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CHOCTAW NATION

The Official Publication of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

December 2014 Issue

Tribal council holds regular session

The Choctaw Nation Tribal Council met in regular session Nov. 8 at Tvshka Homma.

New business approved included:

- Funds and budgets for the COPS Tribal Resources Equipment/ Training Grant, Project EMPOWER, Comprehensive Tribal Victim Assistance Program, Chahta Inchukka Program, Chahta Vila Apela Program, and Vocational Rehabilitation Services Project for American Indians with Disabilities.
- Presentation of Choctaw School of Language Teacher Certificates.
- Letter of reappointment of Judge Frederick Bobb to the Constitutional Court of Choctaw Nation.
- Applications for FY 2015 Funding through DHHS for the Community Services Block Grant and the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program.
- Budgets for FY 2015 Choctaw Nation Environmental Office Performance Partnership Grant, Choctaw Nation Environmental Office Hazardous Waste Management Grant, Indian Child Welfare FY 2014-15, and Family Violence Prevention FY 2015.
- Oil and gas lease with Silver Creek Oil and Gas, LLC.

The Tribal Council meets 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 www.choctawnation.com or by contacting the Tribal Membership office at (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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Choctaw tags available beginning in January 2015

New tags will continue to benefit state-run services

By RONNI PIERCE
Choctaw Nation



The new tag reads Chahta Sia Hoke! Choctaw for I am Choctaw!

With the New Year comes a new way for Choctaw citizens to display their heritage.

All Choctaw tribal members living in Oklahoma will be eligible to purchase the automobile tags starting Jan. 1, 2015.

The agreement to sell the tags came after the Choctaw Nation negotiated an agreement, or in this case a car tag compact, with the state.

All state programs will continue to be funded at the same rate as before per the negotiated compact. The compact will allow for revenue to go back into services for the state—services such as schools, roads, bridges, and law enforcement.

The joint agreement aligns with Chief Gary Batton's vision to promote Choctaw culture and to open paths of success for all Choctaws. "Doing what is best for Choctaws," and to continue the Nation's progress with a focus on jobs and heritage.

"A Choctaw tag is much more than just saving money—it is a way to show our heritage," said Chief Batton. "There is resurgence in interest of the culture within the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. The new license plates are a great way for our members to display their pride in tribal heritage."

Choctaws will be able to visit any tag agency and present their tribal membership card to purchase the tag. The fees and taxes will be the same as a non-Choctaw would pay. However, tribal citizens should expect to receive a 20 percent rebate for new tag licensing, registration, and payment of excise taxes.

Tag Purchase for New Vehicle

- Can purchase tags starting Jan. 1, 2015 at local tag agency
- Must present a Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma tribal membership card at the time of purchase
- Will pay regular fees and taxes at the time of purchase; the 20 percent rebate will be mailed to vehicle owner from the Choctaw Nation within 60 days
- Do not have to live within the 10.5 counties of the Choctaw Nation but must live in Oklahoma

Tag Renewal (non-commercial)

- Must wait until current tag expires
- Purchase Choctaw Nation tag at tag agency, not by mail
- Must present a Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma tribal membership card at the time of purchase
- Will pay regular fees and taxes at the time of purchase; the \$20 rebate will be mailed to vehicle owner from the Choctaw Nation within 60 days

There is no limit on the number of tags sold per household as long as the tribal member is listed on the vehicle title. Motorcycle and motor home tags will be available.

Tags for the physically disabled will be available for currently registered vehicles if the driver already has a disabled placard from the Department of Public Safety. There is no separate charge for a disabled plate. However, there is a \$10 charge for an optional front plate and a \$25 charge for the "in lieu of" plates for vehicles modified because of the owner's disability.

Vanity plates will also be available through the new program. A \$20 fee will be charged to the owner of any currently registered vehicle requesting a personalized tag.

Registration forms for either the disabled or vanity plates can be found at any tag agency or online at www.tax.ok.gov/sp1.html.

For more detailed information regarding the new tags, see choctawnation.com.

Choctaw Vets honored at annual ceremony in Tvshka Homma



The Choctaw Nation Color Guard assists in honoring those who served.

By RONNI PIERCE
Choctaw Nation

On Nov. 11 the Choctaw Nation continued its long tradition of honoring the men and women who have served in our country's armed forces.

Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. opened the ceremonies on the lawn of the council house at Tvshka Homma. Choctaw Nation Chaplain Bertram Bobb began with the opening prayer followed by the posting of the colors by the Nation's color guard.

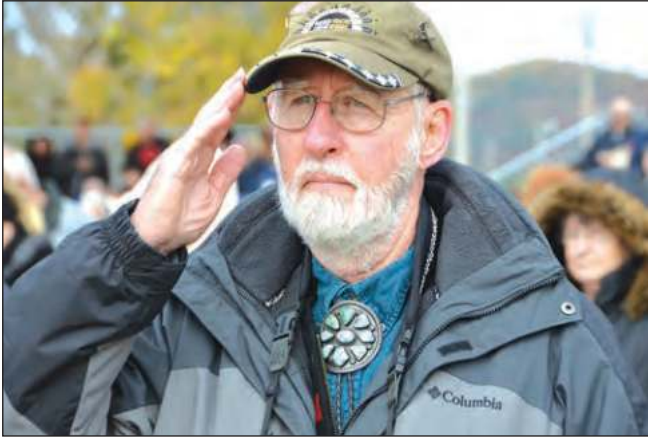
After the Choctaw princesses led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance and the Lord's Prayer, the Talihina High School band played the Armed Forces Medley.

Chief Gary Batton then spoke to "celebrate, honor, and thank our vets."

"I know that our gratitude in no way can match all that you have sacrificed and what your families have gone through. But I hope today can just be an acknowledgment of that contribution you've made."

"I just want to say Yakoke chito," he continued. "A big thank you for what you've done for our country, what you've done for God, what you've done for our families."

Guest speaker Lt. General Leroy Sisco, representing the Military Warrior Support Foundation, presented a return-



Choctaw Army veteran Chester Cowen shows his patriotism and reverence for the men and women in the military. Mr. Cowen served in East Africa just after the Bay of Pigs from 1961-64.

ing soldier with a key to a new home in Broken Arrow. Staff Sergeant David Merchant was shot by a sniper while serving and suffers from posttraumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury. The Purple Heart recipient was

cont'd on page 14



Dignitaries break ground on the Poteau clinic and wellness center expansion.

Work begins on Poteau clinic, Broken Bow distribution center

Choctaw Nation broke ground on a 21,000-square-foot expansion of the Rubin White Clinic in Poteau in November.

Chief Gary Batton and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. were joined by numerous tribal councilmen, employees and Poteau area dignitaries for the ceremony under clear blue skies.

"I'm excited about the opportunity to provide more services to our tribal members and employees," Batton said. "This used to be our flagship of clinics, so this is a huge win. Access to health care is always an issue and a lot of people don't realize this will also add more providers."

Once the expansion is complete, an additional 20 to 25 employees

— including health care providers — will be needed to staff the new facility.

"This gives us an opportunity to provide services which we have never been able to provide before," said Brian Wren, director of the Poteau clinic. "This constitutes a true expansion, so it's an exciting time."

New or enhanced services will include pediatrics, podiatry, behavioral health, optometry, physical therapy and employee health. A wellness center is part of the overall expansion and will include exercise facilities and a basketball court.

Minor renovations will be made to the existing mammography clinic and lab services area. All should be complete some time in 2015.



Tribal officials break ground on new food distribution center in Broken Bow.

Officials, dignitaries, and locals broke ground on the new Broken Bow Food Distribution Center, near the current community center at 210 S. Chahta Road on Nov. 20.

"This has been needed in the Broken Bow area for a long period of time, food is very essential to us," Batton said.

"This will be your new commodity warehouse, you can come and get what you want," Council Member Tony Messenger said. "You don't have to get it all at one time, you can make another trip to come down, and it is all going to be right here."

The new food distribution center, a food market, will allow eligible tribal members to shop in a store, choosing their own food rather than having it supplied in bulk without option.

Jerry Tonubbee, Director of Food Distribution, said how much a household can receive depends on the number of people living in the household, and eligibility is based on the following requirements: a member of the household must have a CDIB from any federally recognized tribe, the household must be within the 10.5 counties, and the household must be within income guidelines.

"We have tribal members trying to make ends meet, elders in need of assistance, and many do not have the gas to travel long distances," Tonubbee said. "So strategically placing these centers in areas of need will serve the Choctaw people."

The food market is projected to be completed by July 2015.

FAITH, FAMILY AND CULTURE

Helping hand during the holidays



I have thoroughly enjoyed the Thanksgiving celebrations I’ve been able to attend throughout the Nation. The dinners held for senior citizens in each district give us time for fellowship and good food! I want to thank all of the employees who volunteered to serve the meals and were available to visit with tribal members about our programs.

Being together is important during the holidays. I am thankful every day for my family and treasure the time spent with them. When I think of the holidays, I can almost smell the wonderful things cooking in the kitchen and look forward to our family traditions. As a grandfather, I realize the importance of being together much more than I did as a young boy.

It is our goal to help others have a better Thanksgiving and Christmas when needed. Over 3,000 Thanksgiving food vouchers have been distributed and more will be given for Christmas. In November, we were also able to hand out hams to more than 6,000 employees to have for their family meal.

Several of our staff can’t wait to get a Choctaw elder or youth angel and either purchase presents or gift cards to make someone’s Christmas brighter. More than 500 angel gifts have been provided through our Outreach Services and Jones Academy. Angie and I have fun filling our cart with items from the wish lists we picked each year.

The Choctaw Nation also buys toys for kids who may not have any other present this year. Toys are gathered for all ages and put in gift bags to be distributed. Close to 2,000 gifts are being prepared this year for Choctaw boys and girls.

These are just a few of the ways we give a helping hand at the holidays.

The act of giving is a gift within itself and should not be just a seasonal thing. There are so many ways during the year we are able to reach out – a friendly smile, an unexpected visit with someone we haven’t seen in a while, or helping our neighbor clear the leaves from his yard.

It is my hope that you are able to enjoy this time with friends and loved ones.

My family and I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a New Year full of faith and family.

Honoring our Choctaw veterans



It was such an honor to be able to participate in this year’s Veterans Day ceremony. I have attended many in the past and am always humbled to see our Choctaw warriors together at Tvshka Homma.

The Choctaw have a long history of protecting this land. I met veterans of Vietnam, Korea, World War II, and young men and women from the more recent fight against terrorism. We salute our American veterans everywhere and say Yakoke, thank you, for all that you do. As an Army veteran myself, I felt and recognized in others the instinct to snap to attention as the band played the song of each military branch.

It also warms my heart to see the appreciation shown to our veterans. The Vietnam veterans were met with a different attitude in the ‘70s. Now, they are stopped by people who notice them wearing a veterans cap and told thank you for their service. Their hands are shaken and they receive a long-deserved pat on the back.

The Choctaw Nation’s annual ceremony is one small way we can show our appreciation. The caps and jackets given to the veterans are worn with pride. We also have three veterans’ advocates who work year-round with Choctaw veterans to assist with VA eligibility and the rights of veterans and their dependents.

This is the first opportunity I have been blessed to participate in a Homes4Wounded-Heroes presentation. I am grateful to be a part of such a wonderful Nation who cares for others.

I am also very proud of our tribe’s Color Guard. It is currently comprised of 18 Choctaw veterans. Members of the Color Guard posted the colors, presented arms and fired a 21-gun salute in respect during the ceremony. These men and women represent the Choctaw Nation at numerous events around the country.

May God bless you all for giving us the freedoms we have and we continue to pray for the safety of those serving around the world.

Spotlight on Elders

with Burnett C. James

By ZACH MAXWELL

Choctaw Nation

Few people embody the definition of *Tvshka*—a Choctaw warrior—as fully as Burnett C. James. This decorated Army veteran of the pivotal World War II Battle of the Bulge was one of 19 veterans bestowed with the French Legion of Honor at a ceremony in Texas this past November.

The ceremony, where James was presented the medal by the Consul General of France, highlights the story of a man whose accolades were seldom told outside of the family circle.

James, who goes by “Charlie,” attended Jones Academy as a youth. It was here that he received his draft papers in 1944. The Garvin native returned home to visit his mother before heading off to various military training camps and, eventually, England and France on the front lines of some of the biggest battles in history.

“You’re just there and you do what you have to do,” James said of being drafted into the war. “I came up out in the country so I didn’t know much about what was going on in the world.”

During basic training, he exhibited mastery as a machine gunner, so military officials assigned him to the task. It was a rocky relationship initially: Twice he lost the gun, once after losing his ammo while fleeing German tanks and another when a member of his crew fell asleep. The big gun was recovered both times.

But it was this very task – spraying bullets at the German front line – which earned him a Silver Star for gallantry in action. His version of the incident is recounted in “Stalwart and Strong,” an unpublished history of his military service compiled by daughter-in-law Dorris Soule James.

“We were marching through the woods on ‘Company Front,’ all moving forward at the same time. We came to a barbed wire entanglement, four or five feet high. We had to stop. We were pinned down,” James said. “I just happened to see a hole in the barbed wire where a shell had hit it. I had my machine gun on my hip and a belt of ammo over my shoulder. I thought I could make it through the hole....and I did. I was firing as I went through the hole, forcing the Germans to take cover. I was going on the old theory that ‘fire superiority rules.’ Two or three riflemen followed me. They weren’t firing, but were in position to do so. I started spraying the area in front of me



from side to side.”

Soon, the German unit surrendered – but not before James spotted a rifleman in a fox hole with his gun trained on the Choctaw. Turning to face him would force the German to shoot, so he played it cool for a minute until the final gunman surrendered as well.

James also saw some of the Nazi concentration camps before his return to the U.S. He served another year in the Army after the war, finishing with the rank of Staff Sergeant.

James settled in Arizona and his extended family includes two children, nine grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren. He now lives north of Dallas near his son.

At the French Legion of Honor ceremony this year, held at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, James was joined not only by his family, but one of his best “wartime” friends, PFC Eldon B. Gracy. They had not seen each other in 60 years.

Heroism runs deep within the James family. Jesse A. James, Charlie’s father, was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for an equally daring dead of “extraordinary heroism” in France during World War I, according to military records.

Brother Sam James also was awarded a Silver Star, according to family.

Also, James’s first cousin Owen Mambi was killed in the Battle of the Bulge around the same time that James was in action in the area in early 1945. Mambi’s name appears on the war memorial at Tvshka Homma.

“I’m just proud to have been a part of it,” James said, adding that his father Jesse also received the French honor for his role in liberating that nation in World War I. “I’m proud of that, but I’ve never talked about it before. We were just trying to be patriotic like everyone else. It was just something that came along that you had to do.”



Mr. Sujiro Seam, the Consul General of France, presents the French Legion of Honor to Burnett C. James.



SSgt. Burnett C. James (center, in uniform) with his family after the presentation of the French Legion of Honor in San Antonio this past November.

Chaplain’s Corner

Christian Choices



Rev. Bertram Bobb
Tribal Chaplain

May you have a Merry Christmas as we commemorate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Yet, during the Christmas season, during the rush, Christ is left out as many forget that it is His birthday we are celebrating. The meaning of that first Christmas is clear: God came to this earth in human form.

There will be exchanging of gifts. And this leads me to talk about two subjects, “Gifts and Rewards.”

First we will refer to the greatest gift we can ever receive, that is God’s gift of salvation. The gift of salvation is FREE, and rewards are EARNED. Salvation is obtained now, and rewards are for the future.

You cannot do anything to earn salvation, you could work all your life and yet you could not earn it.

The ONLY way is to be saved, that is what salvation means. To be saved or to be rescued from death, is to believe in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross. To believe means to trust or to receive. Luke writes in Acts 16:31: “And they said, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”

John 3:16 says, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Over and over in the Bible we read that salvation is a gift. We read in Romans 6:23: “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus

Christ our Lord.”

Paul wrote in Ephesians 2:8-9: “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”

If I gave you a present, you would not come to me and say, “Thank you for the gift, I want to pay for it.” If you paid for it, it would not be a gift anymore. So you cannot pay for salvation. All you can do is just to receive salvation. It is free, it is not of works. You are saved by what the Lord Jesus Christ did when He died on the cross.

You might even say, “When I get better I’ll become a Christian.” You can’t get better, I can’t get better, no one can get better. We read in the Bible in Romans 3:23: “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” Salvation is only by the grace of God.

Rewards are just the opposite of salvation. Rewards are not a gift, they must be earned. Those who have been saved, born again, may earn rewards by the work they do for the Lord. Every time the Bible speaks of rewards it shows that the rewards are given for doing something.

Remember, salvation is a free gift, and that rewards are always earned by good works.

The other great difference between the two is that we have one of them now, but we must wait till we get to Heaven for the other one.

There are many verses of Scriptures that show us that we have eternal life right now. We read in I John 5:11: “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.”

Because we have eternal life now, we can say that we are saved, not that we will be saved when we get to Heaven. Some would think that when a person says he is saved, he is boasting. When one thinks this way, it just shows he is relying on works to save him. This causes him to think that when a person who says he

is saved is boasting of his good works.

They will be waiting for us. All of the verses that speak of rewards speak of the future. Paul writes in Colossians 3:22-25 NIV:

“Slaves, obey your masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord.

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.

“Since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Jesus Christ you are serving.

“Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for his wrong, and there is no favoritism.”

Notice the phrase in verse 24: “... you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward.” Rewards are in the future.

It is wonderful that we can have salvation now. What a day of rejoicing that will be if we have been faithful and have earned rewards which we can receive at that great day.

We must be diligent now, and never forget that it is in these days that we earn the rewards; it is these days when we store our treasures up in heaven. When we get to Heaven it will be too late.

Today, I ask you, have you received the free gift of salvation? Have you trusted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior? This is the one thing, according to the Word of God, that will determine your eternal destiny.

If you don’t know Jesus as your Savior, you can trust Him even right now. You can pray something like this: “Dear Lord, I realize I am a sinner. I receive Jesus as my Savior.” If you prayed this prayer, I will pray for you. May God bless you and I pray you will have a happy and successful New Year 2015. Pray for our nation and our leaders.

Pray for our men and women in service. Pray for those who are sick and for those who are in hospitals.



This holiday season, the Durant Police Department and Choctaw Nation partnership against Impaired Driving reminds you:

The driver is safer when the roads are dry; the roads are safer when the driver is dry.

DON’T DRINK AND DRIVE.

BUSINESS

Choctaw-owned stores bring customers back to Common Roots



Micky and Kristen Lloyd lean on a pink Volkswagen Beetle, the decoration which sets Dottie’s Children’s Boutique apart.



Just above the entryway, Common Roots glows with the light from a marquee of the store’s namesake.



Local goodies are displayed on wooden shelves. Most of the shop’s furniture is the handiwork of Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd.

Lloyd family businesses support shopping local in McAlester

By BRANDON FRYE
Choctaw Nation

Husband and wife Micky and Kristen Lloyd are at the front of the movement to shop locally in McAlester and are the entrepreneurs of three successful businesses built up by their own hands and from their own ambition.

The Lloyds have worked together for years. Their first downtown brick-and-mortar store, Studio 23 Photography, has served the McAlester area since 2000. When the two noticed a need for children’s clothes during photo shoots, the first business snowballed into a second business, Dottie’s Children’s Boutique. Now, the couple is helping revive local trade in downtown McAlester with a third business: Common Roots, an eclectic mercantile housing an assortment of local and unique gifts and treats.

Being a Choctaw citizen, Micky says the new store in particular was their way of

showing a “sense of being local, what ties us together, where we come from and where we go back.” He has deep roots to the local community and Choctaw people. His great-great grandfather Buck White founded the Oklahoma town of White Oak. And his uncle Rubin White is a former Speaker of the Choctaw Nation’s Tribal Council.

“Common Roots has been open for two months now, and it’s been great,” Micky said. “I couldn’t have expected it to be any better than it has been.”

Dottie’s Children’s Boutique and Common Roots now stand as side-by-side storefronts offering goods to interested customers, but in very different ways.

The children’s boutique is a bright, light-filled space, colored joyfully and inviting children to play and interact. “We just wanted to do something different,” Kristen said. “If you look around you can see how fun and funky it is.”

The children have many reasons to

remember and revisit the boutique. The Lloyds took apart an old Volkswagen Beetle, cut it down the middle, painted it pink, and placed it as a unique decoration. The shop has toys and an area for children to make their own perfumes and lotions. And according to the Lloyds, the little ones also enjoy running back and forth through the broken down wall connecting the two businesses like a portal.

Next door the aesthetics of Common Roots take on a more serious, natural element. The urban and industrial break through and give way to the rustic. Throughout the store, holes in plaster uncover arched designs and logos, the painted black tin roof reflects light shining from the yellow bulbs spelling out the store name just inside the entryway, and wooden shelves hold hand-made items and Oklahoma treats.

“We built all of the tables, the shelving, displays, the bar. We did everything ourselves,” Micky said. It took plenty of time

and remodeling, and Micky said he and his wife let the building tell them what it needed as they uncovered it.

One of the more unique features of Common Roots is the bar with a countertop made entirely of pennies. They said it is where men tend to sit, drink, and eat chocolates as women shop around. Behind the bar, they keep 30 ice-cold beverages: root beers, cream sodas, and pops with pure cane sugar, all cold enough to develop ice crystals after leaving the ice box.

Locals and travelers alike are welcome at Common Roots and Dottie’s Children’s Boutique, which can be found at 111 and 113 East Choctaw Avenue in McAlester.

The couple said McAlester is very important to them, and they want to support shopping local. “We thought we would do what we can to revitalize downtown, we just didn’t want to let it die. We do what we can to try to bring it back and inspire others to do the same,” Micky said.

Member’s business set to weatherize homes

“Blow ‘Em Tight” keeps ‘em warm



Billy Hamilton, Icy Conn, Codi Conn, and Boyd Miller pose for a photograph in front of the Blow ‘Em Tight business trailer.

By BRANDON FRYE
Choctaw Nation

In a meeting with representatives from Choctaw Nation departments aimed at helping businesses, Choctaw Codi Conn and his wife Icy Conn offered to help make homes more energy efficient and comfortable for the Nation and its people.

Their business, Blow ‘Em Tight Insulating, based in Caddo, began in August of 2012. It grew from an interesting investment to being able to insulate barns, shops, houses, and everything in between with cutting edge equipment.

Speaking of how the business started, Codi said “Icy’s father was a contractor for around 30 years. We got together and talked about the long haul.” He said he and his father-in-law decided the insulation business was a good field to get started.

Icy said her husband Codi is an online trade enthusiast and likes doing swaps online. He was browsing Craigslist when he found the fiberglass and cellulose insulation machine he used to start Blow ‘Em Tight.

But to get his business off the ground, Codi had to make a sacrifice. “We traded a toy for a business,” Icy said about Codi’s willingness to sell his four-wheeler to collect the funds to buy his first machine. She said she comforted him with the thought that, when the business takes off, it would pay for a new toy and more.

With his new setup, Codi said, “I insulated a few houses and realized that the job market was moving toward spray foam. At the first of this year, we invested in a spray foam rig. Now we can do fiberglass, cellulose, and spray foam for

houses, shops, and barns.”

Mr. and Mrs. Conn explained the benefits of foam insulation as being practical and more energy efficient. In terms of application, the foam can be used to seal leaks and cracks in construction of buildings such as outside shops. It can be sprayed into enclosed spaces in the walls of houses and will expand to fit the area, and it is just not as messy as fiberglass or cellulose.

“More people are spending a little bit more money on spray foam insulation because it is more energy efficient with long term use,” Icy explained. She added that the foam performs better the more extreme the weather gets. It keeps cold in when it is simmering outside and heat in when it is frigid, thanks to the better, air-tight seal. In time, she said, the investment pays for itself in energy bill savings.

“It’s a part time business now. But I have always wanted to see him have his own business, do his own thing, be his own boss,” Icy said in support of her husband’s business venture. “We just want to be able to live comfortably while Codi has his own business. We really try to stick to old fashioned business standards.”

Billy Hamilton, Small Business Services Manager with the Choctaw Nation’s Business Development Department, made himself available to help the Conns with their goals for Blow ‘Em Tight.

Hamilton’s position allows him to develop a mentoring or coaching relationship with Choctaw business owners, guide them to plan for growth and take action on it.

“We’re working with Blow ‘Em Tight one on one now, as far as setting goals on where they want to be. You could tell Codi had big dreams in his eyes, now it’s a matter of putting them on paper,” Hamilton said. “But when it comes to business planning, it is also something you live and breath by, not just something you write down and put on the shelf. We can set some long term goals, then see how to grow capacity.”

Boyd Miller, Preferred Supplier Program Manager with the Nation, also offered aid to the Conns. “We want to promote all of our Choctaw businesses,” he said. Miller works to increase business opportunities for Choctaw tribal member-owned business enterprises.

Miller, and the Preferred Supplier Program, help by registering businesses so that they will be shared and made available for selection when work needs to be done or products need to be bought.

“Blow ‘Em Tight is enrolled and registered in the Preferred Supplier Program,” Miller said. He added as the program takes off, these business will be shared amongst other tribes, as well as any internal departments, and also Choctaw members, so they can access and be able to choose Blow ‘Em Tight for insulating services.

Promise Zone progress on display during HUD visit to Choctaw Nation



Robin Counce, right, Director of Choctaw Nation Career Development, offers program highlights during a Promise Zone meeting with HUD officials and tribal employees.

By ZACH MAXWELL
Choctaw Nation

The Choctaw Nation hosted dignitaries from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for a progress report tour of areas in one of President Barack Obama’s Promise Zones.

Jemine Bryon, Deputy Undersecretary and Acting Assistant Secretary for HUD, was joined by Rodger Boyd (Navajo Nation), Deputy Assistant Secretary for HUD Native Programs, and C. Wayne Sims, Administrator for HUD’s Southern Plains Office of Native American Programs.

They were shown several shovel-ready projects around Durant by members

of the Choctaw Nation Office of Tribal Policy, including Promise Zone Coordinator Sara-Jane Smallwood.

She took the group to the Durant Boys and Girls Club, currently occupying a portion of old Durant Middle School. Business partnerships and Promise Zone designation could help turn the tide for youths in “one of the poorest Census tracts in the Choctaw Nation,” Smallwood said.

The group also visited residents at Chahta Tvmaha elder housing, where units were built using HUD funding.

“It’s a life-saver for me,” said resident Van Lindsay. “It’s just me and my dog, so it is a comfortable place and I feel safe here.”

Haughty Mae's
CHOCOLATE

#1 BREAKFAST GRAY
THE 'BEST' CHOCOLATE PIE
OR
DELICIOUS FONDUE
MIX

MADE WITH LOVE
GENERATION AFTER GENERATION
SINCE 1935

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NEW SHIPMENT.. just in time for the holidays

CHOCTAW
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Choctaw Store
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CHOCTAW NATION
SMALL BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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

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

- Business Planning
- Business Counseling
- Business Registration
- Access to Financing
- 8(a) Certification Assistance
- Minority Business Registration
- Marketing
- Business Taxes
- Bid Assistance

Our focus is to build successful, job creating, Choctaw owned companies within the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

Contact Billy Hamilton, Small Business Development Services Manager today!

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

HEALTH

Holiday eating tips for enjoyable, guilt-free dining

Halito, December is a wondrous time of year. As we look around at all of the many blessings we have, all the young children wondering what Santa will put under the Christmas tree for them, wondering what to prepare for family Christmas dinner and, 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 carbohydrates, you can portion into three to four carbohydrate servings. Generally a carbohydrate 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.

NURSERY NEWS

Audrey Rose Fleck

Ryan and Dana (Belveal) Fleck of New Salem, North Dakota, would like to announce the birth of their daughter Audrey Rose Fleck. She was born on Aug. 30 at 5:49 p.m. at Sanford Hospital in Bismarck, North Dakota. She weighed 7 lbs., 11 ozs. and was 21 inches long. Proud grandparents are David and Patty Belveal of Broken Arrow and Mark and Lori Fleck of New Salem. Great-grandparents are the late David and Mae Reese of Durant who were active in the Choctaw Nation, Wendy and Frank Chevez of Tulsa, Lola Hagen of Arizona, and Jim and Maxine Fleck of Bismarck.



Raiden Anthony Haury

Derrick Haury and Jessica Cockrell of Idabel are very happy to announce the arrival of their baby boy, Raiden Anthony Haury, born Sept. 25, 2014, at the Choctaw Nation Hospital in Talihina. Raiden was born 8:25 a.m., weighing 7 lbs., 9 ozs. and was 18.9 inches long. Happy grandparents Glenda Cockrill and the late John Cockrill of the Redland Community and Evelyn Casterjon of Goodwater. Raiden was welcomed by his sister Patience Haury who is so happy to have a little baby brother.



Recipe of the Month

Roast Venison with Dried-Cranberry Gravy

Ingredients:

- 2 1/2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1/4 cup finely chopped shallots
- 2 cloves garlic, minced (2 teaspoons)
- 2 cups dry red wine
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 10 juniper berries, crushed*
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon crushed black pepper
- 1 3-pound boneless leg of venison, trimmed and tied into a roast
- 1 cup reduced-sodium beef broth
- 1 cup cranberry-juice cocktail
- 1/3 cup dried cranberries
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 1 teaspoon cornstarch
- 1 tablespoon water
- Pinch of sugar, or to taste

Directions:

1. Heat 1 1/2 teaspoons oil in a medium saucepan over medium-low heat. Add shallots and garlic; cook, stirring, until softened, 2 to 3 minutes. Add wine, vinegar, juniper berries*, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil and simmer until reduced by half, 10 to 15 minutes. Set aside to cool.
2. Place venison in a shallow nonreactive dish just large enough to hold the roast. Pour cooled marinade over venison and cover with plastic wrap. Refrigerate, turning occasionally, for 2 to 4 hours or overnight.
3. Preheat oven to 425°F.
4. Remove the venison from marinade and pat dry, reserving marinade. Rub venison with remaining 1 teaspoon oil. Heat a cast-iron skillet over high heat. Sear the venison, turning with tongs, until browned on all sides, about 6 minutes.

5. Transfer venison to a small metal roasting pan. Roast until an instant-read thermometer inserted in the center of the roast registers 125°F for medium-rare, 45 to 50 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board, tent with foil and let rest for 10 minutes.
6. Meanwhile, strain the reserved marinade into a medium saucepan. Add stock (or broth), cranberry juice, dried cranberries and tomato paste. Bring to a simmer over medium heat. Cook until gravy is reduced by half, 15 to 20 minutes. Combine cornstarch and cold water in a small bowl; slowly whisk into the simmering gravy until slightly thickened. Season with salt, pepper and sugar. Keep warm.
7. Remove strings from venison and carve into thin slices. Serve with the gravy.

Nutrition Facts:
Per serving: 252 calories; 5 g fat (2 g sat, 2 g mono); 116 mg cholesterol; 10 g carbohydrates; 2 g added sugars; 32 g protein; 0 g fiber; 314 mg sodium; 535 mg potassium.
Nutrition Bonus: Iron (28% daily value), Zinc (20% dv), Selenium & Vitamin C (19%), Potassium (15% dv).

* When juniper berries are not available, these substitutes may be used:

- Fresh rosemary sprigs, figure one sprig for every four berries. Add a bit of lemon juice with the rosemary will help to bring out that slight citrus taste as well.
- A single, crushed bay leaf will serve as a substitute for six juniper berries in most recipes.
- Also, adding additional onion, garlic or other herbs and spices can make up for the loss of flavor.

I hope you all enjoy this recipe! For further information you may contact: Erin Adams, RD, LD Choctaw Nation Diabetes Wellness Center 800-349-7026 ext. 6959.

Choctaw Nation WIC encourages breast feeding



Give Your Baby the Gift of Life... Breast feed. Christmas is a great time to think about the gifts that breast feeding can offer both moms and babies. Besides

creating a special bond between a mother and her baby, breast feeding gives lifelong health benefits that a baby can't get from anywhere else. Breast feeding gives babies special protection by reducing the risk of diabetes, ear infections, respiratory diseases, obesity, and diarrhea and is easier to digest than formula. Breast milk 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 breast feeding too! By breast feeding 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 breast feeding offers! Moms can give the gift of a healthy life by breast feeding. Families can join in too by supporting breast feeding moms and babies. For more information about breast feeding, please call 1-800-522-6170 extension 2507.

ChoctawStore.com

Choctaw Welcome Center
1882 Hwy 69/75 Colbert, OK 74733
855-865-7854
www.choctawstore.com

HOMEBUYER EDUCATION CLASS

Are you ready to purchase a new home?
First time home buyer? Not sure where to start?
Not sure about your credit?
Come to our homebuyer class to learn the important steps in the home buying process. We make the process fun and educational.
Call today to register.
Carrie Blackmon, Homebuyer Education Counselor
1-800-235-3087 ext. 318

When: JANUARY 8, 2015
Where: ANTLERS COMMUNITY CENTER
ANTLERS, OK
TIME: 4:30-7:30

Housing Authority of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
Home Finance Department
P.O. Box G
Hugo, Oklahoma 74743

CHOCTAW NATION FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Open 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.
Staff will take lunch from 11:30 to noon.

WAREHOUSES & MARKETS
Antlers: 306 S.W. "O" St., (580) 298-6443
Durant: 2352 Big Lots Pkwy, (580) 924-7773
McAlester: 1212 S. Main St., (918) 420-5716
Poteau: 100 Kerr Ave, (918) 649-0431

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

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ANTLERS
Market open weekdays Jan. 1-31, except for:
Jan. 7: Idabel 9-11:30 a.m.; Broken Bow 1- 3:30 p.m. (market open)
Jan. 14: Bethel 9-10:30; Smithville 12-2 (market open)
Closed: Jan. 1 for Tribal Holiday; Jan. 29-30 for inventory.
Cooking with Carmen: Jan. 12, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

DURANT
Market open weekdays Jan. 1-31, except for:
Closed: Jan. 1 for Tribal Holiday; Jan. 29-30 for inventory.
Cooking with Carmen: Jan. 6, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

MCALESTER
Market open weekdays Jan. 1-31, except for:
Closed: Jan. 1 for Tribal Holiday; Jan. 29-30 for inventory.
Cooking with Carmen: Jan. 15, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

POTEAU
Market open weekdays Jan. 1-31, except for:
Closed: Jan. 1 for Tribal Holiday; Jan. 29-31 for inventory.
Cooking with Carmen: Jan. 8, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Choctaw Nation WIC

WOMEN, INFANTS and CHILDREN

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

Public Release Statement for Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma - Child Care Program
Announces its participation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). All participants in attendance are served meals, at no extra charge to the parents. In accordance with federal law and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) policy, participating institutions are prohibited from discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC, 20250-9410, or call toll-free 866-632-9992 (Voice). Individuals who are hearing-impaired or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339 or 800-445-6116 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Free help

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

NOTES TO THE NATION

Veteran’s family extends gratitude

Our family would like to express our appreciation to the Choctaw Nation and its Outreach Services for providing for its people.

Tvshka Homma is a beautiful and sacred place. We are so proud that our Nation had the foresight to provide a place of distinction for the veterans. The Color Guard always represents the Nation well. They give a little touch of dignity to the events they attend. The respect they exhibited to our veteran and brother was truly heartfelt.

On behalf of the family of Bill Joe Peters we say “Yakoke!”

Closer to home

Dear Chief Batton and Choctaw Nation,

Ever since I was a little boy in the Texas Panhandle, I dreamed of being here in the 10 1/2 counties. (I proved my heritage in 1993) I’ve now fulfilled my dream 50 years later! I want to thank you for a great festival and kindness to me and my daughter (5-years-old). She danced with the dancers. I’ve received my hearing aids a few months back I’ve needed for 35 years, Thank You!

I miss former Chief Pyle (met him in Austin once). But I’ve met you five times around Clayton and we are blessed to have you and your family as leaders for our Nation. Also, I received approval for a storm shelter a week ago. So thanks again. Plus, I won a bicycle at the festival—thank you for making my dream come true!

Paul Sutherland

Thank you for the support

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Choctaw Nation for the support and encouragement throughout the past year as I was venturing through nursing school and for continuing the support as I work towards my RN. This November I graduated LPN as an honor student receiving student of the year award from WTC in Burns Flat, Okla. While it was not always easy, I had my family’s support. I had my first baby girl, Jaylen, on July 23, not missing a day and taking online college classes. My grandparents Holland and Linda Fleming played a big role in helping me through. Without my Papa’s Choctaw heritage, I would not have had the financial help I received. I am very thankful for all the help. I am looking forward to the journey that lies ahead in the career world. The picture attached is from the pinning ceremony.



Mandy Nicole Fleming

RUF/NEK appreciates summer work program

I would like to thank the Choctaw Nation, as well as the men and women who dedicate their time and effort toward the summer work program. I am now a sophomore and RUF/NEK at the University of Oklahoma and have had the opportunity to utilize the summer work program for the past five years. I would like to emphasize my gratitude for being able to participate in this incredible program. I have learned many things through this program and I feel that I am better prepared for future occupational opportunities. Once again I cannot express my gratitude enough for having been given this opportunity to learn and to grow.



Zach Wallis

A new outlook on life

I want to personally thank the Choctaw Nation and its members for giving me something to smile about. People have always treated me differently because of my bad teeth. But the tribe helped me get long needed dental work and now I have a real smile! Thank you so much.

Bry Coleman

Gary Batton
Chief

Jack Austin Jr.
Assistant Chief

The Official
Monthly Publication
of the
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

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Lisa Reed, Executive Director
Vonna Shults, Media Director
Ronni Pierce, Editor
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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.



Happy for shelter

I am writing to thank the Nation for providing the money for a Tornado Shelter at our home. The money provided made this possible for my family. Thank you very much.

Donna F. Steffey, Brookston, Texas



Thank you from Norman

In over 72 years on this earth, the only storm cellar I ever had access to was the elementary school cellar in Bentley Community, Atoka County. At 16, I left. Even though a protected central area of my home has always been designated for refuge, nothing compares to having a shelter in the floor of our garage.

My husband and I, with our two cats, can rush into our new Choctaw-provided shelter without going outside. It is such a gift for that peace of mind. We thank the Choctaw Nation for providing us with such a substantial shelter. Gratitude for the good, efficient work of the Housing Authority in Hugo.

Chahta sia hoke! What an honor to be a member of the great Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

Yakoke!
Naomi N. Stanley

To the people of the Choctaw Nation, our Chiefs, and honored Council Members

Today I have an emergency shelter to protect me from the forces of nature because you have the foresight and the determination to provide for our care.

Thank you for your gift and leadership.

Raymond Wright

Looking for family members

My name is Thomas Terrill. My father is the late Solomon Billy Sr. of Rattan. I am seeking correspondence with any of our relatives. Please contact me at:

Thomas Terrill
#497113
A-1-10
P.O. Box 514
Granite, OK 73547

Thomas Terrill

Gratitude from Moore

Even though the tornado that hit Moore last May missed our house by about ½ mile, having a storm shelter is a necessity living in Oklahoma. I appreciate the Choctaw Nation in providing the storm shelter that I now have.

I have not had to use it yet, but it is there when I need it. Many thanks.

Dan Walkup

Thank you for the new road

Thank you so very much for your very generous and thoughtful gift to the Caddo Civic and Cemetery Club Fund to pave a road in the Caddo Cemetery. You will be thanked hundreds of times each year as proud and thankful Choctaws, their families, the community, and everyone who visits the Caddo Cemetery drive over the smooth and newly paved road you helped make possible. Again your gift is deeply appreciated.

Linda Moran Combrink, Proud Choctaw
and the entire membership of the Caddo Civic and Cemetery Association

Crowder seniors say thanks

The Crowder senior citizens want to thank everyone who volunteered to help serve Thanksgiving lunch on Nov. 19. Yakoke!

Youth of the Nation

Courtney Patterson, YAB member

My Christmas Gift to You

This season is renowned for being the happiest time of the year. Laughter, cheer, and warm cocoa fill our hearts and homes during this time, but not everyone’s satisfied. The holiday season we all know so well from being jolly is quite heartbreaking to many. You might ask yourself, “What could be sad about the Holidays? There couldn’t be one thing.” I guarantee you’d be surprised by the answers.

There are several hardships that take place every day during this season. Far worse than not having your iPhone 6 or that MacBook you wanted. Right now as you read this, there are several parents crying on the inside. Wondering if they’re going to have food for Thanksgiving, and how they’ll make ends meet for Christmas. Does Christian get his NintendoDS, or does he get warm clothes to wear? Will Shay get that puppy, or will she get a decent bed to sleep on? Believe it or not some people don’t look forward to this holiday due to its struggle, and understand the hot water doesn’t stop boiling there. For some people, it’s hard to cope with loss of loved ones during this season. People claim the “old times” are always better, but what they can’t see is the opportunity in front of them. While you do miss your loved ones, there are plenty of others to love. Yes, no one will ever replace those holes, but there’s such warm things you can fill them with. Crime rates do sky rocket as well, but instead of worrying with stolen property, let’s focus on the true meaning of the holidays, and not what MK purse your neighbor has.

If you get nothing this holiday I want to give you this. Times are hard, but behind every storm cloud is a great ray of sunshine, and I’m sorry to burst some people’s bubble, but not everyone is as happy as you. Remember love is something that needs to be cherished, and giving is much better than receiving.

Happy Holidays

Gratitude to the Choctaw Career Development Program

I want to sincerely thank Chief Gary Batton and the Choctaw Nation for the opportunity to have received assistance from the Choctaw Nation Career Development Program. This program allowed me to start and complete my Texas EC-12 School Superintendent Certification.

I am very grateful that I was able to participate in this program.

I am currently the Junior High and High School Principal of Petrolia Consolidated Independent School District in Petrolia, Texas. My goal is to one day become a School Superintendent. I will be able to do this one day because of the Career Development Program provided by the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

I also want to say a special thank you to Lauren English and Tisha Giles from the Career Development Program as they supported and assisted me from start to finish while I was in the program.

Gary Waitman

EVENTS

2015 Livestock Show Feb. 7 & 8, 2015

Open to all 4-H and FFA members 9 to 19 years of age at the time of the show and have a Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB). There are no Boundary Guidelines again this year, so participants do not have to live or go to school within the 10 1/2 counties of the Choctaw Nation.

Location

Durant show, Bryan County Fairgrounds; Wilburton show, Goddard Building, Eastern Oklahoma State College

Fees & Deadlines

Entry fee is \$10 per head
Late fee is \$25 (after Jan. 25)
Up to three entries per division
(swine, goats, sheep, heifers, steers)

For more information, contact Jones Academy Administration at (888) 767-2518 or (918) 297-2518 or Jones Academy Agriculture (918) 297-7373.

Rules & Regulations

- Wood chips or shavings only shall be used for bedding. (NO HAY OR STRAW) Participants must bring their own shavings.
- Durant show: No shavings in cattle barn
- Each school will be responsible for monitoring their students and following their eligibility rules for participating in activities.
- A photo area will be set up for all breed, reserve breed and grand champions.
- All animals must be owned by 4-H or FFA exhibitor at least 60 days prior to show.
- No animal can be shown at both shows. Start times: Steers – after heifer show Plaques will be given for Breed and Reserve Breed (Steers and Heifers) for each division (English, Continental, Brahman Influence and AOB). Does, Wethers, and Lambs will be broken into divisions based on the total number of entries. Plaques will be given to each champion division and reserve champion division winners. Bronze Champion will be named for each species. The show committee’s decision final in grievances.

See <http://choctaw.link/1CO5ELC> for applications.

Making a Difference Program

If you know a student who has scored 25 or above on the ACT and plans to attend Southeastern Oklahoma State University, the Making a Difference Honors program may be just what they are looking for.

While preference is given to Choctaw students for one applicable scholarship, all qualifying students are encouraged to apply.

This year’s deadline for mailing the honors application and supporting documentation is Jan. 31, 2015. Qualifying students will be invited to participate in the Southeastern Honors Day events scheduled on Saturday, Feb. 21, 2015.

Because of the short window of time between the deadline and Honors Day, applications that arrive before the deadline will be greatly appreciated by the Honors Program staff.

Qualified students may visit the website at <http://homepages.se.edu/honorsprogram/> for additional information or to apply online. For questions or help filling out the application, please contact the Making a Difference office.

WANT ALL THE LATEST IN ◆ CHOCTAW ◆ NEWS & EVENTS?

Keep in touch with fellow Choctaws through the Biskinik and our social media sites. Stay up-to-date with:

- Cultural events
- Education assistance
- Birth announcements
- Obituaries
- Tribal Council updates
- Choctaw success stories
- And more!

Subscriptions and submissions are free services to members of the Choctaw Nation.

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To Submit Stories:
biskinik@choctawnation.com
or
Choctaw Nation
Attn: Editor
P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702

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@ChoctawNationOK

CHOCTAW NATION

Thanksgiving Dinners



Jim Johnson transports seniors to and from the Antlers Community Center.



Lora Tom, and Edgar and Hazel Taylor visit after eating at Antlers.



Fred Platt and Phil Kelly visit before the Atoka dinner begins.



Margaret Gipson volunteered and helped make the Atoka dinner possible.



Leamon Morris shows an old Biskinik picture of the last three Choctaw Enrollees of Coal County, his mom, Ethel Alta Morris, Maggie Powell and Mary Motes Mitchell, with their Councilman, James Frazier.



Maggie Anderson (bottom right) with her three daughters, Jeanette Anderson, Mary Roberts and Vickie Anderson during the Coalgate dinner.



Seated, Jeanne Powell and Sandy Dugan. Standing, Betty Wood. The three attended Crowder's dinner.



Kimmie Battiest, Alexia Battiest and Destiny Battiest at the Bethel dinner.



Vernon Willis, Tribal Councilman Tony Messenger, Deidra Battiest, Sarah Battiest and Wilkin Billy at the Bethel Thanksgiving dinner.



Councilman Ted Dosh with Youth Advisory Board volunteers for the Durant dinner.



Emma Rodgers, Destiny Tom, Maddie Reyna and Kaden Danderson at the Durant dinner.



Kids from the Broken Bow Headstart program performed for diners singing Amazing Grace and a Choctaw hymn.



Keene and Cora Faye (Wilson) Kohrt (background) from Wrangell, Alaska; Theresa Wilson, Tujunga, California; (foreground); Kaydence Young (pink coat); and E.J. Young (blue coat) join Dewayne and Sue Hicks, Broken Bow, for a reunion and celebration.



Buck John, Juanita Lajeunesse, Reggie Baker, and Josephine Baker relax after helping cook Thanksgiving for Idabel.



Mother Heather Tehauno holds her daughter Ariyah Salinas during the Idabel Thanksgiving dinner.



Councilman Perry Thompson sits with his wife Gail and grandchildren Jackson and Mallory Polard during the Hugo Thanksgiving dinner.



Trish Dunlap and Courtney Stephens make plates to serve the hungry Atoka attendees.



Councilman Thompson takes a break with sisters Vivian Baker and Patricia Baker, while their mother Bettye Baker holds great-grandson Lucas Wesley.



Chief Gary Batton with Harley Wright and Geraldine Wright during the Durant dinner.



Celebrating birthdays and anniversaries in November at Crowder are, standing, Terry Lowe, Leon Cloud, Gloria Garis, Pat and Keith Holman, and Larry Ivey; seated, Margaret Wocco and Mary Risenhoover.



Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr., Norma Lee, Merline Planer and Chief Gary Batton in McAlester.



Lydia Hutchings, Walter Amos and David Amos in McAlester.



Abraham Castaneda of Shady Point seen at the Poteau dinner.



Children from the local Head Start classrooms take part in a presentation at the Dale Cox Community Center in Poteau.



Councilman Kenny Bryant with Virginia Grant and Pauline Davis at the Smithville holiday dinner.



Brad Whiteaker and his mother Myrtle Whiteaker of Panama, showing her door prize winnings at the Spiro dinner.



District 4 Junior Miss Brianna Battiest opened the Spiro meal with the Lord's Prayer.



First grader Rylan Watson and brother Javen, who is in 2nd grade, had some awesome Thanksgiving hats they wore to the Smithville dinner.



Enjoying the morning in Stigler – Harold McAlvain, Earl Blaylock, Assistant Chief Austin, Councilman Ron Perry, and Don McAlvain.



Matthew Kemp, Elmer Burd, Jamie Edwards and Mona White gather for the good day at Stigler.



LEFT: Councilman Kenny Bryant and Sherian Tom Fremont both attended school at Talihina.



RIGHT: Donna Shere, Wanda Ward, Patty Atwood, Rita Faris, Ronald Stewart, Allen Dukes and Annie Robison at Talihina.



Jackie and Jim Fry with Hannah Fry, Kimsey Fry and relatives Hailey McClain with dad Brian McClain at the Spiro meal.



Wilburton's self-proclaimed "best Tvshka Homma stickball player" Curtis Billy enjoys the festivities along with his family Melissa, Kamilla, and Curt Jr.



Children from the Wright City Choctaw Nation Head Start perform the wedding dance.



Margaret Billy smiles for the camera while waiting for the food to be served in Wright City.



Keaton Gotes and Pamela McGirt are all smiles in Wilburton.



Darlene Ludlow (gray shirt) waits for dinner to be served along with her grandchildren, Marcella Sotelo and Raben King at Tvshka Homma.



Candace Robinson, Kage Caldwell, Judy and Cornelius Winship at the Wilburton dinner.



Kim Johnson, Dana Gobellan, and Paula Griffith, all Choctaw employees, volunteer at the Wright City dinner.



Sue Anderson and Laura Mackey in Wilburton.



Lucas Samuels and his "Papa," Wayne Metcalf in Smithville.



Anthony Noahubi and Asher Moore at Wright City.



Sadie McCann is happy to be with grandpa, Dewayne McCann in Stigler.



Chief Gary Batton with Rodgers Walton, Todd Baughman and Councilman Joe Coley at the Wilburton meal.



Folks enjoying the meal in McAlester.



Door prize winner William Wren from Nashoba takes home a ham for Thanksgiving dinner. He and family are shown at the Tvshka Homma dinner.



Chief Gary Batton with Walter Amos at McAlester.



Brian Wren serves Thanksgiving dinners to Donna Goforth and family in Spiro.

PEOPLE YOU KNOW

Choctaws run Marine Corps Marathon



Four Choctaw tribal members, (left to right) Tammie Canady, C.J. Norvell, Mary Ayn Tullier, and Shelley Russell, completed the 2014 Marine Corps Marathon in Washington, D.C., on Oct. 26. They were among nearly 30,000 runners from across the country to participate.

The marathon is known by many as “The People’s Marathon” and “The Marathon of Monuments” because it is open to all runners ages 14 and above and takes participants through a 26.2 mile scenic route through the U.S. Capitol. The mission of the marathon is to promote physical fitness, generate community goodwill, and showcase the organizational skills of the United States Marine Corps.

“Through the whole thing, at every station, there were Marines handing out water,” Shelley Russell said. “They would thank us, but they were the ones who made the sacrifice, not us.”

What started with the firing of a 105mm Howitzer cannon ended with the proud Choctaw runners taking a picture with the Choctaw Nation’s flag once they crossed the finish line.

Choctaw earns bachelor’s degree

Molly Culver Bell graduated with her bachelor’s degree in Human Development from Pacific Oaks College, in Pasadena, California. She is a proud descendant of original enrollee Amanda Lomer, and deeply grateful for the Choctaw Nation merit scholarships that supported her undergraduate studies. Currently, Molly works with elementary school students at the Chandler School in Pasadena, and serves on the school’s Diversity Committee.



James receives Continued Excellence Award

Tommie M. James, Family and Consumer Science Extension Educator of Bryan County, with the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, was recently honored with the Continued Excellence Award at the National Extension Association for Family and Consumer Sciences 2014 annual session, held in Lexington, Kentucky.



In receiving the award, James was recognized for her work in nutrition, health, home safety and parenting educational programming. The Continued Excellence Award recognizes NEAFCS members who continue to be involved in professional development and leadership.

James has been employed with the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service for thirteen years. She says the main highlight of her job is teaching children and youth important life skills that they will use for a lifetime, such as food preparation skills. James’ commitment to meeting the needs of individuals, families and communities is exemplary.

James is proud tribal member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and resides in Boswell.

Coursen named Miss Florida Teen USA

Jara Coursen of Lake City, Fla., competed with 56 other young women and won the title of Miss Florida Teen USA, the first Native to earn this title.

“I have always been very passionate about my culture and I plan to connect with other tribes during my reign and throughout my life,” Coursen said. “I want to reach out to our youth and be a positive role model for them.”



She is a 17-year-old senior at Columbia High School, and is a four-year varsity starter and captain of her high school volleyball team.

Coursen will receive a four-year scholarship to Florida Atlantic University for earning the title of Miss Florida Teen USA. She plans on earning her Bachelor’s degree in business and Master’s in Business Administration. Eventually, she plans on attending law school and working as an attorney in corporate law.

Choctaws host Veteran’s Day Run



The Choctaw Nation Bike Team and Choctaw Nation PACE (Promoting Active Communities Everywhere) program hosted the Veteran’s Day 15K and Relay on Saturday, Nov. 8. The 95 runners and walkers participated in a pre-run ceremony honoring all U.S. Veterans. The program included the singing of the National Anthem and God Bless the U.S.A. by Kevin and Liz Johnson, and Lindsay Harris respectively, and Choctaw Nation Color Guard members Danny Belvin and Bruce Jessie presenting the colors. A portion of the proceeds will benefit the Wounded Warrior Project and Wreaths Across America.

Choctaw student co-founds NATIVE



Choctaw student Holly Glass co-founded a student organization that aspires to raise awareness of American Indian issues and concerns, while promoting cultural knowledge and community involvement.

Glass, age 21, is a Senior Anthropology student at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn. and now serves as Vice President of Finances for the organization she helped create: NATIVE (Native Americans in Tennessee Interacting at Vanderbilt).

“I’m interested and really excited about NATIVE because it provides an opportunity to indigenize Vanderbilt and show that just because we represent 0.4% of the student body, we’re not invisible and we can still have a strong presence,” Glass said.

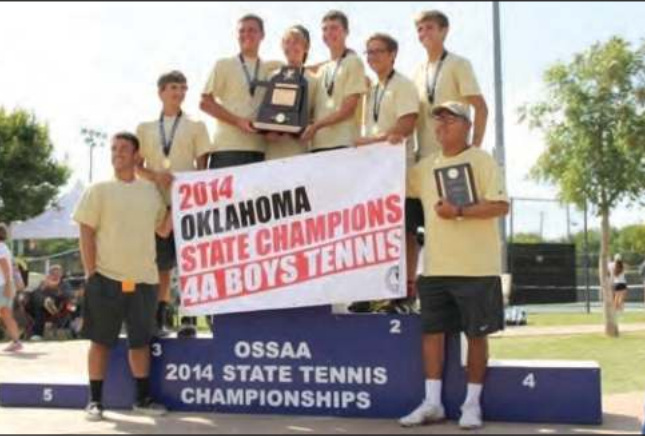
NATIVE, as part of Vanderbilt University’s commemoration of Constitution and Citizenship Day, held their inaugural event called “Nations Within States: Citizenship, Pottery, and The Catawba Indian Nation” on Sept. 17.

The event featured a pottery exhibit, a panel discussion on Indian sovereignty, and the first ever powwow dance performance held at Vanderbilt. Glass performed the Women’s Southern Cloth Dance during the event.

“I think the event is important because it’s our first opportunity to come together for an evening of fun, learning, and community,” Glass said.

Holly Glass plans to pursue a Master in Public Health and Ph.D. in Anthropology, after she earns her Bachelor’s degree.

Simpson leads tennis teams to success



Alan Simpson, tennis coach at Byng (pictured at bottom right), lead his boys team to their first ever 4A State Tennis Championship. The girls team made state runner-up.

Simpson was also selected as Class 4A Coach of the Year by the Tennis Coaches Association and Oklahoma Tennis Coach of the Year for all classes by the Oklahoma Coaches Association, an honor he also received in 2006 and 2012.

Paddocks celebrate 30th anniversary



Kevin and Tina Paddock celebrated their 30th marriage anniversary on Nov. 16.

The two originally married in Durant, and chose to travel together to Las Vegas for this anniversary.

Kennedy competes in World Championship



Choctaw member Woodrow Kennedy found success with his ranch rodeo team, which recently made it to the Working Ranch Cowboys Association (WRCA) World Championship Ranch Rodeo 2014 in Amarillo, Texas. The rodeo was held Nov. 6-9, and Kennedy competed on the Angell Ranch Co. team out of Lovington, New Mexico. Kennedy rides the bronc and ropes for the team. This was their second year to make it to the world finals.

Rains celebrates 16th birthday

KayLindra Zane-Keetly Rains reached her 16th birth year on December 11, 2014. She is a sophomore and a member of the cheer-leading squad at her high school and is actively involved in giving back to her community through her volunteer work. KayLindra maintains a high GPA with upper-level courses, while participating in extra-curricular activities and church events. She is also a Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Youth Advisory Board Member and proud Choctaw youth. Her interests and hobbies include sport shooting, cheer, medical research, guitar, reading, gaming, family and friends, and her new puppy. KayLindra plans on studying medicine after graduation.



“She’s been a joy to raise. We’re really proud of the young woman she is growing in to and wish her the happiest of all her birthdays so far!” her parents said. KayLindra is the sister of Jack Legind and the daughter of Leslie and Ronald Rains of Choctaw Nation District 9.

Choctaw Nation Vocational Rehabilitation January 2015

Durant - Mon., Wed. and Fri.; Broken Bow - Mon., Wed. and Fri.; Idabel by appt. Phone: 580-326-8304; Fax: 580-326-0115 Email: ddavenport@choctawnation.com						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5 Durant 8:00-4:30	6 Talibina 10:00-2:00	7 Antlers by appt.	8	9 Broken Bow 8:00-4:30 Idabel by appt.	10
11	12 Durant 8:00-4:30	13 Poteau 11:30-1:00	14 Crowder by appt.	15	16 Wright City by appt.	17
18	19 Durant 8:00-4:30	20	21 McMester 10:00-2:00 Stigler by appt.	22	23 Atoka by appt. Coalgate by appt.	24
25	26 Durant 8:00-4:30	27 Wilburton by appt.	28	29	30	31

CHRISTMAS IN THE PARK

Tvshka Homma Grounds

For More Information Please Contact: Cultural Services @ 580-924-8280, X2377

Enjoy the sparkle of the season at **Christmas in the Park** holiday light display on the Tvshka Homma tribal grounds. Light display will be free and open to the public during the month of December. Join us in celebrating this special time of year!

Light Display & Free Hot Chocolate:
Fridays: December 5, 12, and 19
Saturdays: December 6, 13, and 20
6-9 pm

EDUCATION

Everidge earns bachelor’s degree

Ellen Everidge, pictured with her brother Lealon Everidge, received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering in May 2014. She would like to thank the Choctaw Nation for supporting her education at University of California at Berkeley. She hopes to continue her education next Fall by obtaining a Masters degree. Meanwhile, she is employed by an engineering company, working on sewage water and storm water improvement projects throughout the San Francisco Bay Area.



Local teachers honored

Lucille and John A. Hooser of Clayton were honored Nov. 3 by the Oklahoma Retired Educators Association with the Pioneer Award in recognition of their decades of teaching. Lucille Hooser taught 35 years and John A. Hooser taught 38 years.



Lucille and John A. Hooser display their Pioneer Awards presented to them in honor of their years of teaching.

In 2006 John Hooser was named the Outstanding Choctaw. He has been interviewed by the Oklahoma Historical Society. The Hoosers taught in Missouri and in Oklahoma. Schools where one or both taught included Johns Valley, Stanley, Lenapah, Stillwater and Morrison. John A. Hooser recalled teaching at a one-room school in Johns Valley in the 1950s where he had six students from grades one to six. Their award stated that it was given, “In recognition of many years of dedicated service rendered as a pioneer educator in the schools of Oklahoma and Missouri.” Lucille and John Hooser will have been married 70 years on Dec. 28. They met while in college at Wilburton. She taught math and he taught science. He is making a quilt about the 62 schools of Pushmataha County. Each will have a quilt picture depicting a school house and the name of the school. Most of the schools were one room, he said. “They were concerned about transportation so they built the schools where the children would just have to go four or five miles.” He is hoping to gather more information about the schools of Pushmataha County.

Reeder teaches Choctaw language lesson



Lindsay Reeder, former two time Okla Chata Senior Princess, showed her Choctaw pride while giving a Choctaw language lesson at her school, Rio Hondo College in Whittier, CA during Native American History Month.

Choctaw tribal member achieves goal through Career Development program

Choctaw tribal member Natasha Northcross, originally from Sherman Oaks, California, recently earned her bachelor’s degree in healthcare administration from California State University Northridge. A participant in the Choctaw Nation’s Career Development Program, Northcross is now living her dream of giving back to her community and her tribe. “I found it very enlightening and rewarding to know that I was at the forefront of making a difference in communities,” she said.



Natasha Northcross recently started working in the Diabetes and Prevention Division of Indian Health Services in Washington, D.C.

Upon graduation, Northcross knew she wanted to work for Indian Health Services and kept watching their website for the perfect position. A couple of attempts at jobs were unsuccessful, so she reached out to Career Development’s Employment Services for help. Stacy Hallmark who is located in the Hugo and Durant offices helped Natasha with a resume and interview skills. Northcross says, “I learned you really need to prepare for interviews and utilize your resources in order to be successful.” Northcross would like to thank the Career Development program, “especially Bettye Bolen and Hallmark for encouraging me to achieve my dreams.” Bolen is the career counselor who works with tribal members outside Oklahoma and Texas. Northcross is also grateful to the Choctaw Nation for its support of programs helping to advance self-sustaining careers. Choctaw Nation Career Development provides a comprehensive array of career guidance services, workforce skills development, academic skills enhancement, and financial education that enables members of the Choctaw Nation to obtain recognized certifications in a variety of vocations. For more information, log on to choctawcareers.com.

Southeastern takes part in College Day

Southeastern was one of two dozen colleges and universities which took part in a Choctaw College Connect event in early November. The event was also part of the university’s Native November program, highlighting its status as one of the highest in the nation in terms of Native American student enrollment. “The Choctaw College Connect event provided an excellent opportunity for us to meet with potential students and to highlight our programs and services at Southeastern Oklahoma State University,” said Chris Wesberry, Director of the Native Center for Student Success at Southeastern. “We met a lot of Choctaw students that were exploring their college choices.” Members of the university’s student-led Native American Student Association also toured the Chahta Anumpa Language Department at Choctaw Nation. The group, together with the Native Center, hosted numerous activities on campus for Native November. These included stickball demonstrations, a reception in the newly refurbished Native American Commons at Henry G. Bennett Library and viewing of a Chickasaw documentary titled “The First Encounter.”



Southeastern representatives at Choctaw Nation College Connect event included (left to right) Native American Center Director Chris Wesberry, Director of Admissions and Recruitment Shelly Key, President Sean Burrage and Associate Dean of Academic Services Tim Boatman.



Tisa Davidson, Jennifer Kemp, Nakoma Hazlett, Twana Hamill and Katelyn Humphries from Southeastern Native American Students on tour at Choctaw Language Department.

Law student receives honors and a position at OKC firm

Riane Fern is a 3rd year law student at OCU Law School. She is a member of the Choctaw Nation and is a recipient of one of the tribe’s higher education program scholarships. This week’s Oklahoma Bar Journal includes an announcement that Riane has been selected to receive the Outstanding Senior Law School Student Award, which will be presented during the OBA Annual Meeting later this month. Riane is a member of the OCU Law Review and received the law review’s 2013-14 Award for Excellence in Technical Editing. During law school, she has been an academic fellow and research assistant for a highly respected OCU Law Professor, Arthur LeFrancois. She has received 12 Excellence for the Future Awards for the highest grade in various law school courses and is a member of Phi Delta Phi legal fraternity. Prior to attending law school she graduated summa cum laude from the University of Oklahoma with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Letters, which is a triple major degree program. Following graduation from law school in the spring, Riane will be joining McAfee & Taft Law Firm in Oklahoma City.



A visit from Smokey the Bear



The children at the Coalgate Head Start enjoyed visits from Smokey the Bear, the Choctaw Nation Forestry Department, and the Coalgate EMS and Fire Departments during a unit titled “What jobs are in my community?” The children listened to a story about Smokey the Bear and learned about fire prevention from the Choctaw Nation Forestry Department. Their learning was extended by the Coalgate Fire Department when they spoke with the children about what to do if your house is on fire. The firemen performed a role play activity with the children using a sheet to pretend it was smoke and had all of the children get low and crawl below the smoke. They also practiced stop, drop, and roll and calling 911 for emergencies with the children before going outside for hands-on activities with the fire truck and ambulance.

University of North Dakota’s Indians into Medicine Choctaw success story

Cameron MacInnis received his undergraduate degree in 2012 at the University of New Mexico where he was a National Native American Scholar. He deferred medical school for one year while performing full time college ministry at the University. In August of this year, Cameron started medical school at the University of North Dakota where he is part of the INMED (Indians into Medicine) Program. Before his retirement, Chief Gregory Pyle’s office assisted with Cameron’s application to the INMED program. Established in 1973, The INMED program at the University of North Dakota assists Native American students seeking health degrees and wanting to give back to tribal communities. The program provides financial aid assistance, tutoring services as well as other support and advisement amenities.



CHOCTAW YOUTH WORK PROGRAM

APPLICATION AVAILABLE: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 1, 2015

APPLICATION DEADLINE: TUESDAY, APRIL 1, 2015

Applicants must be 16 years of age on or before Monday, June 8, 2015 to meet eligibility requirements. Applicants 21 years of age who turn 22 years of age on or before Monday, June 8, 2015 are not eligible to participate in the Youth Work Program.

DATE	LOCATION	TIME
1-6-15	VALLIANT	9:00 AM
	WISTER	12:15 PM
1-8-15	RED OAK	7:45 AM
	EAGLETOWN	9:00 AM
1-12-15	RATTAN	11:00 AM
	TALIHINA	9:00 AM
1-13-15	IDABEL	11:20 AM
	HEAVENER	9:00 AM
	CADDO	9:15 AM
	HUGO	10:00 AM
	BENNINGTON	10:15 AM
	HOWE	11:00 AM
	FT. TOWSON	12:00 PM
	WRIGHT CITY	1:15 PM
	BATTIEST	8:00 AM
	SMITHVILLE	9:30 AM
1-14-15	ANTLERS	10:00 AM
	BOKOSHE	10:00 AM
	MCCURTAIN	10:00 AM
1-15-15	BOSWELL	8:30 AM
	CAMERON	9:15 AM
	COLBERT	9:15 AM
	ARKOMA	11:00 AM
	ACHILLE	11:45 AM
	ROCK CREEK	1:00 PM
	BROKEN BOW	1:30 PM
	LE FLORE	9:05 AM
	DURANT	9:45 AM
	SILO	1:40 PM
1-16-15	POTEAU	12:30 PM

DATE	LOCATION	TIME
1-20-15	KINTA	9:20 AM
	MOYERS	9:30 AM
	QUINTON	11:05 AM
	HAWORTH	9:00 AM
1-21-15	VISIONS ACADEMY	9:00 AM
	TUSHKA	11:15 AM
	PANOLA	11:30 AM
	WILBURTON	1:20 PM
1-22-15	SOPER	8:50 AM
	WHITESBORO	9:15 AM
	CANEY	11:30 AM
	ATOKA	1:00 PM
1-26-15	TUPELO	9:20 AM
	CALVIN	11:15 AM
1-27-15	COALGATE	1:25 PM
	SPIRO	9:00 AM
1-28-15	HARTSHORNE	10:00 AM
	STIGLER	11:00 AM
2-4-15	KEOTA	1:30 PM
	CLAYTON	9:05 AM
	BUFFALO VALLEY	10:15 AM
	CROWDER	12:35 AM
2-10-15	CANADIAN	1:30 PM
	PITTSBURG	9:00 AM
	KIOWA	10:00 AM
2-18-15	SAVANNA	11:20 AM
	PANAMA	9:00 AM
	POCOLA	11:00 AM

TBD: Calera, Choctaw Interlocal, Haileyville, Indianola, McAlester, Stringtown, Stuart, Victory Life Academy

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

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Choctaw Nation HSE/GED Classes

Class meets each week for approximately 13 weeks. Books, supplies, and testing fees are provided. In addition, a \$10/day attendance stipend will be paid to those who attend classes on a regular basis and attempt the HSE/GED test. If you have turned in an application with our Adult Education Program for HSE/GED classes and wish to attend the upcoming class, please contact our office. If you have not applied and wish to attend these or future classes, please contact Kathy Bench at the Durant office, (800) 522-6170, ext. 2122. A Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) is required.

LeFlore County, Poteau
Beginning date and time: November 10, 2014, Monday and Wednesday, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Choctaw Nation Community Center, 208 “B” Street, Poteau, OK

Pittsburg County, McAlester
Beginning date and time: November 13, 2014, Tuesday and Thursday, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Eastern Oklahoma College, McAlester Campus, Clark Bass Building, Room # 230

Bryan County, Durant
Beginning date and time: November 13, 2014, Tuesday and Thursday, 6 p.m. – 9 p.m.
Choctaw Nation Tribal Complex, South Bldg. 1st Floor, 529 N. 16th, Durant, OK

McCurtain County, Broken Bow
Beginning date and time: November 13, 2014, Thursday, 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.
Choctaw Nation Family Investment Center, 210 Chatah Rd., Broken Bow, OK

Choctaw County, Hugo
Beginning date and time: November 10, 2014, Monday, 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.
Choctaw Nation Community Center, 408 N. “M” Street, Hugo, OK

OBITUARIES

Ruthie May Winlock

Ruthie May Winlock, 49, passed away on July 21, 2014 in Henryetta.

Ruthie was born on Sept. 27, 1964, to James and Levine (Stewart) Winlock. She was a homemaker.

She was preceded in death by her parents; and brothers, Lee Winlock, Victor Winlock, Virgil Winlock, Jimmy Winlock and Larry Winlock.

Surviving relatives include her son, Leonard Winlock; his father, Leonard Smith; sisters, Dorothy Davis of Oklahoma City, Shirley Bonteparte of Red Oak, Jerri Sumka of Beggs, Karen Winlock of Texas and Janice Winlock of Tahlequah; aunt Millie Chapman of Tahlequah; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Ronald Boyd Rose

Ronald Boyd Rose, born Oct. 13, 1947, passed away on June 4, 2014, at the age of 66 after a brief but courageous battle with cancer.

He is survived by his loving wife Sheila; daughters Tracy and Amy; brother Paul; sisters Patricia, Marilyn and Donna; grandchildren Tony, Dan, Kristine, Kevin and many nephews and nieces.

Ron was a devoted family man whose gregarious and generous nature brightened the lives of all that knew him. A fun-loving, adventurous, athletic and passionate man, Ron had many devoted friends.

An avid golfer and traveler, Ron and Sheila enjoyed a whirlwind of traveling, fine dining and golfing after his well-planned retirement from being a small business owner in the Central Valley of California.



Henry Lee ‘Hank’ Hankins

Henry Lee “Hank” Hankins died Oct. 7, 2014 in Missouri Baptist Hospital with his loving family by his side. Hank was born in Dallas on Feb. 24, 1944 to Henry Hankins and Mattie Anniebelle McKinney Nee: Chance.

Hank proudly served our country for 20 years, from 1961 until 1981 in the United States Army, where he earned his high school diploma as well as much more education. After his discharge he worked in upper management for Allnet Communications.

On Dec. 11, 1982 Hank was married to Pamela June Ferguson in Maryland Heights, Missouri, who still survives him.

Hank loved fishing when he could and was a die-hard football fan, only missing one Super Bowl game in recent history. He followed the Cowboys, Rams and the Bears.

Hank grew up listening to Cardinals baseball on the radio with his dad and tried to listen to them anywhere he lived or was stationed. Hank was a flirt and a jokerster and never met anyone he didn’t make friends with. He was often found helping his neighbors. Hank loved to tell stories.

Around 1996 Hank and a partner opened up a Mexican bakery in St. Charles which soon became a grocery store and a small eatery within the store. Hank will be missed by family and friends alike.

Dear husband of Pam Hankins, dear father and father-in-law to Cathy Anne and Ricky Gantt Nee: Hankins, and Naomi Dawn and “Bud” McCall and Byron and Monica Hankins. Dear brother and brother-in-law to Sarah, Nova, Gerald, Shirley and Frankie.

Hank was the grandfather of 10 and great grandfather of numerous great-grandchildren.

Besides his parents, Hank was preceded in death by a sister, Judy; brother Lew Allen; and granddaughter Tegan.

In Hank’s memory a memorial may be made to the Wounded Warrior Project, P.O. Box 758517, Topeka, Kansas 66675 or the ASPCA, 424 E. 92nd St. New York, NY 10128-6804.



Billy George Pool

Bill was born in Chattanooga, Oklahoma on Sept. 25, 1931 to the late Ike Pool and Margie Wilson Pool. He passed away peacefully at his home on Aug. 6, 2014.

Bill was raised in Durant and attended school at Cobb. He was a veteran of the United States Army and proudly served his country during the Korean War. He worked in the oilfield most of his life. Outside of work, he was an avid fan of football and enjoyed being outdoors hunting and fishing.

Survivors include his sisters Betty Pool Shaffer of Mustang and Ann Parker of McAlester; his nephews Wayne Trent of Oklahoma City and Butch Sims of McAlester; his nieces Carol Trent of Oklahoma City and Beth Taylor of Mustang.

Along with his parents, he was preceded in death by his first wife, Dorothy Shaffer Pool and his second wife, Nola Theriot Pool.



David Verlin Morris

David Verlin Morris, 88, passed away peacefully at home in Arizona City, Arizona on Oct. 3, 2014. He was born May 14, 1926 on the family allotment in Kanima, Oklahoma to original Choctaw enrollees Nelson James Morris and Malissa E. (Bond) Morris. He attended various boarding schools in his youth. David enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1944 and in 1945 saw action as a rifle marksman and bazooka operator with the 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines, 1st Marine Division in the Battle of Okinawa, where he received the Purple Heart for injury received as a result of enemy action. After the surrender of Japan, Pfc. Morris was deployed to mainland China to assist with the post-war repatriation of Japanese citizens there. After his honorable discharge in 1946, he attended Haskell Institute in Lawrence, Kansas, where he became proficient in carpentry and other construction trades. While in Lawrence, he met and, in 1952, married Gladys Hodge, a Lawrence native. David worked in various construction jobs in Lawrence until the late 1960s when he began teaching carpentry and related skills at Haskell. His commitment to vocational education took him to Arizona in 1971. After a stint in vocational instruction on the Gila River Indian Reservation and for the Arizona State Prison system in Florence, he moved to Sells, Arizona to head up a vocational program for the Tohono O’otham Nation. David ended his working career at Phoenix Indian School as Facility Manager, retiring shortly before the school was closed in 1990. After retirement, David and Gladys enjoyed traveling with their RV.

David was preceded in death by his parents, sisters Levisa Dyer Gilstrap and Agnes Glory, his granddaughter Jessica Morris (age 9), and in February 2014 after 61 years of marriage, by his wife Gladys.

He is survived by his three sons, David E., Dwaine, and Jan Wesley (wife, Deborah); and grandsons Ryan and Brandon Morris, all of Arizona. At his request, there will be private cremation and no services will be held.



Cyle Virgil ‘Cubby’ Greenwood

Cyle Virgil “Cubby” Greenwood passed from this life on Sept. 25, 2014, in Finley at the age of 54. He was born July 22, 1960, in Talihina to Allen & Edith (Sexton) Greenwood. Cubby married Shelly Austin in August 2003 in Finley.

Cubby was very proud of his heritage. He enjoyed dancing at the pow wows and attended all that he could. He enjoyed making Native American crafts. He worked in Taos, New Mexico making Native American drums. He was a demonstrator in leatherwork for the Chickasaw Nation for many years where he taught how to make medicine pouches and moc-casins. He enjoyed being outdoors and fishing, especially with his nieces, Cathy and Nizhoni. He enjoyed listening to his nieces sing Choctaw hymns. He always kept a fire burning in his fire pit where he would pray. Cubby helped a lot of young people find their paths in life around his fire pit.

Cubby is preceded in death by his parents, Allen and Edith Greenwood; grandparents, Myatt Allen and Ida (Graham) Greenwood, and grandparents, David and Bessie (Davis) Sexton.

He is survived by his wife Shelly of the home; three step-children; brother, Allen David Greenwood of Antlers; god son, Tony Hudson; nieces, Cathy and Nizhoni Martinez, Christy Sapulpa-Myers, Yasmine Myers, Aliyah Myers, Shakira Myers, and Arianna Myers, all of Finley; as well as other relatives and a host of friends.



William Gipson ‘Bill’ Loman

William Gipson “Bill” Loman was born Jan. 5, 1930 in Daisy to William and May (Hewitt) Loman. He passed from this life on June 27, 2014 in Wichita Falls at the age of 84.

Bill moved to Ryan in 1949, where he met the love of his life “Pearl.” Bill and Emma Pearl Webster were married Aug. 11, 1950 in Henrietta, Texas. They were married for 63 years before she preceded him in death on July 18, 2013. Bill worked as a truck driver hauling hay and posts, and also as a rancher. He enjoyed checking on his cattle and reminiscing about his adventures of hauling hay and the many friends he met. He never met a stranger, which was evident since he could not go anywhere where someone didn’t know him. Bill also had a nickname for everyone.

He is survived by his children, Alan Loman of Apache, Billie Duncan and husband Len of Wichita Falls, Texas and Betty Loman of Ryan; three grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; eight nieces and six nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, wife, baby daughter Doreen and great-granddaughter Alexandra Jade (AJ) Loman.

Burial was in the Ryan Cemetery under the direction of Dudley Funeral Home in Ryan.



Junior ‘Tody’ Ray Clay

Junior “Tody” Ray Clay, 74, of Stringtown, passed away Oct. 12, 2014 in Stringtown.

He was born on Aug. 12, 1940, to Henry and Cillian Bertha Bell (Carnes) Clay at Adel. He attended school at Clayton. Tody was a construction worker and rancher. He married Donna Elitha (Arterberry) on May 18, 1971 at Vernon, Texas. Tody was a member of Stringtown Baptist Church. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, trapping and softball.

He is survived by wife Donna Clay of the home in Stringtown; daughters, Jeannie Lucas and husband Mike of Independence, Kansas, Tammy Moore and husband Ronnie of Atoka, Tracie Moon and husband Mark of Mound Valley, Kansas, Patti Seifert and husband Jack of Cherryvale, Kansas; grandsons, Colt More of Wichita, Kansas, Nathan Walters of Independence, Kansas, Dustin Oliver of San Diego, California, Josh Arterberry of Atoka, David Arterberry and wife Heather of Calera, Daniel Arterberry and wife Kaydi of Okmulgee, Kalvin Seifert of Joplin, Missouri, Cody Seifert of Cherryvale, Kansas; granddaughters, Kacie Moon of Columbia, Missouri, Kara Moon of Mound Valley, Kansas, Ashley Wren of Inman, South Carolina; great-grandsons, Sean Arterberry and Kash Arterberry; great-granddaughters, Selah Arterberry, Presley Standridge, Sky Walters and Lillian More; sister, Dolly Batton of Clayton; along with numerous nieces, nephews, other relatives and many dear friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Henry and Cillian Clay; son, Donald Arterberry; grandson, Lance Walters; brothers, Eugene Clay and Melvin Stevens; and sisters, Aline Ward, Ruth Ann Hutson, Virginia Smith.

Interment was held in Mt. Home Cemetery, Daisy.



Leah Coleman-Scrivner

Leah Coleman-Scrivner was born on Jan. 10, 1934 to the late William and Patsy (Nelson) Coleman. A resident of Hugo, she departed this life on Oct. 16, 2014 in Paris, Texas after a lengthy illness, at the age of 80. A member of a large family, Leah had many happy memories of her life in Hugo and in surrounding areas in Oklahoma and north Texas.

Leah was a full-blood member of the Choctaw Nation. Baptized into the Presbyterian faith as a child, she considered that to be her faith. She had faith in prayer and loved our Heavenly Father and his son, Jesus Christ.

Leah married Donald Gene Scrivner on Oct. 20, 1960, in Reno, Nevada. Together, they made their home in California until moving back to Hugo in 1968. Together, they raised three daughters: Virginia Leigh, Donna Jean and Elizabeth Anne.

Leah graduated from Okmulgee Tech in 1985 with an Associate Degree in printing and graphic arts. She worked in the Dallas area for a few years, and later moved to Denison, Texas to work in the home health care field. She chose a career that allowed her to embrace and comfort the terminally ill. Her position took her all over north Texas to care for, reassure, and make the patient and their family feel better. She worked in Oklahoma City, Denton, Denison, and Dallas, until retiring in 2005, after Don’s death. She moved to Durant in 2011, due to health concerns, and then finally returned to Hugo in 2014.

She loved gardening, reading, sewing, working cryptograms, and being with her children. She was also an avid animal lover and passed that love on to all of her children.

Leah was preceded in death by her parents, by Donald on May 28, 2005; her brothers and sisters, Ruth Coleman Wilson, Mary Coleman Logan, Jacob Coleman, Matthew Coleman, David Coleman, Jonathan Coleman, Minnie Coleman, Martha Coleman, Neoma Coleman, Eli Williams Jr., Isaac Williams, and her beloved granddaughter, Chelsea Coleman Scrivner-Canada.

Surviving family members include her daughters Donna Stephens of Dallas, Elizabeth Scrivner of Calera, and Virginia Swan of Lafayette, Louisiana, as well as her sister Rebecca Moran of Hugo, four nieces and two nephews.



Juanita C. (McIntosh) Transue

Juanita Cordilla (McIntosh) Transue (affectionately known as Punkin) of Talihina passed away on Sept. 30, 2014 in the care of her loving family. She was born in Talihina on Oct. 31, 1924 to Cornelius Lewis and Lydia Cordilla McIntosh.

She was a homemaker and spent her life looking after her only son, Russell and she kept her grandkids as much as she could. She enjoyed it when the family got together and had cookouts. She loved telling the family stories of when she was young.

She is preceded in death by her son Russell Lee Transue; husband, Russell Rosen Transue; mother, Lydia McIntosh; father, Cornelius Lewis McIntosh; brother, Cornelius McIntosh Jr.; sister, Melvina Lanning; grandson, Brian Lee Transue; granddaughter, Velina Kay Transue.

She is survived by one brother, Lester McIntosh of California; grandson, Russell Lewis Transue and wife Shawn of Talihina; granddaughter, Shirley Ann Watkins and husband John Watkins of Talihina. She had seven great-grandchildren: Matthew, Ashleigh, Timothy, Tyla, Amanda, Kelsey and Madison; seven great-great-grandchildren; Jaxon, Abigail, Kaydence, Timberlee, Tucker, Harper and Jaycee.

She was loved by all. She had numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and all other relatives and friends.

Graveside services were held at Old Talihina Cemetery, Talihina, with Pastor Cliff Gravitt officiating.



Mary Ellen James

Mary Ellen James, 67, a resident of Red Oak, Texas, passed from this life and joined her Savior in paradise in Dallas, Texas on Oct. 4, 2014. She was born in Durant to Arvin and Bertie (Scott) Masters on Friday, April 4, 1947. Mary Ellen Masters married Benny James in Durant, on March 7, 1969.

Mrs. James was a member of the First Baptist Church of Bokchito and a proud member of the National Rifle Association (NRA).

Mrs. James is survived by her husband, Benny James of the home; son, Cary James of Red Oak, Texas; brothers, Gene Masters of Durant and Ben Masters of Euless, Texas; cousins, Eddie Mac Phillips of Bokchito and Jan Phillips Dill of Bokchito.

Mrs. James was preceded in death by her parents, Arvin and Bertie Masters.

Interment was in Bokchito Cemetery.

Bobby Gene Highfill

Bobby Gene Highfill (Aug. 5, 1941 to Sept. 10, 2014) *“When an Old Man Dies a Library Burns.”*

This was one of Bob’s favorite sayings. Bob was a story teller. He listened intently as a child to the tales, stories and legends of his grandparents, parents, aunts and uncles. He shared these and other tales with his children and grandchildren. His stories often grew more colorful with each telling, which kept his listeners mesmerized. Bob also enjoyed endless hours of fishing and hunting with friends and family.

Bob leaves behind his wife Judy; two daughters; two sons; a sister; 11 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren.

He had a large extended family and will be missed by all who knew him.



Donna Sue Doll Goddard

Donna Sue Doll Goddard, 58, of Tulsa, left this earthly world on Sept. 13, 2014. She was born on June 27, 1956 to Wayne Doll and Myra Conatzer Doll.

Donna was a 1974 graduate of Tulsa Webster High School. Following high school, Donna was employed at Okmulgee Public Schools and Creek Nation Food Distribution program. From 2007 until her death, she was a corrections officer at David L. Moss Correctional Center in Tulsa.

Donna loved her church and the people there. But most of all, Donna will be remembered for the smiles, support and love she showed to everyone she knew and met. After her commitment to God, her family always came first in everything she did.

Donna is preceded in death by her father and grandparents.

She is survived by her mother; a daughter; four sons; 12 grandchildren; two sisters; a nephew; a niece; a great-nephew; numerous other extended family and many good friends.

Interment was in Meadowbrook Cemetery in Tulsa.

Georgia Ann Frazier

Georgia Ann Frazier of Talihina died Oct. 29, 2014 in Fort Smith, Arkansas, at the age of 70.

Georgia was born Jan. 22, 1944 in Talihina to Atchison and Angeline (McIntosh) Hickman. Georgia devoted her life to her family and friends.

She is survived by two daughters, Brenda Hickman and Ben Melton Jr. of Talihina and Ellen Frazier of Talihina; nine grandchildren, Jennifer Godsby, Ben Melton III, Michael Charles James, Jr., David Melton, Cassandra James, Josh Godsby, Kerry Frazier, Jay Johnson and Justin Melton; five great-grandchildren, Aidan Ludlow, Kira Ludlow, Clint Godsby, Aryana Godsby and Miko Melton; special friend and cousin, Charlie and Helen Hanes of Panama and other family and friends.

Georgia was preceded in death by her parents, Angeline and Atch Hickman; daughter, Donna Godsby; son, Ellem Benjamin “Sonny” Frazier, Jr.; brothers, Joshua Hickman and Jerry Hickman; sisters, Nancy Oldersma, Irene Himes, Pauline Fish and Margaret Brown.

Graveside services were held on Nov. 4, 2014 at Talihina Cemetery with Rev. Kenny Bryant officiating.

A special thank you to the Choctaw Nation, CHR, Kenny Bryant and Jean and Helen Hickman. May God bless each of you from the family of Georgia Frazier.

Eddie Vinson Edwards, II

Eddie Vinson Edwards, II, a resident of Sulphur was born Oct. 9, 1952 in San Diego, California to Eddie Vinson and Barbara (Huddleston) Edwards. He passed away Oct. 5, 2014 at Sulphur at the age of 61 years 11 months and 28 days.

He had lived in Oklahoma City for many years, and graduated from Moore High School. Eddie moved to Sulphur about 20 years ago. He had worked in construction and attended the Oak Grove Church.

He was preceded in death by his father in 2009; grandparents, Wilson Edwards and Dollie Edwards Sorrels.

He is survived by his mother and step-father, Barbara Christ-offels with husband John of Moore; sisters and brothers-in-law, Debbie Alexander with husband Jackie of Sulphur, Carolyn Edwards Johnson with husband Harold of Edmond and Amy Stovall with husband Brian of Chandler, Arizona; step-mother Mary Edwards of Edmond and her children, Emily Edwards and Chandler Edwards.



OBITUARIES

John Daniel (Dan) Hampton

John Daniel “Dan” Hampton was born Oct. 29, 1956, to Carl and Dorothy Hampton in Ardmore. He passed from this life on Nov. 2, 2014, in Oklahoma City.

John was a resident of Ardmore his entire life. He was an employee at Total refinery for 23 years on which he held various positions. He was most proud when he was hired in maintenance as an electrician. Dan retired from the refinery and obtained a license as an electrician. He worked for various companies in the area until failing health forced him to retire.

Dan was a loving man who enjoyed his grandchildren, family and friends. His hobbies included taking care of his grandchildren. He enjoyed spending time at Lake Murray and was an avid NASCAR fan.

He was preceded in death by his sister, Carolyn Kidd.

John is survived by his parents, Carl and Dorothy (Richard) Hampton of the home; daughter, Danielle Murray and her husband, Daniel of Wilson; brother, David Hampton of St. Peters, Missouri; sister, Carla Hampton of Las Vegas, Nevada; grandchildren, Jacey Crook, Kaydence Crook, Zoey Murray, and Michael Murray.



Gary Denis Frix

Gary Denis Frix came into this world on July 5, 1953 in Muskogee, to Carl Frix Jr. and Priscilla (Lowe) Frix. On Oct. 28, 2014, Gary passed away from medical complications due his tough battle with cancer.

Gary grew up in the Honor Heights area of Muskogee and had many fond memories of his childhood home and friends on Palmer Drive. Growing up Gary was quite the marksman and enjoyed many outdoors activities including hunting, fishing, and golfing. He was also an avid boater and spent much of his younger life on Fort Gibson Lake swimming, boating and skiing. Additionally, Gary also enjoyed the “faster” things in life and could often be found behind the wheel of a race car or in the family box at Oklawn Park in Hot Springs following the family’s race horses.

Following in the footsteps of his father, Gary worked at the family business, Frix and Foster Construction Company, and was an active member of the highway construction industry until his retirement in 2007. In 1982 Gary began his own family with the birth of his daughter, Haylee Frix, and, in 1986, added to the beautiful group with an addition of a son, Geoffrey Carl Frix. As anyone who knew Gary could attest, his passion for deep sea fishing, cars, live music, traveling, and living life to the fullest was something he cherished and made sure his children were exposed to early on. He always had a story or life experience to share with all those needing some wisdom.

Gary was baptized at First Baptist Church in Muskogee and loved the Lord, Jesus Christ.

Gary is preceded in death by his older brother, Dr. Carl D. Frix III, and his parents, Carl D. Frix Jr. and Priscilla D. Frix. He is survived by his children Haylee Frix and Geoffrey C. Frix. Additionally, he is survived by his younger brother Kemmy D. Frix, sister-in-law Paige Frix, as well as nieces, nephews, cousins, and many other family members.



Richard E. Altstatt Sr.

Richard E. Altstatt Sr., born Aug. 24, 1953, passed away on Oct. 10, 2014.

Richard will be remembered and cherished forever. He was a loving father, grandfather, uncle and friend. You were always there for everybody. Your heart touched many souls. You are missed by many and remembered by all.



Norma Ruth Price

Norma Ruth Price passed away peacefully in her home with her daughter by her side on Wednesday Oct. 23, 2014 at the age of 88.

Norma was known to our family as “Ruth.” Ruth Price was a full blooded Native American Indian from the Choctaw Tribe of Oklahoma. She was born on July 1, 1926 in Antlers to Nathan Hill Benton Sr. of Talihina and Alice Gibson of Antlers. Ruth Price was the eldest of nine children: Nathan Hill Benton Jr., Benjamin Bohanan, Howard Bohanan, Emma Bohanan Young, Betty Carnes Grunzweig, Nancy Carnes Laybourn, Gloria Carnes Martin, and Wanda Carnes Sawa. She attended elementary school at Wheelock Academy and Haskell High School. Her family started making their way to California in the summer of 1942. Her family settled in Oakland and during her time here she worked at See’s Candy in South San Francisco, Sunshine Biscuits in East Oakland and later retired with Nabisco of Oakland.

She met Robert Nelson Price Sr. at a USO dance that was held at the Four Winds Club in Oakland. They were later married on March 25, 1956 in Reno, Nevada. Ruth moved in with Robert who was residing in San Francisco at that time. They had two children: Patsy Ruth Price and Robert Nelson Price Jr. and began raising them in San Francisco, later moving to Oakland.

Ruth Price lived a rich and self-sufficient life and was continuously surrounded by family. She was actively involved with the American Indian Baptist Church of Oakland for about 31 years, the Intertribal Friendship House and the Four Winds Club. She was generous and gracious to all her friends and family and was much beloved. After Ruth had retired she became involved in the Women Over 40 Group and the Elders Club that met at the Intertribal Friendship House. She also was a part of the Okla Chahta Clan of California and would make yearly trips for the gatherings. During the holidays, we would gather at her house and she would cook us her famous “frybread.” She enjoyed gardening and watching Dancing with the Stars with her grandchildren. We always thought watching the show brought back good memories of when she would go dancing with our grandfather.

Ruth Price is survived by her daughter, Patsy Ruth Price, and her daughter-in-law, Carmen Price; her grandchildren Sophia Leyva, Robert Nelson Price III, Dania Leyva, Felipe Leyva Jr, Tiffany Price, Patricia Leyva, Melissa Leyva Nava, Robert Swain, Salvador Nava and Amy Leyva; her great-grandchildren Jaden Harris, Salvador Leyva, Miabella Leyva, and Lillybelle. She also was an aunt and great aunt to over 100 nieces and nephews.

She is preceded in death by Robert Nelson Price Sr. and Robert Nelson Price Jr.

Grandma, you are always and forever in our hearts and memories. We will continue to instill the values you have taught us grandchildren to our future generations. You were so very loved and will be missed by your family.



CWO2 Randy Lee Billings

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Randy Lee Billings was born on Sept. 1, 1979, to his mother, now Eva M. Cooper, and father Robert L. Billings, in Poteau. He lived in and went to school in both Poteau and Heavener and graduated from Poteau High School in 1997.

He enlisted in the U.S. Army shortly thereafter at age 17. He made the Army his career and had served 16 years and loved what he did. His last duty station was Fort Riley, Kansas, as a member of Bravo Company 3-1 Aviation, First Infantry Division as a UH 60 Blackhawk pilot, and he was deployed in Afghanistan.

CW2 Billings and five other crew members were killed on Dec. 17, 2013 when the Blackhawk helicopter (Aerosmith 35) they were in went down in southern Afghanistan.

CW2 Billings was preceded in death by his paternal grandparents, Hurschel and Wilma Jean Billings of Heavener; maternal grandmother, Viola Parsons Brown of Heavener; step-grandmother Shelly Waldron of Quinton.

He is survived by his wife, Ashley Billings of the home; his father Robert L. Billings of Heavener; mother, Eva M. Cooper and husband Richard of Poteau; younger brother, Scotty Jacob Woodral of Poteau; maternal grandfather, George Lee Waldron of Quinton; a step-grandfather Mike Brown of Poteau; an ex-step-mother Sheryl Brown of Heavener; as well as an ex-step-father and true friend, Gary Heavener of Poteau; numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, other family and friends.

CW2 Billings was laid to rest in the Florida National Cemetery near Inverness, Florida, on Jan. 4, 2014. Due to the distance to the funeral, many family members and friends from this area could not attend the service; therefore a memorial service was held at 2 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 11, at the Donald W. Reynolds Center in Poteau.

CW2 Randy Lee Billings was honored by the Oklahoma Army National Guard, Choctaw Nation Color Guard, local DAV Chapter 63, The Patriot Guard Riders and other organizations.

In lieu of flowers, memorials in Randy’s memory were directed to: Wounded Warrior Project or The Fisher House Foundation in the name of CW2 Randy L. Billings.

On Dec. 17, 2014, at the Donald W. Reynolds Center Outdoor Theater in Poteau, at 6:30 P.M. there will be a candle light memorial for CW2 Randy Lee Billings and the five crew members of Aerosmith 35, as well as any and all soldiers from the area that have given their lives in service of our country.



Ronnie Mowdy

Ronnie Mowdy, 69, died Sept. 16, 2014 in Stayton, Oregon. He was born and raised in Mena, Arkansas. Ronnie moved to Oregon as a young man and lived in Gresham and Sweet Home until settling in Stayton. He worked as a farm laborer all his life. Ronnie enjoyed hunting, being outdoors and spending time by himself.

He is survived by children and step-children by his previous wife, Linda and his current wife, J. Bernice; brothers, Andy Mowdy, Leonard Mowdy, and David Mowdy; sisters, Lola Ferebee, Sue Ash, Frankie Sunseri and Kay Mowdy; and many grandchildren.

Ronnie was preceded in death by daughter, Nancy Burchatz; brothers, Pierre Mowdy and Jimmy Mowdy; and sister, Mallie Smelser.

Graveside services were held Sept. 19, 2014 at Miller Cemetery in Scio, Oregon.



Alvin Lloyd Moore

Alvin Lloyd Moore, 80, earned his heavenly wings Saturday, Sept. 13, 2014 in Paris, Texas. He was born Sept. 7, 1934 to Arville Lloyd Moore and Ruby Anna Pugh in Big Cedar. Alvin married Marilyn Joan Constant on April 10, 1955 in Clovis, New Mexico.

As a young man, he enjoyed many jobs, such as Millers Pig Stand and his Dad’s mechanic garage in Big Spring, Texas. He worked as a lineman for Texas Electric and served in the United States Navy Sea Bees on Grand Turks Island and Camp David for President Eisenhower. Alvin was an electrical contractor in Texas City, Texas and Oklahoma until his retirement in Oklahoma where he raised cattle. He was an avid top fuel dragster owner and driver and a cowboy poet. He served as President and Lt. Governor for the Texas City Noon Optimist Club. He was a lifelong member of the Big Cedar Freewill Baptist Church in Big Cedar.

He cherished his family and friends and loved to share stories and family history. He was very proud of his Choctaw heritage.

Alvin was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Marilyn; his parents; a brother, Bill Moore; and a sister, Ada Emily Moore.

Alvin is survived by two daughters, Debbie Prise and husband, Steve of Octavia and April Freeman and husband, Buck of League City, Texas; one brother, Autry Moore and wife, Martha of Big Spring, Texas; and two sisters, Hauna McChristian and husband, Howard of Denham Springs, Louisiana and Judy Moore of Big Spring, Texas. He is also survived by six grandchildren, Steffany Hardaway and husband, Brad of Battiest, Travis Prise of Octavia, Candice Freeman of Galveston, Texas, Dilan Freeman, Jaycob Freeman and Audra Freeman all of League City, Texas; three great-grandchildren, Brayden Hardaway, Blayne Hardaway and Bryer Hardaway all of Battiest; 10 nieces and nephews; many great-nieces and great-nephews; many great-great-nieces and great-great-nephews; and many adored cousins.

Graveside services were held on Sept. 17, 2014 at the Peace Chapel at Trinity Memorial Park, Big Spring, Texas.

Aaron Alfonso Lorren Gonzalez

Aaron Alfonso Lorren Gonzalez, 42, of Atoka, passed away Nov. 7, 2014 at Atoka.

He was born on Monday, June 21, 1972, to Alvin and Cathy Marie (Karr) Morton, at Brawley, California. He attended Farris Elementary and Jr. High and graduated from Atoka High School. Aaron served our country in the Marine Corps during the Gulf War. He was honorably discharged on Sept. 26, 1993. Aaron was an electrician. He was of the Baptist faith. Aaron enjoyed fishing, hunting and golf.

He is survived by parents, Alvin and Cathy Marie (Karr) Morton of the home in Farris; grandfather, Walter Scott Karr of Durant; sons, Aaron Jesse Gonzalez of Farris and Alexander R. Gonzalez of Broken Arrow; daughters, Angel M. Gonzalez of Broken Arrow and Alyssa R. Gonzalez of Broken Arrow; ex-wife, Kimberly Gonzalez of Broken Arrow; brother, Salvador Lopez and girlfriend Holly Taylor of Center Point; sister, Christy L. Morton of Taylor, Texas; along with numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, other relatives and many dear friends.

He was preceded in death by a sister, Misty M. Morton; grandmother, Berty M. Armstrong; and grandparents, Henry and Gladys Morton.



Eddie Leroy Cantrell

Eddie Leroy Cantrell, 69, of Ardmore, passed away on Friday, Nov. 13, 2014.

Eddie was born on June 5, 1945, to Louis Lavern Cantrell and Josephine (Sewell) Cantrell at Ardmore. He was a 1963 graduate of Dickson High School and attended college at Southeastern Oklahoma State University in Durant. He served his country in the U.S. Army in Vietnam and was honorably discharged at the rank of Sergeant. He married Miss Mary Kay Peery on June 9, 1969, at Tulsa. Eddie was a member of East Side Baptist Church of Marietta. He was an avid OU fan, enjoyed gardening, reading, trade days, and looking at cars.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Louis and Josephine Cantrell; brothers, Tony Cantrell, Wally Sewell and Genie Coppedge; and sisters, Iva Jo Jones, Nettie Newman and Tina Coppedge.

Eddie is survived by his wife, Mary Kay Cantrell, of the home; daughter, Cheryl Hudson and husband, Sean; and son, Jeremy Brett Cantrell; grandchildren, Camden Hudson, Carys Hudson and Caylys Hudson; sisters, Tanda Duncan and Camille Bean; numerous nieces and nephews.

Interment was at Provence Cemetery, Carter County, Oklahoma.



Ruby Irene Joe

Ruby Irene Joe, 80, passed away on Nov. 13, 2014, at Oklahoma City.

Ruby was born on Oct. 20, 1934, in Durwood, to Erie and Lillian (Colbert) Taylor. Ruby attended Bloomfield Academy and Ardmore High School. She married Donald Joe on July 26, 1958, in Gainesville, Texas. Her husband, Don, was her life. She worked for Cooks Laundry for 30-plus years, and then later on, retired. Ruby loved cooking and sewing. She would spend hours with her family and grandkids. She served as the President of the Women’s Missionary Union for many years. Ruby was a devoted member of Durwood Indian Missionary Baptist Church. She was the church treasurer for many years and a Sunday School teacher. Ruby was known to have a servant’s heart.

Ruby was preceded in death by her parents, Erie and Lillian Taylor; son, Chad Vincent Joe; grandson, Kevin Aaron; great-granddaughter, Taygan Joe; daughter-in-law, Donna Joe; and brother, Woodrow Taylor.

She is survived by her husband, Donald Joe; four sons, Michael Ray Joe and wife, Jonnie, Mark Joe and wife, Dondi, Brad Leon Joe, and Arlyn Jay; two daughters, Elaine Day and husband, Tim, and Annette Aaron; two sisters, Anna Bob and Pearl Marris; 13 grandkids; 13 great-grandkids; one great-great-grandchild; and numerous nieces and nephews who live in Ardmore and all the way to the Umatilla Indian Reservation in Pendleton, Oregon.

Interment was at Hillcrest Memorial Park, Ardmore.



Jaunethia V. (Williams) Springs

Jaunethia Vodau (Williams) Springs, 92, of Bristow, passed away March 2, 2014. She was born Nov. 26, 1921, in Atoka, to Mack and Myrtle Williams.

Jaunethia enjoyed sewing and OU sports. She loved going to church; she attended Alameda Baptist Church.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Melvin Springs; grandson, Kevin Ayers; and one brother, Oscar Williams.

Jaunethia is survived by one daughter, Martha Ayers; two sons, Doyle Springs and wife Niki Floyd and Danny Springs; grandchildren Ryan Ayers, Dana Ayers and husband Damien Gallegos, Geoffrey Springs and wife Sarah, Trenton Springs and Jennifer Byington and husband Sam; great-grandchildren Abby Ayers, Emmilyn Springs, Charles Byington and Ashley Byington; numerous nieces, nephews and other loving family members and friends.

Interment was held at Sunset Memorial Park.

Services are under the direction of the John M. Ireland Funeral Home in Moore.



Harry Phillip Morris

Harry Phillip Morris, 78, longtime Seminole resident, died Nov. 20, 2014 at Chickasaw Nation Medical Center in Ada. Phillip was born March 16, 1936 in Seminole to Vaden Elizabeth (Smith) and Harry Oakes Morris.

Phillip attended New Lima Public Schools and graduated in 1954; he attended East Central University, Oklahoma State University, University of Oklahoma, Tulsa University and received his Masters of Education from St. Mary’s in San Antonio, Texas.

Phillip was a member of the Disciples of Christ First Christian Church in Seminole where he was an elder. He was an active member of the Seminole City Masonic Lodge # 476 AF & AM, where he served in all offices and served as worshipful Master three times, and currently was serving as secretary of the lodge. He was also a proud member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

Phillip retired from the United States Air Force in 1981 after 20 years of service to his country; he attained the rank of Captain. He was also a retired educator, teaching Math and Business at Earlsboro Schools, Carnegie Schools, Prague Schools, Dustin Schools, and was principal at Hanna High School. Phillip raised Registered Simmental Cattle, loved being with his grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He taught concealed carry gun courses in Seminole, and was an avid gun lover.

Phillip married Patricia Ann Lasley on March 27, 1959 at the Air Force Base in Amarillo, Texas.

Phillip is survived by his loving wife of 55 years Patricia Ann Morris of Seminole; one son Phillip Alan Morris and his wife Tommy of Seminole; two daughters Phyllis Ann Wallace of Ada and Patricia Kay Crabbe and her husband Don Crabbe of Cabot, Arkansas; one sister Mary Lou Duggins of Sharon and a sister-in-law Clarice Morris of Seminole; nine grandchildren Amy Ballagh and her husband Garet, Bryan Allen, Brent Allen and his wife Melanie, Laura Morris, Eric Gray, Angela Wach and her husband Scott, Krystal Morris and Scott Enderson and Kara Crabb; great-grandchildren, Lucas Lipps, Gavin Lee Ballagh, Maeleigh Ann Allen, Gia Nicole Ballagh and Finley Olivia Allen.

He was preceded in death by his parents; brother Jack Favor Morris; grandson Jacob Wayne Crabbe; and son-in-law, Dr. J.B. Wallace.

Burial with full military honors was held at Little Cemetery.

Funeral services under the direction of Swearingen Funeral Home in Seminole.



2014: A year of success, opportunity, and recognition for Choctaw citizens

By BRANDON FRYE, ZACH MAXWELL, and RONNI PIERCE

Choctaw Nation

Music, sports, education, art—just some of the areas in which Choctaws excel. And this past year is no exception. The list of Choctaw accomplishments is long and varied.

From touchdowns to tempo, this year’s achievements by Nation members range from high school football player hoping to play big time college ball to a classical music composer who dreams of red cedar in southern Oklahoma.

Heart of a Warrior

Dalton Wood has the heart of a Choctaw warrior, with the scars to prove it.

Wood is a senior at McAlester High School, where he helped the Buffaloes football team to an 11-2 record this season as the team’s quarterback.

His long and determined road to football success has guided him through injuries including a heart surgery – and now a potential career as a tight end at the University of Oklahoma.

Wood recently committed to the Sooners. He was recruited



Dalton Wood (holding football) with Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr., Chief Gary Batton, and McAlester football coach Bryan Pratt.

by OU, OSU, Clemson and Arizona State, thanks to his talent on the field and an aggressive campaign by his coach, Bryan Pratt.

And a recent meeting with Choctaw Nation Chief Gary Batton and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. was more like a family reunion than a formal meet-and-greet.

Batton graduated in the same class as Wood’s mother, Khris,

at Clayton High School. The Woods moved to McAlester when Dalton was in second grade.

“One of the biggest things to be thankful for is family, but also being Choctaw,” Wood said.

At 6-foot-4, Wood has the build and the skills which got the attention of Coach Cale Gundy at OU. But his first three years at McAlester were tests of adversity and determination.

He collapsed during a game in his sophomore year, revealing an issue with his heart that required a surgery. He was back on the field before the end of the season.

Then, in junior year, he broke an ankle. But this season has been a break-out year for Wood.

That drive has Wood on the verge of something Choctaws and OU fans will love: A Choctaw on the Sooners’ roster.

A Most Excellent Educator

Someone they can trust, that’s how Debra Billy has been described where her students are concerned, a familiar face with a good Choctaw heart.

To many Choctaw Nation members who make the annual trek to Labor Day festivities, Billy is known as the dressmaker in the Choctaw Village at the Labor Day Festival. However, as of this fall she can add another accolade to her resume—the National Indian Educator of the Year.

Billy traveled all the way to Anchorage, Alaska, to pick up her award at the National Indian Education Association’s annual convention.

Day to day she clocks in as a 5th grade teacher at Hayes Elementary, much to the enjoyment of her students. She has been a teacher in the Oklahoma City Public School District for 33 years.

“She is a strong advocate for Indian education and has volunteered and worked for our Indian Education program in various capacities,” according to Dr. Star Yellowfish with Native American Student Services, the person who nominated Billy for the award. “She is a master teacher!”



Debra Billy being honored during her school’s Rise and Shine program pictured alongside Hayes Elementary School principal Shaun Ross and Choctaw Nation Executive Director Stacy Shepherd.

Musical Memories of Oklahoma

Evoking memories of Oklahoma and his Choctaw heritage, those are the origins of Charles Shadle’s classical composition, “Red Cedar.”

A 6th generation Oklahoman, Shadle is descended from Choctaw ranching families from the Atoka area. “Red Cedar” is a piece that in some way is about Oklahoma: It speaks of a culture that is rural, complex and at heart partly and complicatedly Choctaw,” according to Shadle.

He is also on the faculty of MIT and recently had the honor of having his work performed by the renowned music ensemble Lontano as part of the Fifth London Festival of American Music in London at the St. James Theatre.

The piece was so well received, the performers plan to add it to their repertoire when they tour the United States in the spring.

Drawing a Bead

Marcus Amerman, Choctaw artist, was named a 2014 United States Artists Fellow.

He was one of 34 artists to receive the title and a \$50,000 grant, meant to provide direct and unrestricted support to artists across the U.S. in their practice and professional development.

Amerman works with beads, fashion, painting, performance arts, among other forms, and often overlapping in form. His unique use of traditional techniques alongside contemporary art and imagery is apparent.

Amerman often expresses his Choctaw roots with Mississippian imagery, and his glass work includes traditional ceramic designs, as well as more contemporary designs.

The work of Marcus Amerman has been exhibited in galleries and museums all over the world, including the Highgate Gallery in London, the Museum of World Culture in Sweden, The Museum of Contemporary Native Arts in Sante Fe, The Museum of Craft and Folk Art in San Francisco and, The Far Eastern Museum in Russia.



Celebrating Family Day

Jones Academy celebrated its Fourteenth Annual Family Day on October 11, 2014. Approximately 100 family and friends visited with students at Jones Academy. It was a cool and rainy day, but the students and their guests enjoyed a day of fellowship, games, and food. Jones Academy provided buses to transport guests from the Tulsa, OKC and Broken Bow areas. One family travelled from as far as Los Angeles, Calif. Guests began arriving around 11 a.m.

After lunch, visitors were greeted by Jones Academy’s superintendent, Brad Spears. Guests and students then participated in several fun activities including an 18 - foot slide, a moon bounce, an obstacle course and a boogie head display. A professional photographer also took student and family portraits. There was an open house at the elementary school and several parents were able to conference with the teachers and principal Robert Ray. At the end of the festivities, families were served supper before being transported home. The wet weather didn’t seem to dampen the spirits of students and guests who enjoyed the fall event.



Reviving a Native tradition



Back Row (l-r): Ryan Myore, Layra Framer, Jacelynn Charger, Sara Cervantes (Staff), Lexus Sewell, Tanner Henry, and Zack Farmer
Front Row (l-r): Daylon Ben, Antonio Weston, Daniel Bearshead, Garrett Rust, and Kelby Tomas. All of the participants placed in their individual categories.

One of the best metaphors for living is that life is a marathon. Life is an arduous trek which requires self-discipline and perseverance.

Through the help of the Choctaw Nation Health Services and the P.A.C.E. program, students at Jones Academy have revived the Native American tradition of long-distance running. In the past two and a half years, students at the Academy have participated in a

series of 5K, 10K, and even 15K runs throughout southeast Oklahoma. The runs are usually on weekends and require each individual’s commitment to run or walk the set distance. Both Jones Academy staff and students participate. The events are an effort by the Nation to promote healthy lifestyles and the students have taken the events to heart!

They are passionate about the competition and can be spotted in their participant T-shirts commemorating each race. Jones Academy’s recreational director, Kim Russell, acknowledges that “a runner more often competes against himself or herself, pushing to see the extent of his or her limits and strength.”

Currently there are 50 to 60 students plus staff who are signed up on the P.A.C.E. program. They call themselves R.I.O.T. (Running Is Our Therapy) which alludes to how the participants deal with the everyday stresses of life. Last year the club ran 10 long-distance events.

This semester the team has already competed in 10 races which include names like the Big Foot 5K, the Green Frog Puddle Jump, the Turkey Trot 5K, Brave the Mud Run, Friday Night Lights, the Runestone 5K/ 10K, and the World’s Highest Hill 5 Mile Run.

Billy Mills, an Oglala Lakota tribal member who grew up on the Pine Ridge reservation, won the 10K Gold Medal in the 1964 Tokyo Olympic Games. Perhaps a Jones Academy student will succeed him and keep the native tradition of long distance running alive in southeast Oklahoma.

Affordable Rental Housing

Bokoshe, Caney, Quinton, Red Oak, Talihina, and Wright City 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

Calera, Hartshorne, Hugo, Idabel, Poteau, Stigler and Talihina 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 the Service Coordinator, 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 131 affordable rental units located within the Choctaw Nation boundaries.

A feast of thanks at Jones Academy

Everybody loves the holiday season at Jones Academy! Students, staff and guests gave thanks and enjoyed fellowship at the annual Thanksgiving Dinner on Nov. 19. While dietary staff prepared chicken and shrimp in the kitchen, superintendent Brad Spears, principal Robert Ray, and JA maintenance staff Mike Duran grilled 400 steaks(!) in the beautiful fall breeze.

The buffet included fresh vegetables, hot rolls, and a scrumptious dessert bar. A grateful crowd gathered in the campus cafeteria amid festive decorations and bountiful fare. Staff members assisted the kitchen crew in serving diners, bussing tables, and garnishing pies with whipped cream upon request. It was a memorable feast!

Our JA students and staff have so much for which to be thankful and particularly enjoy sharing a special meal with Choctaw Nation dignitaries, teaching staff, administrators, and supporters who bless them every day.

We thank all of these individuals who join us in serving and mentoring our youth as we point them toward success.

Students enjoy their Thanksgiving meal: (left of center) Ayrianna Lewis, AnnMarie Cometsevah, Anahi Romero, and Leilene Jefferson; (right of center) De’ja Robinson.

Thanksgiving diners Jasmine Waldon, Layra Farmer, Jacelynn Charger, and Ryan Myore.

Up from Within

Deborah Dill Director of Human Resources for Health Services

Deborah Dill has been with CNHSA since 1996 as a nurse while continuing her education. After obtaining her Bachelor of Science in Nursing, she transferred to Human Resources as the Health System Educator and compliance resource for the department. Deborah has a Master of Health Administration and Master of Science in Nursing. She is a nationally certified sexual assault nurse trained in forensic responses to medical/legal exams. For five years, Deborah worked in Human Resources then transferred into a nursing supervisor role and eventually transferred into the McAlester Facility Director position with completion of her Master’s degrees. Deborah has been Professional Woman of the year in Talihina, worked on the advisory board for the Oklahoma Native American Coalition against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault and sat on advisory boards for Kiamichi Technological Nursing School and Eastern Oklahoma State College’s nursing department. Deborah is excited to be in her new role as Director of Human Resource for the Health Services.

Deborah is married and together they share 11 children (one daughter, six sons, three daughter-in-laws, and one son-in-law) in which her four children are two sets of twins. They have nine grandchildren (four boys and five girls), a spoiled Yorkie and four very pampered horses. She lives near Albion with her husband who is retired. She and her family attend church at the Albion Church of Christ.

Iti Fabussa

Keeping old man winter at bay the Choctaw way

In the Spring of 2011, Iti Fabvssa published an article about traditional Choctaw houses. One thing that article lacked was a good image of what these structures actually looked like from the inside. This fall, the Historic Preservation Department has created a drawing that shows what the interior of a Choctaw winter home would have looked like about 300 years ago.

As seen in this image, Choctaw winter houses were designed with warmth in mind. Heated by a central fire, some winter houses had holes for the smoke to escape, others apparently did not. To prevent the wind from getting inside, the doorway curved around part of the outside of the house and was closed with a wooden door, hinged with pieces of rawhide.

The walls were thick, and covered with an adobe-like

plaster. In all likelihood, the walls were decorated with dyed river cane mats and painted robes that were hung up when they were not being used elsewhere. River cane platforms covered in softly tanned hides lined the house's interior walls. During the day, they served as couches; at night, they were beds. Food was stored under these beds, sometimes coated in clay to help it preserve longer. River cane trunks lining the walls held clothing and other possessions.

Deer hides waiting to be tanned would have hung from the rafters to absorb some of the smoke coming from the fire. Dried roots, vegetables, and jerky would have also been hung up, handy for the cooks. Warriors' weapons would have been placed where they could be picked up on an instant's notice. The fireplace, perhaps lined with poured clay, would have had been surrounded by an assortment of Choctaw-made bowls and jars, some filled with warm food waiting for a hungry guest.

With cold weather raging outside, a Choctaw winter home was a pretty cozy place.



Illustration by Ruby Bolding

A Choctaw winter house did not always have an interior opening in the top allowing the smoke to escape, thereby keeping all the much-needed heat inside creating a dutch oven effect. Squash and other vegetables were kept under sleeping quarters for winter consumption. The entryway was small to keep out drafts and created sloping downward since the house was partially built under the ground.

Veterans group presents award to Choctaw Nation

By ZACH MAXWELL
Choctaw Nation

Veterans Airlift Command, which links wounded service men and women with private air transportation, has honored the Choctaw Nation with an appreciation award. The actual award is a glass-carved eagle taking flight, symbolizing the flights provided by hundreds of entities for wounded veterans.

Choctaw Nation ranks third out of that list of air service providers. Choctaw Nation Flight Operations pilots Al Cherry, Quentin McLarry, and John Wesley are a big part of the tribe's service to veterans across the U.S.A.

"I'm just so proud of our pilots for what they are doing for our veterans, helping and assisting those who serve God and country," said Chief Gary Batton. "It's just one more way the Choctaw Nation is able to give back to our veterans, who served so that we can have our freedom. I am so proud for our pilots to lead this."

So far in 2014, Choctaw Nation has flown 15 missions, serving 22 veterans, and 19 support people such as spouses and caregivers.



Photo by Tracy McKaughan

Choctaw Nation Flight Operations Director Al Cherry with Chief Gary Batton showing the Veterans Airlift Command Appreciation Award.

"It's a very emotional thing for us, but with a lot of satisfaction," Cherry said, himself a military veteran. "These people not only served their country, they all have traumatic injuries which they will carry the rest of their lives. It's a small thing we can do for those who sacrificed so much."

One military wife, speaking for her husband, said this about the VAC program: "I cannot say enough good things about the Veterans Airlift Command and their pilots. They aren't giving up their

time because they have to, they want to. These pilots want to be there and that is a selfless act."

The award was one of a handful presented in appreciation to volunteer organizations such as Choctaw Nation. It was given by VAC in Nashville on Nov. 14.

Choctaw Nation pilots average around one VAC flight per month, ferrying wounded veterans to a variety of "humanitarian and compassionate" destinations such as medical rehabilitation, weddings, and reunions.

Cherry said one group was recently taken from San Antonio to their base in Tennessee to welcome their unit home after a lengthy tour of duty. He said the pilots also take groups to the annual Bataan Death March memorial walk, a 26.2-mile trek over the desert in White Sands, N.M., honoring US prisoners of war from World War II.

The Choctaw Nation has been involved in the flights for four years at no cost to the veterans or their families.

For more information about the VAC, visit veteransairlift.org.

Natives benefit from farm



At the In A Good Way Farm just west of Talihina a small farm is helping Native American men in a big way.

Those needing a helping hand are learning to harvest rainwater, seed for hay, and care for livestock in the hopes of turning their farming skills into a living and a wage.

The farm's owner and director Choctaw citizen Teddi Irwin says, "This is a unique way for native men to help themselves. We are here for the average guy, just someone who needs a hand up and a place to live."

Kathy Sieminski's brother was one of the first men Teddi was able to help. The former school principal from Whitesboro suffered a traumatic brain injury and was no longer able to work. Teddi helped him when he was first released from the hospital. He liked being at the farm and helped paint one of the property's barns.

A bunkhouse for the men built entirely with a chainsaw is currently in its final stages and was on display during the farm's fall homestead event and gospel singing. Visitor Mark Hale of Cameron likes what he sees, "I really appreciate what she is doing here, her idealist approach to helping people."

The farm is a 501(c)(3) non-profit and depends on private donations to keep things running. The farm is also in need of dishes, pots and pans, drywall, and a wood stove. To help out, contact Teddi at (918) 567-3313 or check out their Facebook page.

Chahta Anumpa
Aiiikhvna
Lesson of the Month
Christmas Carols in Choctaw

Joy to the World
Yakni Moma Na Yukpali

Okla momvt ho na yukpa
Hvpi chukash kil atahli.
Moyomvt talowah
Moyomvt talowah
Oklah moyomvt talowah

Okla e moma Pi Miko
Hohchifo yvt Chisvs
Il iyimmit hachubilhkv
Hikiachi hoke
hikiachi hoke
Hikia, hikiachi hoke

Away in a Manger

Meli micha Choseph itatoklo kv
Bethlehem tvmaha ittonachih ma
Wak i chukka yo ont anusachi tuk
Yammako Chisvs vt aialhpowa tok.

Wak alhihvt alla nakni pisah ma
Melit na hlilafa isht afoachicha
Chisvs a wak aiimpa yo bohli tok
Chisus vt hvshuk shila anusi tok.

Household Energy Incentives
from Your Electric Company

Did you know most electric companies are offering incentives for homeowners to make their home more energy efficient? Electric companies in all parts of the United States are offering some form of energy efficiency packages to their customers. It pays to stay informed of what programs your electric company offers its customers. Choctaw Nation Utility Authority (CNUA) would like to inform you of some that are offered in the Choctaw Nations boundaries. If you are a customer of OG&E you could be missing out on great opportunities to reduce your electric bills.

OG&E PROGRAMS

Any OG&E customer who lives in a house can participate in the SmartHours program. Last summer, customers enrolled in SmartHours saved nearly \$200! Simply reduce your electricity usage during peak hours, from 2-7 p.m. weekdays. Then take advantage of the other 19 off-peak hours each weekday, plus all weekends and national holidays, when electricity costs less. For people participating in the program, during the hours of 2-7 p.m. on weekdays the electric rate is higher than normal but the other 19 hours you will have a much lower electric rate. This requires a little change in homeowner habits for some people. You simply need to minimize the electricity used in the house during the hours of 2-7 p.m. Wait till after 7 p.m. to cook supper if your kitchen is all electric, wait till after 7 p.m. to do laundry, and take advantage of the nice Oklahoma weather and stay outside with the family playing games or doing yard work until after 7 p.m.

The following is a listing of programs OG&E offers Oklahoma Customers to reduce energy consumption in the house.

Home Energy Efficiency Program (HEEP)

OG&E's HEEP program is now FREE to all residential customers. This program begins with an online audit—a Custom Energy Report—providing up-to-the minute usage and cost information as well as customized recommendations for improving your home's efficiency.

With HEEP, you can receive:

- A FREE cooling system service (an \$85 value)*
- The first pound of A/C system refrigerant, if needed
- If needed, up to \$300 in duct system repair and tightening
- If eligible, an attic insulation rebate of 30 percent of the cost of additional insulation, up to \$500

Having your A/C system serviced increases its performance to help keep your home more comfortable, all while lowering your summer bill. Regular servicing of your A/C unit will help it last longer and save you even more. OG&E's HEEP offering will send a licensed A/C contractor to your home to get your system ready for summer.

Weatherization Residential Assistance Program

Hot summer days and cold winter nights take their toll on home energy needs, especially for our elderly, disabled and financially challenged tribal members.

If you own or *lease a single-family, duplex or mobile home and have an income of less than \$50,000 a year, your home could be eligible for free weatherization services. The OG&E Residential Weatherization program can help improve your comfort and reduce energy costs.

*Weatherization services are available to rental properties if an eligible customer lives in the home and with approval from the property owner.

Some home improvements may include:

- Adding attic insulation
- Air leakage sealing around windows and doors
- Duct sealing
- Installing energy-saving compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs)

For eligibility and participation, contact OG&E Customer Service at 405-272-9741 (metro Oklahoma City) or 800-272-9741 (all others).

For more information or questions concerning energy efficiency programs for homeowners please feel free to contact Choctaw Nation Utility Authority at (580) 326-0967.

VETERANS DAY



cont'd from page 1

surrounded by his wife Angela and two of their sons, Skylar and Zach.

As Chief Batton presented the family with the key to their new home, Lt. General Sisco referred to the giving nature of the Choctaw people who have sponsored over \$1.2 million in housing to wounded heroes and their families.

District 4 Councilman and Speaker of the Tribal Council Delton Cox, who also served in the Marine Corps, told a moving story about his father-in-law who served during WWII.

Ending with a benediction by District 6 Councilman Joe Coley and the traditional 21-gun salute, the ceremony was topped off by a complimentary and hearty dinner for all those in attendance.



Five Jones Academy classmates representing three branches of the military gathered at the Veterans Day ceremony (l-r): Matthew Kemp (Army), Don LeFlore (Air Force), Tully Choate (Navy), Ted LeFlore (Navy) and Wiliam Frye (Navy).



Staff Sergeant David Merchant and family are presented with a key to their new home in Broken Arrow.



Chief Batton shakes the hand of U.S. Air Force veteran Ronnie Smith who is sitting alongside Larry Sockey, Army veteran.

Photos by Judy Allen, Zach Maxwell, Ronni Pierce, & Vonna Shults

SMITHVILLE DINNER & MCALESTER FALL FESTIVAL



Ruthie Bohanon accepts a commemorative knife on behalf of her husband Randel Bohanon for his 33-year service to the Choctaw Nation within the housing authority. (l-r) Duane Winship, Chief Batton, Council Member Kenny Bryant, and Assistant Chief Jack Austin, Jr. present Bohanon the knife.



Leona Samuel stir fries potatoes before the community dinner in Smithville on Oct. 15.



After a waiting through a long line, attendees of the community dinner browse the selection of food, cooked and served up by volunteers.



Rena Winship-Goings and Sylvester Moore sit down to enjoy their dinner, having been some of the first people to receive their food in a line stretching around the community center.



Vicki Perez, Director of Victims Assistance and Elder Advocacy, passes out information to attendees during the 2014 Fall Festival.



Gene Arpelar (left), from McAlester, and Josh Riley, with Choctaw Nation Tribal Policy, converse before lunch at the Fall Festival.



Attendees from McAlester, Hartshorne, and Stuart visit and eat during the Fall Festival.



Wanda McReory and Janet Smith peek in to see if the food is ready to serve the Smithville community members.



The Crowder High School Review, a band made up of students from the school's show choir class, perform popular tunes during the 2014 Fall Festival in McAlester.



John Hooser (left), and Dr. Forrest Gibbs sit down for lunch during the Fall Festival.



Smithville community members make their way down the row of food, including a mixture of traditional foods, contemporary foods, plenty of ham, and deserts.



Janis and Lyndon Karl McKinney take a break from eating to smile for a picture during the Smithville community dinner.

Photos by Brandon Frye

CULTURAL GATHERINGS

Albuquerque.



Hiloha Ward took a break from stickball practice to pose for this photo in Albuquerque.



Carrie West and husband Don West with Chief Gary Batton and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. at the Choctaw meeting in New Mexico.



The Archuleta family receiving information about Choctaw Nation programs. Leticia and husband Candido with sons Cruz and Arturo.



Lois Hardy and her son Terry Sheppard, both of Albuquerque, take in some Choctaw beading activities at the Cultural Meeting at Sandia Pueblo Resort.



Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. visits with Choctaw artist Paul Hacker at the Choctaw meeting in New Mexico.



Chief Gary Batton with Satsuki Wampler, who drew out the winning tickets for door prizes at Albuquerque.



Lisa Motter of Bosque Farms, N.M., shows her Choctaw pride with this exquisite medallion.



Student artist Amanda Beardsley shows her work to Christina and Anthony Loretto.



Chief Gary Batton finds artist Kristin Gentry for the Stealing Partners Dance.



Brenda McCarty shows the beginnings of her Choctaw beadwork earrings to son Ian McCarty.



Kristin Gentry at her table of arts and crafts at the Choctaw Cultural Meeting held in October at Sandia Pueblo, New Mexico.



Choctaw/Chickasaw sculptor Kelly Byars at the Albuquerque cultural meeting with visitor Neel Holcombe of Las Lunas, New Mexico.



Jared Tom spars with Jason Wilson while Xavier Ruiz waits his turn at stickball.

Photos by
Zach Maxwell

San Mateo.



Gabriel Garcia-Roberts tries on his new Choctaw T-shirt with mom Alisia Roberts Walker of Sebastopol, Calif.



Chief Gary Batton poses with the Johnson family, composed of several Bay Area Choctaws. At left, he is with budding athlete Jazzelyn Rios of Tracy, Calif. BELOW: Chief Batton hands a door prize blanket to one of the cultural meeting participants.



Joe Jefferson with Chenoa, Bob and Cera Farmer of Santa Cruz, Calif.



The Smith family of Roseville, Calif., tries Choctaw beadwork.



LEFT: Lou and Brenda Coffaro of Redwood City with grandson Jacob Villorente at the Choctaw basketry booth.



RIGHT: Demorea Hegedus of Roseville, Calif., shows her Choctaw pride.



Jessica Quinn and Choctaw artist Merisha Lemmer of Forestville, Calif., at the Choctaw Cultural Meeting.



LEFT: Chief Gary Batton and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. with Nancy Ellison of Half Moon Bay, Calif. and Ida Wilson of San Francisco. The two ladies are cousins.



Jim Anne Hallcom Hayes of Felton, Calif., says she had a “great time” visiting the Choctaw gathering with Chief Batton and Assistant Chief Austin.



Lisa Wilhelmi (right) shows a pair of beaded earrings she acquired at the San Mateo meeting made by Kay Jackson.



RIGHT: Okla Chahta princesses Tori Archuleta, Rosetta Colley, and Sarah D'Herrera.

Upcoming cultural events

January 2015 • San Antonio, Texas; San Bernardino, California; Fresno, California
February 2015 • San Diego, California; Phoenix, Arizona

If you are not receiving your letter informing you of upcoming cultural events in your area, please give us a call. We'll make sure your contact information is correct.

800.522.6170, ext. 2116, 2409 or 2310

Dates and locations are subject to change.

