, Hank Nida of Perry, Ethel England with husband Stan of Montrose, Colo., Willy Nida of Lexington; brother, Leroy Dancer of Ada; and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

9th Annual Choctaw Casino Resort POW WOW



Photos by DEIDRE ELROD | Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma



Cultural Services holds traditional art classes during Native American Heritage Month

By DEIDRE ELROD

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Choctaw Nation Cultural Services held beading classes at the tribal headquarters in Durant in honor of Native American Heritage Month. A different cultural class teaching a Native art was held each Friday during the month of November. Employees and guests were taught to bead traditional medallions and earrings in the beading classes. Pottery and moccasin classes were offered as well.



Employees from Tribal Membership string the beads to begin working on their earrings.



Beading earrings takes concentration!



The beginning stages of a medallion.



Brad Joe shows Assistant Chief Gary Batton how to bead a medallion.