




February 2020 Issue


Gaming Defined



CLASS I

Class I gaming is classified as traditional Indian gaming, such as stickball, or social gaming where a minimal prize may be won.

Regulatory authority over class I gaming is vested exclusively in tribal governments and is not subject to regulation.



CLASS II

Class II gaming includes what is commonly known as bingo, whether it's electronic, pull tabs, punch board, tip jars, instant bingo or other games similar to bingo. Class II also includes non-banked card games.

Tribal governments are responsible for regulating class II gaming with commission oversight.



CLASS III

Class III gaming includes all forms of gaming that are neither class I nor II. This includes games commonly played at casinos, such as slot machines, blackjack, craps, and roulette as well as wagering games and electronic versions of any game of chance.

One requirement for a tribe to have class III gaming is, the Tribe and the State must have negotiated a compact that has been approved by the Secretary of the Interior, or the Secretary must have approved regulatory procedures.

Compact negotiations lead to lawsuit

By Christian Toews

The Choctaw, Chickasaw and Cherokee Nations filed a federal lawsuit Dec. 31, 2019 to bring an end to the uncertainty Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt has attempted to cast over tribal gaming operations. The suit names Gov. Stitt in his official capacity and seeks a judicial declaration that the gaming compacts renew in accordance with their express terms, effective January 1, 2020. The Nations provided a copy of the federal complaint to Gov. Stitt, along with a letter explaining their reasons for filing it. Counsel for the Nations, former United States Circuit Judge Robert Henry, provided a companion letter and copy of the complaint to Oklahoma Attorney General Mike Hunter.

The Nations’ lawsuit does not address revenue-share rates. It instead calls for the court to declare the legal effect of the compact’s Part 15.B., which states:

This Compact shall have a term which will expire on January 1, 2020, and at that time, if organization licensees or others are authorized to conduct electronic gaming in any form other than pari-mutuel wagering on live horse racing pursuant to any governmental action of the state or court order following the effective date of this Compact, the Compact shall automatically renew for successive additional fifteen-year terms. (Emphasis added)

As the Nations emphasized in their letter to Gov. Stitt, “the dispute—like the lawsuit—is about renewal, not rates.”

The Nations have publicly offered statements and analyses that support their position on renewal, including a legal opinion from former Solicitor General of the United States Seth Waxman that concluded:

“The renewal provision in the Tribes’ gaming compacts with Oklahoma is not ambiguous. Under that provision’s plain language, the compacts will renew automatically when they expire on January 1, because the provision’s sole condition precedent for automatic renewal is unquestionably satisfied. Each of the contrary arguments I have seen to date simply cannot be squared with fundamental principles of contract interpretation.”

The original author of the compact, former State Senator Cal Hobson commented on the compact in an interview with News 8 in Tulsa, Okla. He said the compact automatically renews even if there is no immediate agreement on the revenue-share rates.

Gov. Stitt has repeatedly rejected renewal of the compact, instead criticizing tribes for not working on a new compact with him, insisting the current compacts terminate and falsely declaring tribal gaming unlawful in 2020. Throughout this conflict, the tribes have signaled they are willing to negotiate gaming rates with the State.

Since signing the gaming compact into law, previous administrations have worked with tribes, allowing them to expand their gaming operations, namely the legalization of ball and dice games in 2018, which has attracted more visitors to Oklahoma casinos.

2019 marked fifteen years of the gaming compact, and it was the year that current Governor of Oklahoma, Kevin Stitt, began arguing that the compact will expire.

Timeline of gaming compact events:

- 2004

- Brad Henry, who served as governor from 2003 to 2011, negotiated the original compact with the Oklahoma tribes and signed it into law.
- December 17, 2019

- Gov. Stitt held a press conference where he stated “If we do not take expedited action, however, all class III gaming activity will be illegal as of Jan. 1, 2020, creating legal uncertainty for Oklahoma tribes, those who conduct business with casinos, and casino patrons. We cannot put Oklahomans in that position.”
- December 20, 2019

- Only three days later, the Oklahoma Indian Gaming Association (OIGA) hosted a press conference where leaders of 32 of the state’s 35 gaming tribes united to reject Gov. Stitt’s request to extend the compact and negotiations. “We stand united today against the proposed extension by Gov. Stitt as utterly unnecessary, given the automatic renewal,” said OIGA Chairman Matthew Morgan.
- December 23, 2019

- Three days after the OIGA press conference, Gov. Kevin Stitt’s secretary of Native American Affairs resigned. In a very pointed letter of resignation, former state Rep. Lisa Billy said Stitt is “committed to an unnecessary conflict” with the state’s tribal governments and “remained intent on breaking faith with them.”
- December 31, 2019

- Tribes unite and file federal lawsuit.
- January 22, 2020

- Gov. Stitt responds to lawsuit and Muskogee (Creek) Nation take steps to potentially join lawsuit.

In his 41-page response, Stitt is asking the federal court to declare that the compacts did not automatically renew and that continuing gaming operations violates federal and state law. Stitt used a local law-firm to prepare and file his response. He was initially reported to be working with an out-of-state law-firm.

Choctaw Nation Chief Batton made the following statement regarding the lawsuit:

“The Governor’s stance on the gaming compact has created uncertainty and has been seen as a threat to our employees and our business partners. We see this legal action as the most viable option to restore the clarity and stability the Tribes and Oklahoma both deserve by obtaining a resolution that our compact does automatically renew. As elected leaders, it is our responsibility to uphold the compact, honor the will of the Oklahomans who approved State Question 712 and the federal law that defines our relationship with the state on these matters.”

Chickasaw Nation Governor Bill Anoatubby said, “We have a solemn duty to protect the sovereign rights of our tribal nations as well as the interests of our citizens. While we prefer negotiation to litigation, the federal court is now the only reasonable alternative to bring legal certainty to this issue. We remain hopeful we will continue to have a productive and mutually beneficial relationship with the State of Oklahoma once we have resolved this issue.”

Additionally, Cherokee Nation Chief Chuck Hoskin, Jr. made the following statement:

“The Cherokee Nation is committed to being a good partner in our community and with the State of Oklahoma as we have done across two centuries and will continue to do as a peaceful, sovereign nation. Governor Stitt has made comments about ‘uncertainty that exists’ regarding Class III gaming after Jan. 1, threats to our casino vendors and their livelihoods and demands for redundant audits. We have little choice but to ask a federal judge to confirm the compact’s automatic renewal on Jan. 1.”

While the Seminole Nation was not a party to the lawsuit, upon filing Chief Greg Chilcoat said Gov. Stitt’s public position had triggered concerns among vendors and others who work with Oklahoma tribal governments, causing some to worry about instability in the state’s economy.

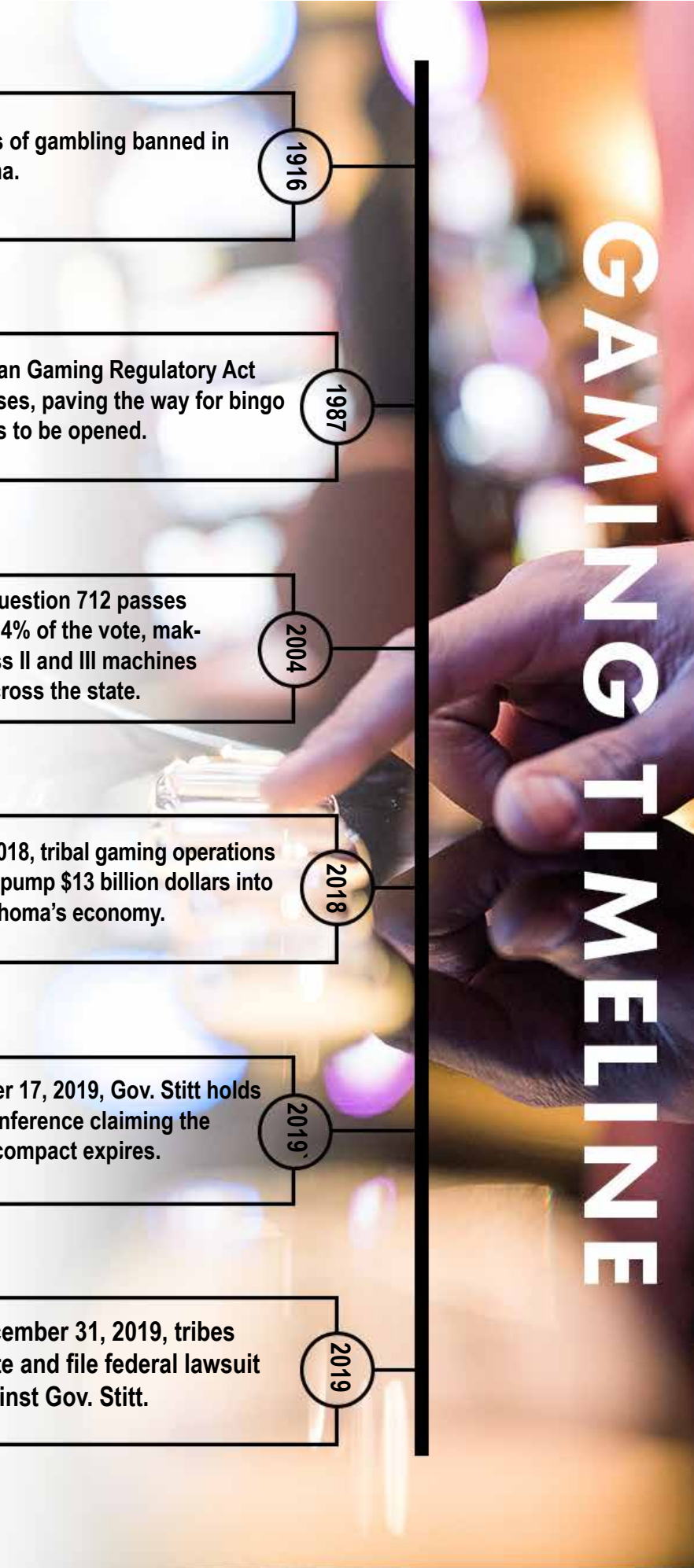
“Rather than respectfully engage with the tribes and seek an amicable resolution, Governor Stitt has continued to insist on our compact’s termination,” Chief Chilcoat said. “While his position is completely at odds with our compact’s language, he has succeeded in causing uncertainty that has an economic consequence. His inconsistent approach has been unfortunate and unnecessary.”

Matthew L. Morgan, chairman of the Oklahoma Indian Gaming Association, stated, “The tribes remain firmly united on the automatic renewal of the compacts. We have communicated our position to Governor Stitt on numerous occasions in hopes of finding a practical path forward benefiting both the State and Tribes. That said, as leaders of sovereign nations, the tribal leaders must honor the compacts and will continue to do so on Jan. 1, 2020, as they’ve done the past 15 years. Tribal leaders have the right as well as the responsibility to protect their citizens. Tribal leaders applaud the action taken today by the Cherokee, Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations to seek certainty on the matter of automatic renewal through the federal court.”



Photo by Christian Toews

32 of the 35 gaming tribes of Oklahoma stand united against Governor Stitt’s ascertainment that the gaming compact expires.



Faith, Family, Culture

Choctaw Nation gives back through Community Partnership Fund



Chief Gary Batton

Community is an essential part of our Chahta culture. I'm so honored and humbled to be able to represent the Chahta people and be a part of this great community. With current events and what is happening with the Oklahoma Gaming Compact, I have realized that many people are unaware of the impact our tribes have on the State of Oklahoma. Sometimes we get so caught up in what we are doing for the Chahta community that we forget to share all the things we do for our local communities as well.

The Chahta people have always strived to live their lives with servants' hearts. From helping each other during forced removal, to collecting a donation to send to the Irish people on the other side of the world, we as Choctaws have been taught to help not only our own, but our neighbors as well. We hear and see the phrase "living out the Chahta Spirit" often. We can do this in many ways. Being a servant leader and helping others for the greater good is a perfect way for us to live it out each day. We at the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma strive to uphold the values that have been passed down for generations in every decision we make. One of the

ways we show this is through our Community Partnership Fund.

In fiscal year 2019, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma was able to put \$1,613,300 back into southeastern Oklahoma. Thanks to our Community Partnership Fund, 26 counties and cities throughout the 10½ counties received funding for needed projects and equipment.

Though we are a sovereign nation, we recognize the impact and influences we have in the communities our members live and work in. This is our home, and most of us grew up right here in this area. We love and care about the people who live here, regardless of their race, religion or creed.

With funding from the Community Partnership Fund, the city of Durant chose to use its \$232,500 for road repairs and improvements. McAlester combined funds with additional donations for a streetscape project that includes sidewalk expansions, bump-outs, decorative light poles and street signs. Pushmataha county used their funds, matched with federal grants, to purchase a new Sheriff's Department vehicle, make much-needed repairs to the fair building and upgrade the courthouse boiler



Photo by Christian Toews

Thanks in part to funding from the Community Partnership Fund, Pushmataha county was able to purchase a new Sheriff's Department vehicle, make much-needed repairs to the fair building and upgrade the courthouse boiler system. The Choctaw Community Partnership Fund is a voluntary distribution to cities and counties within the Choctaw Nation 10½ county jurisdiction that operate Tribal non-gaming businesses.

system. Other cities and counties used their funds for street repair, building repairs, community beautification, city park upgrades and water projects as well.

We just started our second year for this program, and our funds will continue to help strengthen our communities, region and state. The Choctaw Community Partnership Fund is a voluntary distribution to cities and counties within the Choctaw Nation's 10½ county jurisdiction that operate Tribal non-gaming businesses. Together, we can make Oklahoma an even better place for our citizens to live and grow.

Inter-Tribal Council highlights contributions to education

By Kellie Matherly

On January 10, the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes held its general session at the Cherokee Nation's Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Catoosa, Okla. Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr. of the Cherokee Nation, Gov. Bill Anoatubby of the Chickasaw Nation, Chief Gary Batton of the Choctaw Nation, Chief Greg Chilcoat of the Seminole Nation, and newly elected Chief David Hill of the Muscogee Creek Nation presided. Several Tribal Council members, Tribal Legislators, and staff also attended.

State Superintendent of Public Education Joy Hofmeister spoke on the contributions tribal nations have made to the 1017 Education Reform Revolving Fund since her election in 2014. During her tenure in office alone, the state has received \$575.8 million from gaming tribes. Oklahoma tribes have also pledged tens of thousands of dollars toward training teachers on trauma-informed practices "so they can meet our kids right where they are, make those connections and give them the support they need, so they can be successful academically but also with social and emotional learning."

Hofmeister also pointed out several changes benefitting Native students in Oklahoma. Students will be able to specify their tribal affiliation on enrollment paperwork, rather than simply "American Indian or Alaska Native," leading to more accurate demographic data. In addition, students can now fulfill their language requirement for high school graduation by studying one of ten Indigenous languages. Native students are also closing graduation and academic performance gaps between themselves and non-Native students.

After Hofmeister spoke, each of the tribal leaders gave updates on housing, elder care, construction, jobs, nutrition and healthcare. Each leader made a point of emphasizing the unity of Oklahoma tribes and the commitment the tribes have made to all of the state's four million residents, not just Native Americans. "The five tribes are the best friends that the state of Oklahoma has ever had," said Chief Hoskin.

Agency reports by Treasurer Terri Haney, Eddie Streater of the BIA, David Southerland of HUD, and Admiral Travis Watts of IHS followed the tribal updates.

The Inter-Tribal Council also elected new officers for 2020. Chief Hoskin will serve as president of the Council; Chief Hill will be the vice president; and Terri Haney will continue serving as treasurer.

The final order of business for the Council was to approve six new resolutions. They are as follows:

- R#20-1: A Resolution Supporting Restoration of the Earned Income Tax Credit.
- R#20-2: A Resolution Urging the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), Office of Justice PROGRAMS United States. Department of Justice, to Hold a Tribal Consultation and Develop an OJJDP Tribal Policy in Conformance with the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2018.
- R#20-3: A Resolution Urging Congress to Reauthorize the Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI).
- R#20-4: A Resolution Urging Renewal of the Oklahoma Advisory Council on Indian Education Act.
- R#20-5: A Resolution Supporting Oklahoma State Department of Health Adoption of Immunization Rule Changes.
- R#20-6: A Resolution Honoring Lisa J. Billy for Her Service As Secretary of Native American Affairs for the State of Oklahoma.

All resolutions passed unanimously, and Lisa Billy was presented with a drum, a medal, and a copy of the resolution honoring her. In thanking tribal leaders for their acknowledgment, Billy echoed the collaborative message of the tribes: "We are mighty in our message of unity. We continue to move forward."

The next Inter-Tribal Council meeting will be hosted by the Chickasaw Nation on April 15-17, 2020.



Submitted Photo

From Left: Chief David Hill, Muscogee Creek Nation; Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr., Cherokee Nation; Gov. Bill Anoatubby, Chickasaw Nation; Chief Gary Batton, Choctaw Nation; Chief Greg Chilcoat, Seminole Nation

Hunting and fishing compact extended



Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.

On Dec. 30, 2019, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and the Department of Wildlife Conservation signed an extension to the Hunting and Fishing Compact through Dec. 31, 2020.

I'm so glad we were able to come to an agreement on this important compact that benefits both our tribal members and the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation.

Back in August, we began discussions for the renewal of this compact with the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife. Our proposal guaranteed sales and revenue for the vital department. Most don't know that the Department of Wildlife Conservation is

funded by the sales of hunting and fishing licenses and matching federal funds. This department and its roughly 350 employees are responsible for managing Oklahoma's fish and wildlife resources and habitats. We were able to partner with Oklahoma Department of Wildlife for another year, and that contributes to both parties' interest in protecting our state's natural resources while encouraging more people to enjoy the great outdoors. I look forward to keeping this partnership for years to come.

The extension agreement means that we will continue to offer this service as usual in 2020. I've noticed a few comments voicing concern and confusion on social media. I want to give you all a little bit of information to help ease these concerns and explain the process of applying for a Choctaw Hunting and Fishing License.

These licenses do auto-renew meaning you do not have to complete a new application unless your address has changed. The Department of Wildlife Conservation began processing auto-renewals and new tribal member applications Jan. 2, 2020. For those who are interested in receiving a 2020 hunting and fishing license, but did not have one in 2019, I encourage you to apply. Tribal members can do so by going online to the Chahta Achvffa member portal to fill out the application. Applicants may also request an application from the Choctaw Nation Tribal State Licenses Department at 800-522-6170. Members under the age of 16 must have a parent or guardian apply for them. If you already have a lifetime license through the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife, I encourage you to apply for a tribal license. This license affords you a land access permit to the Three Rivers and Honobia Creek wildlife areas that does not come with the lifetime license.

Once the application is received, the Choctaw Nation will confirm the membership and information needed to qualify for the licenses under the compact. The Choctaw Nation will then send approved applications to the State. The State will issue the licenses.

The 2020 hunting and fishing license will be available on the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife website, license.gooutdoorsoklahoma.com, to be printed or downloaded as needed. For added convenience, there is now an app, Go Outdoors Oklahoma, for your Android or Apple device.

Hunting and fishing will be open to compact hunters in all 77 counties in Oklahoma. That does not include tribal land. Tribal members age 16 and over will receive the following privileges: an annual hunting and fishing combination license; a trapping license; a bobcat, raccoon, river otter, gray and red fox license, i.e., furbearer license; state waterfowl stamp; up to four turkey licenses; up to six deer licenses, exclusive of bonus licenses; waived access fee to Three Rivers and Honobia Creek wildlife management areas; and a land access permit. Tribal members under the age of 15 will receive a hunting and fishing combination license, one deer license and one turkey license.



Pastor Olin Williams
Employee Chaplain

Proverbs provide wisdom

Our world is filled with questions. One "expert" declares his opinion, and another contradicts that with other findings. Confusion sets in, followed by doubt, and finally we despair of finding any accurate and satisfying answers to the questions of life. Is there no authority to answer our questions of "what," "where," and "why?"

There are disputes even among the experts in the field of clergy. Because God has spoken to man in the Scriptures, we need not dangle on the opinions of "experts." Instead we must hear the words of God as they speak to us in their absolute authority in this world.

The Bible is God's special way of revealing Himself and His will to us. There are books which offer advice, but the Bible does not merely advise; it tells the Truth. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3:16,17).

The Book of Proverbs is God's powerhouse of wisdom. A proverb condenses the meaning of a thousand words into one short and simple sentence. Proverbs shows us that we do have an authoritative word from God. It gives us the real freedom of knowing what God expects of us, and of knowing right from wrong, good from bad, and wise from foolish.

The world has its own knowledge and wisdom but the ones who trust in the Word of God have the great security of knowing God's wisdom and the privilege of gaining the life which it brings. The Book of Proverbs is wisdom literature. It is a collection of divine counsel from which all people can benefit. These are ethical precepts about practical living. The world's concept of wisdom is often linked with intelligence or level of education. The Bible in general lifts up the man of Godly wisdom as the ideal. An individual who embraces the discernment of the two elements and the role they play in life is a wise person.

Choctaw Nation and Bell announce agreement

By Christian Toews

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma (CNO) and Bell Textron Inc., a Textron Inc. company, announced an agreement to add Bell to the CNO UASIPP team and begin testing some of the Bell innovations and systems on CNO-owned property in rural southeastern Oklahoma.

The flights and tests will be conducted as part of the FAA Unmanned Aircraft Systems Integration Pilot Program (UASIPP). CNO is one of nine UASIPP sites selected by the U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao in May 2018. These nine research sites are paramount in the advancement of drone research and integration in the United States.

This research will include Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) operations and other more advanced UAS operations. These operations will help to develop specific uses for these drones such as the agricultural applications that the Choctaw Nation began testing in 2018.

CNO, Bell, and their partners plan to work with the FAA and other federal agencies to enhance emerging aviation technologies and operations to help keep the United States a leader in aviation.

“The Choctaw Nation continues to be excited to work with our key strategic teammates like Bell as we begin to foster innovation and utilize new technologies in today’s world,” states James Grimsley, Executive Director of Advanced Technology Initiatives. “Working with an industry leader like Bell validates our investment and highlights all the hard work and success our team has had to date.”

“We are proud and excited to be a part of the CNO UASIPP team,” said Scott Drennan, Bell’s Vice President, Innovation. “This agreement will enable us to continue to test our vehicles and work in a collaborative effort with CNO and the FAA to improve aviation technologies and achieve new possibilities together.”

Bell is headquartered in Fort Worth, Texas, less than 200 miles from the test site in Oklahoma but has locations around the globe.

Future missions for the CNO UASIPP team include advanced drone operations – including BVLOS - for agricultural applications, public safety operations, infrastructure inspections, safe operations over people, and weather-related missions.

Representatives from Bell Flight, Intel Corp., AiRXOS (part of GE Aviation), Noble Research Institute, Oklahoma State University, the University of Oklahoma, NASA and others gathered Jan. 17, at the Choctaw Nation Headquarters in Durant, Oklahoma. These organizations came together, in part, to announce CNO was granted a Public Aircraft Operations (PAO) Certificate of Authorization (COA) from the FAA.

CNO is the first Native American tribal government to be granted PAO authorization by the FAA as determined by statutes, 49 USC §40102(a) (41), and §40125 since the new FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 was signed into law. Before the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018, federal law did not permit tribes to operate a public aircraft for governmental or public service under the rules of a PAO.

Current NASA administrator, Jim Bridenstine talked about the importance of the research being done by CNO UASIPP. “These activities are important for NASA, and you guys are right at the center of it. I appreciate all the support you’re going to give to NASA,” he said.

CNO plans to use the PAO COA for aeronautical research and public services as defined in statutes. These plans include aeronautical research on new emerging technology systems that will be operated within the 10½ counties of the CNO tribal boundaries in southeast Oklahoma. CNO will also start using their PAO COA for emergency services such as search and rescue, firefighting support, post-damage assessment from natural disasters and other public needs that may arise in the future.



NASA administrator Jim Bridenstine with Chief Gary Batton after the Jan. 17 event at the Choctaw Nation Headquarters.

“It is an exciting time in the Choctaw Nation as well as all of Oklahoma to make history by being the first tribe designated as a public aircraft operator,” stated Chief Gary Batton. “This designation confirms our commitment to the future of the unmanned aircraft system, which allows us to explore new possibilities and applications in this industry. We believe this designation and commitment will transform the Choctaw Nation and Oklahoma. The future holds endless opportunities.”

“The Choctaw Nation continues to expand our involvement in emerging aviation technology, and we appreciate our strong working relationship with the FAA,” states James Grimsley. “As we continue to foster innovation and utilize new technology in today’s world, we hope to better serve our tribal citizens, customers and employees.”

CNO has become a leader in emerging aviation technologies working with other organizations such as Bell Flight, Intel Corp., AiRXOS (part of GE Aviation), Noble Research Institute, Oklahoma State University, Public Service Company of Oklahoma, Iris Automation and the University of Oklahoma.



An Oklahoma State University drone was one of many on display at the Choctaw Nation Headquarters on Jan. 17.



One of the drones used by Bell Textron Inc. in partnership with the Choctaw Nation’s drone program. This particular drone can carry up to 70 pounds and has a flight speed of 100 miles per hour.



WE'RE BACK, BABY BACK

Chili's - Poteau



Hunters harvest a deer during the Veterans Day hunt at the Choctaw Nation Hunting Lodge. Hunting rights have been extended for tribal members across the state after an agreement was made on the Hunting and Fishing Compact.

Hunting and fishing compact extended

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma’s Hunting and Fishing Compact has been extended through Dec. 31, 2020, based on a signed agreement tied to an offer received yesterday from the state.

“I am very confident this will continue the opportunity for our tribal members to hunt and fish in the State of Oklahoma in the upcoming year,” said Gary Batton, Chief of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. “This allows us the time to explore possibilities to exercise our tribal sovereignty for a longer-term solution.”

Based on the terms of the extension, Choctaw Nation tribal members will have hunting and fishing rights across the State of Oklahoma. Choctaws 16 and older, will be able to apply for their license via the online member portal, Chahta Achvffa, at chahtaachvffa.choctawnation.com.

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Choctaw Nation Judicial Branch

CHOCTAWNATIONCOURT.COM

District 6 has many activities and programs available

Halito from Dist. 6. We have been busy closing out 2019 and rolling into the new year. We are excited for the 20 new homes that will be provided to our tribal members, and they should be ready to move in around late March. We will also have ten independent elderly and ten affordable homes. They are very nice, and we are so thankful to be able to provide these beautiful homes, which brings me to the LEAP homes. We need those applications for Red Oak and Wilburton. If we have ten, housing will build in that area, so it's very important you keep filling out the application and write the town on it. Become a new homeowner; the dream is real!

If you need housing vouchers for home repairs, keep updating your application, and apply every year. Dist. 6 offices and services have grown to provide more to our tribal members for housing at our community center. We welcome those services and are very excited for them to join our community center family. We also have a new tribal security officer. Jesse James has joined our Wilburton Community Center. Come up and say hi. We're glad to have him on board. We have a new office for our Job for the Day Coordinator. If you're looking for a job, please apply with our JFTD. It's a great program to help put our tribal members to work.

We have attended ribbon cuttings in Savanna and Idabel, and every time we visit all the families and see the difference safe, beautiful homes have made for our tribal members, it's exciting.

We are grateful for all February has to offer. It's time for the livestock show on Feb. 1 and 2, in Wilburton. The students work so hard all year with their animals, so come out and support them and encourage them. We are so proud of all students and families who show.

It's time for Choctaw Princess training workshops on Feb. 8, at the McAlester Community Center from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. If you're interested in learning more about running for tribal royalty in the Princess Pageant, please attend one of the workshops. Participants must be between the ages of 8 and 22.

Summer Youth workers, if you want to work, it's time to apply for those jobs. The deadline is April 20, 2020. This is a great opportunity to teach our youth a strong work ethic and gives them an opportunity to make some money.

This month we will have our Dist. 6 king and queen contest, best-decorated valentine box, and Valentine's dinner on Feb. 13. Put it on your schedule for the month of love.

We have been busy as Tribal Council works to support Chief Batton and Assistant Chief Austin on the Gaming Compact. We had our quarterly community check presentations and gave checks to Latimer County, City of Wilburton, and the City of Tahihina to be used on projects to better our communities. We are always proud of giving and being a part of our districts.

Dist. 6 seniors have planned many activities for February. They are working on a quilt every Tuesday. Come and join in the fun. We have our taco sales along with community prayer on the first Friday of the month at 7:00 a.m. Come and join us.

Dist. 6 will be hosting an Education and Career Exploration Summit on Feb. 27 at the community center. Please share and don't miss this great opportunity for seventh to twelfth-graders.

It's February, but spring is coming, and our new lawn care program applications are out at the community centers. Please pick one up and share with our tribal elders 70 years and older or disabled members; it will be a great benefit to our tribal elders who need assistance with their lawn care.

Every month I attend meetings over Member Services, Legal and Compliance, and Commerce updates. These meetings keep us informed on new programs, businesses, and anything involving services to our people. On Wednesdays, I give new information. My door is always open. Any concerns or needs you have are mine also as your Tribal Council representative and your voice for our awesome Dist. 6, so please call me or drop by. It's always my privilege to serve, from our newborn babies to our oldest elder, you matter. I'm grateful for every opportunity to represent us. Dist. 6 is the district with the biggest heart.



Jennifer Woods, District 6

Soil health program announced

The Bryan County Conservation District has announced it is accepting applications for the State of Oklahoma's Soil Health Initiative Cost Share Program funded by the Oklahoma Conservation Commission. The State has provided funds to help landowners implement measures that focus on improving soil health.

A local soil health work-group has chosen to focus the limited funding on improving soils associated with monoculture pastures and hayland such as bermudagrass. Applicants agree to provide a soil test and adopt a prescribed grazing plan to improve soil conditions. Conservation practices available are cover crops, pasture planting, range planting, prescribed grazing, and more. This could also include establishing pollinator habitat in some instances.

The established cost share rate is 85% of the State of Oklahoma average cost. The maximum payment to any one participant is \$5,000. Applications will be accepted now through Jan. 31, 2019. Approved applicants will develop a conservation plan with an NRCS conservationist and must complete their agreements before March 31, 2021.

For more information or to apply, contact the Bryan Conservation District located in the USDA Service Center at 200 Gerlach Drive in Durant or call (580) 924-1564, extension 3.



District 6 Activities February 2020

- *Every Monday and Wednesday-Chair Volleyball Practice – 9:30-10:45a.m.-Wellness Center
- *GED Classes Tuesday and Thursday 9:00 a.m.– 12:00 p.m.
- * Tuesday- Lin Anderson Embroidery/Quilt/Crochet class 1:00 p.m..
- *Every Wednesday – Lunch served, with guest speaker – salad bar opens at 11:00 a.m.
- *Choctaw language Classes Monday evenings 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Wednesday, Feb. 5 – Commodities pickup – McAlester

Thursday, Feb. 6 – Chair Volleyball Game in Poteau – 10:30 a.m.

Friday, Feb. 7 – Councilwoman Jennifer Woods Prayer Meeting – 7:00-8:00 a.m. - (Breakfast to follow) Indian Taco Sale 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 11 - Short Shopping Day

Wednesday, Feb. 12 – Valentine's Lunch – elect Valentine's King/Queen Monthly Senior Meeting – after lunch

Thursday, Feb. 13 – Durant Casino – Bus leaves at 8:30 a.m.

Friday, Feb 14 – Valentines Candy Sale at Travel Plaza

Thursday, Feb 20 – Food Handlers Course – 10:00 a.m.

Friday, Feb 21 – Gilcrease Museum Day Trip – Tulsa, Oklahoma - (Tentative Date)

Tuesday, Feb. 25 – Family Night Potluck and Bingo 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Friday, Feb. 28 – Long Shopping Day – Destination TBA

***Dates and times are subject to change.**

Scott November Veteran of the Month



Photo provided

Dist. 6 Councilwoman Jennifer Woods congratulates Wayne Scott, of Wilburton, Okla., as the November Veteran of the Month during the District #6 Thanksgiving luncheon.

Scott served in the United States Army as a Private First Class from Sept. 10, 1963 to June 15, 1965. He served as a supply clerk and key punch operator in the 44th Battalion, 8th US Army Headquarters Company stationed in Inchon, Korea from 1964-1965.



Photo provided

Dist. 7 Councilman Jack Austin Sr. presents Albert Tom with his Veteran of the Month certificate. Tom was the Veteran of the Month for January.

Tom January Veteran of the Month

Albert Tom Jr. of Sobol, Okla., was honored by being named January's Veteran of the Month.

Tom served in the United States Army as a Specialist, Grade 4 from September 14, 1965 to January 7, 1972.

SPF Tom served in Vietnam and Germany earning the Bronze Star with V Device, Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, two Overseas Bars, National Defense Service Medal and Expert Pistol and Rifle Badge.

Housing Headlines

By Bobby Yandell

Halito! I am excited to include an article each month about our Housing services and how we can better assist our tribal members. This month I would like to address our rental assistance service that is assuring our tribal members who reside in rental property outside those owned by Choctaw Nation are in safe and sanitary housing.

Rental assistance is available throughout the 10% county service area of the Choctaw Nation. Applicants must submit a completed application along with their tribal membership card and income verification (other documents may be required). Those who are under the income guidelines may then be eligible to receive rental assistance for one year. At that point, applicants must come off the program for one year, allowing the Housing Authority the opportunity to serve as many tribal members as possible with rental assistance. Exceptions to the one-year rule are elders (55 and older), disabled families and college students, who may be served for up to 4 years as long as they are enrolled full-time and maintain at least a 2.50 GPA. Currently there is no waiting list for rental assistance as the Tribal Council appropriated additional funding this year to alleviate the backlog.

Each rental unit must undergo a Housing Quality Services (HQS) inspection prior to being placed on the program, ensuring the landlord keeps the unit maintained in a safe and sanitary condition. Units will be inspected at least annually.

The Rental Assistance program also administers the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program. VASH is a collaborative effort between two federal entities, HUD and the VA, to provide housing vouchers to Native American tribes to house homeless veterans. Currently, the Choctaw Nation has 20 vouchers.

Applications for all Housing programs are located at each community center and can be found on line.



YOUTH WORK OPPORTUNITIES

Choctaw Nation Summer Youth Employment Services

(Program funded by Public Law 102-477)



SCHOOL SCHEDULE 2020 | BRING COPIES OF CDIB OR MEMBERSHIP

JAN 06 - Calera, Red Oak	JAN 20 - Whitesboro
JAN 07 - Caddo, Cannadian, Indianola, Crowder, Buffalo Valley, Coleman	JAN 21 - Arkoma, Cameron, Bokoshe, Atoka
JAN 08 - Allen, Tupelo, Wapanuka, Coalgate, Stuart, Kiowa, Calvin, Hugo, Boswell	JAN 22 - Durant, Keota, McCurtain
JAN 09 - Bennington, Choctaw Interlocal, Haileyville, Hartshorne, Kiowa, Clayton	JAN 23 - Ft Towson, Soper
JAN 10 - Rock Creek	JAN 27 - Spiro, Panama, Pocola
JAN 13 - Tahihina, Wister, Howe	JAN 28 - Poteau
JAN 14 - Vision Academy, Achilles, Quinton, Panola, Wilburton, McAlester, LeFlore, Heavener	JAN 29 - Savanna, Pittsburg
JAN 15 - Stigler, Colbert, Stringtown, Kinta, Moyers, Rattan, Silo	FEB 03 - Valliant
JAN 16 - Caney, Tushka, Antlers	FEB 04 - Idabel, Haworth
	FEB 05 - Smithville, Battiest
	FEB 10 - Eagletown
	FEB 11 - Broken Bow
	FEB 12 - Wright City

APPLY ONLINE AT: 477ETSAPP.CHOCTAWNATION.COM

APPLICATION OPEN FROM JANUARY 1ST - APRIL 1ST

Choctaw Nation

Housing Authority

Stay Connected

CHOCTAWNATION.COM

NOTES AND EVENTS

Choctaw language classes
Phase 3

Fife Indian United Methodist Church
1100 Eufaula Street
Muskogee, Oklahoma
Begins Thursday, February 6, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Tulsa Creek Indian Community Center
8611 S. Union Avenue
Tulsa, Oklahoma
Begins Monday, February 3, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Choctaw Community
Center Health Fairs

Feb. 5	Stigler	918-967-2398	10:00 a.m.
Feb. 12	Atoka	580-889-6147	10:00 a.m.
Feb. 26	Coalgate	580-927-3641	10:00 a.m.

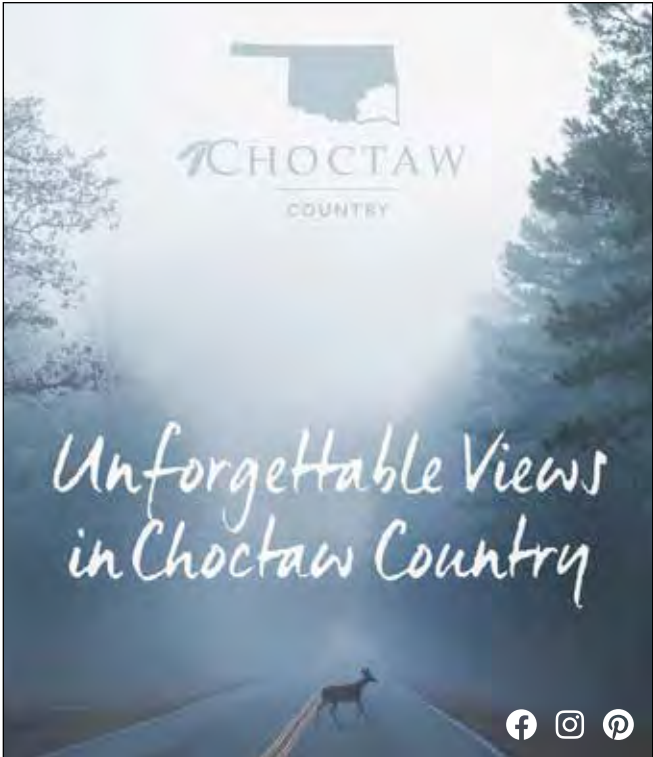
Tribal Council holds January session

CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA TRIBAL
COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION AGENDA
January 11, 2020

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. OPENING PRAYER/FLAG SALUTE
3. ROLL CALL
4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
 - a. Regular Session December 14, 2019
 - b. Special Session December 23, 2019
5. WELCOME GUESTS/RECOGNIZE VETERAN OF THE MONTH
 - a. District #7, Albert Tom- Mr. Tom was unable to attend. Assistant Chief will present the award at the District 7 Senior Lunch on Wednesday 1/15/2020
6. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES
7. NEW BUSINESS
 - a. Approve Application for the 2020 Indian Community Development Block Grant (ICDBG)
Vote Counts: YEAs- Unanimous
Vote Result: Bill passed
 - b. Approve Application for the Energy Infrastructure Deployment on Tribal Lands Grant for the Housing Authority of the Choctaw Nation
Vote Counts: YEAs- Unanimous
Vote Result: Bill passed
 - c. Approve Application for the Energy Infrastructure Deployment on Tribal Lands Grant
Vote Counts: YEAs- Unanimous
Vote Result: Bill passed
 - d. Approve Application to Request a Carryover of Funds from FY2015 to FY2019/2020 for the Choctaw Nation Early Head Start Program
Vote Counts: YEAs- Unanimous
Vote Result: Bill passed
 - e. Approve the Disposal of Surplus Capital Assets
Vote Counts: YEAs- Unanimous;
Vote Result: Item Tabled
8. OTHER NEW BUSINESS
9. OLD BUSINESS
10. ADJOURNMENT
11. CLOSING PRAYER

Council Members Present:

Thomas Williston	Perry Thompson
Tony Ward	James Dry
Eddie Bohanan	Anthony Dillard
Delton Cox	Robert Karr
Ron Perry	James Frazier (Arrived Late- Only Voted on a motion to table item E.)
Jennifer Woods	
Jack Austin	



Sights you can't wait to
fill your feed with.

CHOCTAWCOUNTRY.COM

Thanks from a veteran

I would like to thank the Choctaw tribe for all the and work, planning and thoughtfulness that went into creating a memorable Veterans Day celebration. That was so appreciated, the many gifts each veteran received.
My wife was also impressed with all that went into the day from the golf carts that met us in the parking lot to the fried chicken meal at the end of the day.

Our many thanks for a great day,
Kate and Dwayne Neal

Thanks for all you do

I come from a line of proud people. My grandfather, Albert Billy, was one of the original Code Talkers in WWI. He would be so proud of the way the Choctaw Nation has helped his family. Because of the Choctaw Nation, I have a warm home, food on my table and medical care.
I would like to thank the Choctaw Nation for myself and all of the tribal members they have assisted over the years.
Merry Christmas to all. Nittak Hulo Chito Na Yuk Pa.

Yakohe,
Ellen Billy Eikenberry

Thank you from the family
of Lee “Roy” Lawrence Jr.

The family of Roy Lawrence would like to thank the Choctaw Color Guard and Choctaw Singers for an awesome ceremony. Thank you to RV Colbert, Oma Nell Clay and the Choctaw Nation.

The family of Lee “Roy” Lawrence Jr.

Chahta Anumpa Aiikhvna
February Language Lesson

Weather

Kucha yvt pisa katiohmi? – What is the weather like?
Pronounced: Koh-cha yaht pi-sa kah-tee-oh-meh?

Word Meaning:
kucha – outside, weather *yvt – subj. marker

pisa- look, see
katiohmi – how, in what manner

Kucha yvt_____kalampi. – It is freezing outside.
Pronounced: Koh-cha yaht kah-lahm-pi.

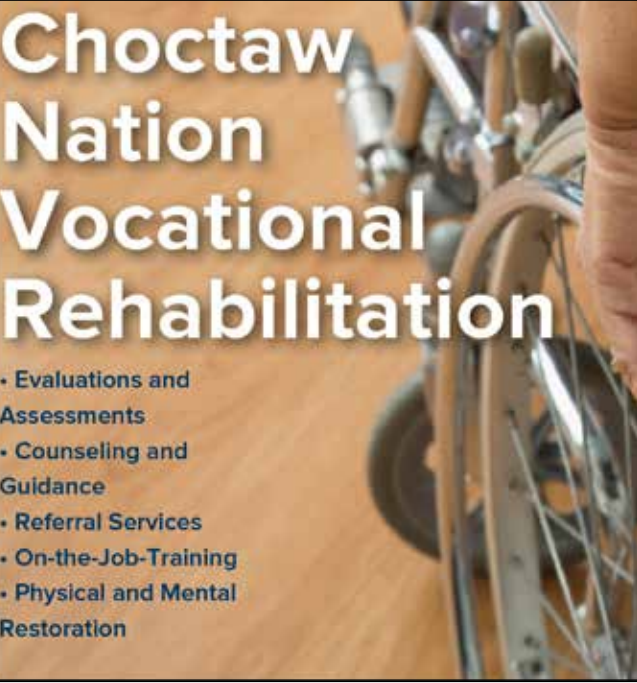
Practice substituting these weather words into your sentences.

kalampi – (kah-lahm-pih) – freeze/freezing
hoshonti – (ho-shon-tih) – cloudy
omba – (ohm-bah) – rain/raining

oktusha – (ohk-toh-sha) – snow/snowing
hvshi tomi – (ha-she toh-meh) – sunny/sunshine

Note: The definition of kucha is ‘outside’. There is not a Choctaw word for ‘weather’. The literal translation of this sentence is “How/What does it look like outside?” In the context of this sentence it is understood that one is speaking of the weather; thus, ‘weather’, is included as a definition of ‘kucha’.

www.choctawschool.com



Choctaw Nation Vocational Rehabilitation

March 3	Poteau	11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.
March 3	Wright City	10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
March 4	Antlers	10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
March 4	Atoka	11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
March 6	Crowder	By appointment
March 10	Idabel	10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
March 10	Talihina	10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
March 11	Coalgate	11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
March 11	Antlers	10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
March 13	Poteau	11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.
March 13	Atoka	11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
March 17	Wilburton	10:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
March 17	Broken Bow	10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
March 18	McAlester	10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
March 18	Stigler	By appointment
March 20	Coalgate	11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
March 24	McAlester	10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
March 25	Talihina	10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
March 31	Wilburton	10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Durant: Monday, Wednesday and Friday
Call 580-326-8304 for an appointment

Oklahoma Indian Legal Services may be able to help tribal members who have received storm damage, but can't get assistance due to title problems.

Call 800-658-1497 for more information.

Veterans Association Members Needed

Choctaw Veterans Association is searching for new members. Most of our members are Vietnam Vets.
We need young Choctaw military men and women, active or retired. Members of different tribes are welcome as well. Veterans Association paperwork is needed.
Meetings are 8 a.m. on the second Saturday of each month at the Spiro Choctaw Community Center.
Members attend funerals, and Disabled American Veterans and Marine Corp League.

For information call:
Ed Hendricks, Recruiter 918-962-5524
Paul Perry, Commander 479-353-2709

Send us your stories!

The Biskinik is a free service to our tribal members. We want to be an outlet for all members to share their successes with the rest of the tribe.

Please send your submissions to us at
biskinik@choctawnation.com

NEED TO CHANGE YOUR ADDRESS?

Contact the Choctaw Nation
Circulation Department

580.924.8280 x4028

Read the Biskinik online at
CHOCTAWNATION.COM/NEWS

BISKINIK

Biskinik
Announcement Guidelines

We accept milestone birthday greetings for ages 1, 5, 13, 15, 16, 18, 21, 30, 40, 50, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80 and above.
Couples may send announcements of silver wedding anniversary at 25 years of marriage, golden anniversary at 50 years, or 60+ anniversaries. We do not post wedding announcements.
News from graduates of higher education only and sports submissions will be accepted as space allows.
We welcome all letters from Choctaw tribal members. However, because of the volume of mail, it isn't possible to publish all letters our readers send. Letters chosen for publication must be under 150 words. We require full contact information. Only the writer's full name and city will be published.
All events sent to the Biskinik will run the month of the event or the month prior to the event if the event falls on the first of the month.

Mail to: Biskinik
P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702
or email: biskinik@choctawnation.com

Gary Batton
Chief

Jack Austin Jr.
Assistant Chief

The Official
Monthly Publication
of the
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

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The BISKINIK is printed each month as a service to Tribal members. The BISKINIK reserves the right to determine whether material submitted for publication shall be printed and reserves the right to edit submitted material which it finds inaccurate, profane, offensive or morally unacceptable. Copy may be edited for space, proper grammar and punctuation. Copy will be accepted in any readable form, but where possible, it is requested that material be type-written and double-spaced. You must include an address and 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. Items are printed in the order received. Faxed photos will not be accepted.

If you are receiving more than one BISKINIK or your address needs to be changed, our Circulation Department would appreciate hearing from you at ext. 4028.

The BISKINIK is a nonprofit publication of the Choctaw Nation. Circulation is monthly. Deadline for articles and photographs to be submitted is the first day of each month to run in the following month.

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.



Friedel top ten in Terlingua Chili Cookoff

Dallas photographer TJ Friedel cooked up a top ten spot at the 53rd Annual Terlingua International Chili Championship, held Nov. 2, 2019.

Friedel has competed at Terlingua for the past thirteen years and says the contest is “widely known

to be the most competitive chili cook off in the world.” Friedel placed with showmanship awards in 2011 and 2012 but was determined to nab a win in chili competition. “I changed my chili name to Double Exposure a couple of years ago with the intention of winning my own chili trophy.” The nod to her photography roots must have been a lucky shot. She was thrilled when her name was announced in the top ten, which automatically qualifies her to compete in 2020.

Friedel also took home top honors in the Small Show Competition with team member Susan Spencer of Irving, Texas. The first place award joins her other achievements as a CASI Chili Cook. CASI, the Chili Appreciation Society International, sponsors the annual chili competition, which attracts cooks from around the world.

Ott continues tradition



On Saturday, Nov. 16, 2019, Solomon Nicholas Ott graduated Officer Candidate School and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps.

He follows a long line of Otts in service to their country. His namesake, Solomon Julian Ott, was a Soldier in the United States Army and fought in France during WWI where he suffered a gas attack which he succumbed to 20

years later. His oldest son, Solomon Julian Ott Jr., was a Flying Sergeant and was eventually commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Marine Corp in WWII. Solomon Nicholas Ott’s grandfather, Bill Ott, flew S-2Fs in the United States Navy during the Korean War, and his father, Captain David T. Ott, US Navy (retired) was a combat aviator flying the A-6 Intruder and EA-6B Prowler aircraft.

Solomon will complete the Basic School at Quantico in May 2020 with follow on orders to Naval Air Station Pensacola for flight training.



Bennett Barnett makes Academic All-Big 12 team

Bennett Barnett, a sophomore member of the cross country and track team at Texas Tech University, was recently recognized by the Big 12 as a member of the Academic All-Big 12 team for cross country. Bennett is on the First Team, which requires a GPA of 3.2 or better.

To qualify as an Academic All-Big 12 Athlete, student-athletes must maintain a 3.00 GPA or higher, either cumulative or the two previous semesters, and must have participated in 20 percent of their team’s scheduled contests. Bennett is the son of Kris and Candler Barnett and the grandson of Ann and Earl Putnam and Sandy and John Barnett. His major is business finance.



Krivanek takes it to the next level

Louis William Krivanek IV (Liam) will graduate from Mustang High School this May, where he is a 4.0 honor student. He is a member of the National Honor Society, Senior Leadership Team, Safety Council, Bridge Church Student Leadership, and Student Council.

He is a fifth generation cattleman on the family home- stead, where he keeps his herd with his grandfather, and is a proud member of the Choctaw tribe.

Liam was captain of his football team and was a member of the homecoming court. He was a three year starter at safety and led the state of Oklahoma in tackles in both his junior and senior seasons. He was named to the Oklahoma top 100 twice, was a finalist for Mr. Football Oklahoma, was a 2019 pre-season VYPE All-6A defensive back, 2019 VYPE All-OKC defensive back, 2018 Oklahoman All-State H.M. and was named 2019 COAC All-Conference, 6A-1-2 All-District, and has been nominated for All-State. The team finished as Dis- trict Runner-Ups and won the 2019 6A Academic State Championship.

Holt contributes to state title

Bixby High senior Trevon Holt contributed in numerous roles in the Spartans’ surge to their fifth Class 6A-II State Football Championship recently at the University of Central Oklahoma’s Wantland Stadium in Edmond.

Holt, who was named a team captain his senior season, was the starting free safety, starting wide receiver and long snapper for the Spartans this season, earning All-District 2 honors for his efforts.

In Bixby’s recent 40-36 state championship win over Stillwater, he had 10 tackles, eight unassisted, one tackle for a loss and intercepted a pass. He also won a team award for his blocking as a receiver for the Spartans, who finished with a 13-0 record.



This season, Holt finished with 108 total tackles, 44 un- assisted, two tackles for a loss, intercepted four passes, had four pass deflections and one fumble recovery. He also caught 31 passes for 369 yards and one touchdown.

He was honored at Bixby’s recent team banquet with the Lee Snider Award, one of three individual awards which go to team leaders on the field and in the class- room.

Holt, who carries a 4.0 GPA, suited up in four Bixby state championship games and played in three state title games for BHS, which has won five of the six Class 6A-II state championship games since Class 6A was divided into two classifications in 2014. He contributed to Bixby’s current 25-game winning streak.

Holt, a Choctaw Nation member, also plays base- ball and is in competitive cheer at Bixby. He cur- rently is considering four collegiate offers to play football in the future.

He is the son of Chris Holt and Darla Holt, the grandson of Ron and Becky Holt of Bixby and the great grandson of Gladys Holt and the late Walon Holt, formerly of Ardmore.

Phi Kappa Phi for Spain

Jade Elizabeth Tai Spain was inducted into Alpha Chi Honor Society on Oct. 17th and the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society on Nov. 12, 2019. She is a senior at Angelo State University in San Angelo, Texas pursuing a Health Science Professional de- gree. Only the top 10% of the senior class who main- tain a 3.0 GPA are invited to join. She graduated valedictorian from Veribest High School in May 2017.

She is the daughter of Choctaw member Beverly Spain of San Angelo, Texas and granddaughter of the late James and Faye Spain.



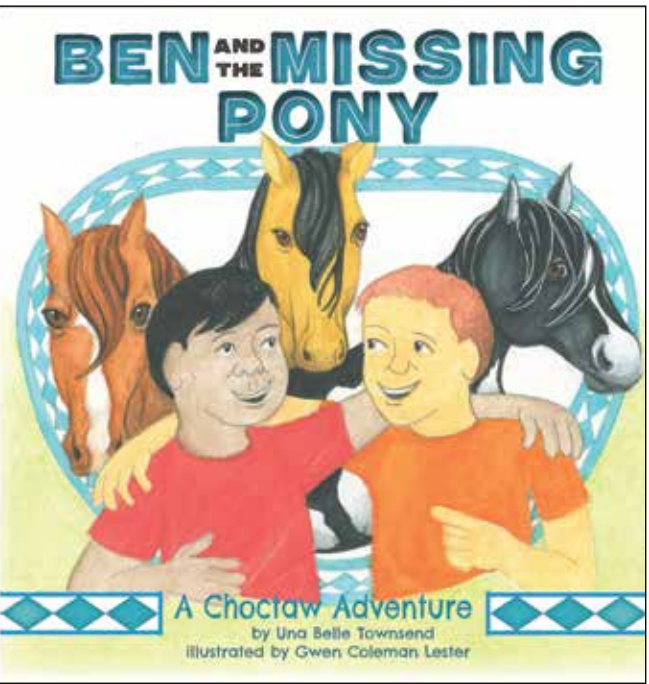
Krsak’s celebrate 50 years

Stephen and Sandra Krsak of Oak Lawn, Ill., were married on Dec. 12, 1969, in Madill, Okla. Sandra is the daughter of the late Noah and Nadine Dosh of Ben- nington, Okla., and the granddaughter of John and Severa Mary (Broke- shoulder) Dosh.

Larry’s and Sandy’s union resulted in two sons Jared and Noah (deceased).



Second book published



The second book in the Code Talker series, “Ben and the Missing Pony: A Choctaw Adventure,” has been published and is available for purchase. The book was written by Una Belle Townsend and illustrated by Choc- taw artist Gwen Coleman Lester. Written for ages 4-8, the book is published by Doodle and Peck Publishing.

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STAR PROGRAM

SUCCESS THROUGH ACADEMIC RECOGNITION

To qualify for STAR awards, students must be enrolled in the second - twelfth grades and possess a tribal membership card. Incentives are given twice a year at the end of each semester, for the following academic achievements:

• ALL A'S: \$25 GIFT CARD

• ALL B 'S: \$10 GIFT CARD

• ALL A'S & B'S: \$10 GIFT CARD

• PERFECT ATTENDANCE: \$25 GIFT CARD

AWARDING PERIOD: SPRING, MAY 1 - SEP 1 | FALL, DEC 1 - MAR 1

STARAPPLICATION.CHOCTAWNATION.COM

800-522-6170 EXT 2581 OR 2971

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Choctaw Nation Land Management

CHOCTAWNATION.COM

Tribe’s Recycling Program going strong after a decade



By Shelia Kirven

The Choctaw Nation Recycling Program began in 2009, giving tribal members, associates and local communities the opportunity to reduce city landfills, provide jobs, educate others and help in saving the environment. The program started off with a grant for three staff members. Before the grant ended, they had expanded to four. Ten years later, the staff total is 15.

Tracy Horst, Environmental Compliance Director for the Choctaw Nation reported that ten years after opening, the program has seen approximately 25 million pounds of recyclable material come through the tribe’s recycling centers, located in Durant and Poteau.

In addition, around 258,000 tires have been recycled. Horst stated, “that means, placed end to end with an average tire size of 27 inches, our tires would stretch over 110 miles!”

Plastic foam recycling is a large part of what goes on inside the recycling centers. Many people do not realize that plastic foam can be recycled, compacted down and then sold to companies who then make it into every day usable items such as photo frames, black trash bags and toothbrushes. According to Jason Lilley, Recycling Manager for the Choctaw Nation Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences Division, the Choctaw Nation has been able to process and sell 43,625 pounds of plastic foam since the program began.

The cities of Paris, Texas and Ardmore, Okla., which are outside the Choctaw Nation service area, have even brought their recyclables to Durant for disposal through the Choctaw Nation’s Recycling Center.

The Recycling Program receives EPA GAP and Environmental Justice grants that help fund the educational component of the program. Horst and Lilley explained that through the grants, the staff are able to teach high school students about cleaning up around water ways and streams, and the importance of keeping them clean.

Another function of the recycling program is hosting community clean-up days. The program staff travel to at least three sites each year to do large recycling for schools and the community as well, taking in items such as tires and electronic equipment. Upcoming dates and locations for 2020

will be announced soon.

Recycling Center staff also do toy drives each Christmas, seeking gently used toys from each of the Choctaw Nation’s service area counties. The 2019 toy drive brought in 559 pounds of toys that were then disbursed back into the communities to children in need throughout the Christmas season.

Staff are on hand all weekend during the tribe’s Labor Day Festival, setting out recycle containers for waste and manning the popular Recycling Program Booth, which does on-site teaching and provides promotional materials to festival goers who bring in items for recycling.

Recycling centers are located at 3408 Wes Watkins Blvd in Durant and at 304 Kerr Ave in Poteau. Persons wishing to drop off recyclable items may do so at either of the centers, or by using the roll-off containers available in 135 locations throughout the Choctaw Nation’s 10 ½ counties. The roll-off containers have free drop-off and are available for public use. To see a list of where roll-off recycling containers are located throughout the Choctaw Nation go to www.choctawnation.com/tribal-services/member-services/choctaw-nation-recycling-center.

Keep up with the Choctaw Recycling events and projects through www.choctawnation.com, Choctaw Nation Facebook and Choctaw Nation Recycling on Facebook.



Photos by Chris Jennings



Brennan Coon, Rick Ash and Will Crosby sort recyclables at the Durant recycling center. The Choctaw Nation recycling centers have processed 25 million pounds since 2009.

Choctaw Nation WIC & Connecting Kids With Coverage are Coming to a Location Near You



Enjoy Full WIC Services and See If Your Child Qualifies for SoonerCare

February Mobile Unit Schedule

4th	Heavener - CV'S Grocery
6th	Boswell - Across from the Push-ma-taha Family Clinic
7th	Heavener - EOMC
11th	Heavener - CV'S Grocery
13th	Clayton - Choctaw Country Market
14th	Heavener - EOMC
18th	Heavener - CV'S Grocery
21st	Heavener - EOMC
25th	Heavener - CV'S Grocery
28th	Heavener - CV'S Grocery

For More Information Call (580) 380-3628

Free backpack with every approved Connecting Kids to Coverage application.

Chili-Mac Skillet

- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 small onion (chopped)
- 15 ounce can kidney beans, drained
- 1 can hominy
- 8 ounce can tomato sauce
- 1 cup canned diced tomatoes with juices
- 1 green bell pepper
- 1 cup noodles, uncooked
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ teaspoon dried garlic
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup shredded cheese

Preparation

1. In a large skillet, cook meat and onion until meat is browned. Drain meat on paper plate with paper towel; drain grease from skillet.
2. Add meat, onions back to skillet Add 1/3 cup water and remaining ingredients except cheese. Stir and bring to boil. Cover, reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes, stirring often.
3. Sprinkle cheese over pasta. Cover for 2 minutes or until cheese is melted. Serve. Cool leftovers in refrigerator immediately after eating.



Nursery News

Issac Meahshantah Coble

Issac Meahshantah Coble was born Dec. 7, 2019 in Ft. Worth, Texas. He weighed 5 pounds, 15 ounces. Issac is the son of Zachery Coble and Heather Moore and grandson of Sonya Deaton.



Colter Lee Dandy

Colter Lee Dandy was born Dec, 19, 2019 in Bakersfield, Calif. He weighed 7 pounds, 15 ounces and was 19¼ inches long. Colter is the son of Crystal Lee Dandy and Ken Dandy and grandson of Dickie Lee Holman and Michelle Holman, Vicki Sills and Tom Dandy.

Micah Lionel Martinez

Born 09/07/2019 at St. John's Medical Center in Tulsa, Okla. He weighed 8 pounds, 9 ounces and was 20¼ inches long. He is the son of Jason and Vanna Martinez of Broken Arrow, Okla.; grandson of Ceferino & Lina Martinez and Beatrice Boston. He is the great grandson of the late Harold Boston and the late Janet White.



Broken Arrow, Okla.; grandson of Ceferino & Lina Martinez and Beatrice Boston. He is the great grandson of the late Harold Boston and the late Janet White.

CHOCTAW NATION FOOD DISTRIBUTION

WAREHOUSES & MARKETS
Open 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday
Thursday: 9:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

February 2020
All markets open weekdays, February 3-26,
Closed: February 17, 27 and 28.
Participants can request a calendar at their location.

ANTLERS 400 S.W. “O” ST., 580-298-6443
Nutrition ed. and food demo February 12 and 21, 10:00-1:00


BROKEN BOW 109 Chahta Rd., 580-584-2842
Nutrition ed. and food demo February 4 and 19, 10:00-1:00

DURANT 2352 Big Lots Pkwy., 580-924-7773
Nutrition ed. and food demo February 6 and 14, 10:00-1:00

MCALESTER 3244 Afulota Hina, 918-420-5716
Nutrition ed. and food demo February 5 and 20, 10:00-1:00

POTEAU 100 Kerr Ave., 918-649-0431
Nutrition ed. and food demo February 11 and 25, 10:00-1:00

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

		
Location	Days	Hours
Antlers 580-298-3161	1st & 2nd Tue. Every Month	8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Atoka 580-889-5825	Mon., Wed., Thur., & Fri.	8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Battiest 580-241-5458	1st Tue. of Every Month	8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Broken Bow 580-584-2746	Tue. & Thur. (except for Battiest & Smithville days)	8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Durant 580-920-2100 x-83582	Daily Mon. - Fri.	8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Hugo 580-326-9707	Daily Mon. - Fri	8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Idabel 580-286-2600 x-41113	Daily Mon. - Fri.	8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
McAlester 918-423-6335	Daily Mon. - Fri	8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Poteau 918-649-1106	Daily Mon. - Fri	8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Smithville 580-244-3289	1st Thur. of Every Month	8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Spiro 918-962-5134	Wed., Thur., & Fri.	8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Stigler 918-867-4211	Mon. & Tue.	8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Talihina 918-567-7000 x-6792	Daily Mon. - Fri	8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Wilburton 918-465-5641	Mon. 7 Fri.	8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Mobile Clinic	Tues., Wed., & Thurs.	8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Building Healthy Families Through Good Nutrition		

Gerri Lynn McIntosh

Geri Lynn McIntosh, 39, passed away July 13, 2019.

Geri was born Oct. 19, 1979, in Talihina, Okla., to Patsy Gail (Hampton) and Carl McIntosh.

She was preceded in death by her mother.

Geri is survived by daughters Erica Oliver and Airelle Carpenter; sons Albert DeWayne Carpenter and Gabriel Carpenter; brothers Carl McIntosh Jr., Brian McIntosh, and James Walker; sister Stephanie McIntosh; father Carl McIntosh; grandchildren Landon, Nevaeh, Daxton, and Kade; many nieces, nephews and cousins.

For the full obituary, please visit [McCarn Funeral Service](#).

**Johnnie Addeane Sherer**

Johnnie Addeane Sherer, 95, passed away Nov. 20, 2019.

Johnnie was born July 12, 1924, in Stigler, Okla., to Myrtle Robinson and Marion Wright.

She was preceded in death by her parents; sister Freida; first husband Lawrence, and second husband Harry Sherer.

Johnnie is survived by daughters Kathryn Kelley, Jo Ann Healey, and Cynthia Sprehe; granddaughters Lindsey, Rebecca, Brenna, Haley and Ruby; grandson David; and great-granddaughter Teagan.

For the full obituary, please visit [Hill and Wood Funeral Home](#).

**Sue Dietz**

Sue Dietz, 70, passed away Nov. 28, 2019.

Sue was born Dec. 6, 1948, in McCurtain Co., Okla., to Mack and Melvina Sweeten.

She was preceded in death by her parents; and brothers Larry Sweeten and Charles Sweeten.

Sue is survived by son Keith Dietz and spouse Kristen; daughter Tracey Dietz; grandson James Bussman and Emily Semon; nephew Jackson Dietz; niece Emily Dietz; brothers Sammy Sweeten and Jerry “Toddy” Sweeten; sisters Charlotte Morrison and spouse Larry, Gloria Garza, Bobbie Person and Ramona Montalvo.

For the full obituary, please visit [Gordon Funeral Home](#).

**Linda Rawlins**

Linda L. Rawlins, 69, passed away Nov. 30, 2019.

Linda was born Feb. 16, 1950, to Mary Sue Puckett and Robert David Puckett.

She was preceded in death by her parents; and grandmother Lou LeFlore Maddux.

Linda is survived by daughter Miranda Kaylin Rawlins and spouse David; son Mark William Rawlins and spouse Melissa; grandsons Dakota, Timothy, Justin, Nathan, and Elijah; granddaughters Savannah and Haley; sister Kathryn Susan Henderson and spouse Rick; and nephew Jonathan James Henderson.

For the full obituary, please visit [Sunny Lane Funeral Home and Cemetery](#).

**Mary Stella Lomahaftewa**

Mary Stella (Wright) Lomahaftewa, 95, passed away Nov. 6, 2019.

Mary was born June 29, 1924, in Duncan, Okla., to Anna Bond and Andrew Wright.

She was preceded in death by husband Clifford; sons Danny and Newton; brother Oliver Mansfield; grandsons Timothy and Walter; great-granddaughter Eileen Siquah.

Mary is survived by sister Harriet (Wright) Amerman, daughters Gloria and Linda; son Cliff “Woody”; 9 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren; 2 great-great grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

For the full obituary please visit [Biskinik](#).

**Larry Dewayne Williams**

Larry Dewayne Williams, 69, passed away Nov. 29, 2019.

Larry was born Jan. 9, 1950, to Elbert and Florence (Syler) Williams.

He was preceded in death by his parents and sister Rita.

Larry is survived by daughter Heather Williams and boyfriend Jordan Moraga; grandchildren Daniel and Jordan Marie; brothers Charles Williams and spouse Verna, Clifford Williams, Jimmy Williams and spouse Gayla, Johnny Williams and spouse Audrey, and Harold Williams and spouse Pauline.

For the full obituary, please visit [Holmes~Cofey~Murray Funeral Home](#).

**James Houston McClure**

James Houston “Mackey” McClure Sr., 78, passed away Dec. 4, 2019.

Mackey was born Nov. 5, 1941, in Denison, Tx., to N.B. McClure and Verna McClure-McDonald.

He was preceded in death by his parents; stepdad Paul Allen McDonald; and sister Marilyn McClure.

Mackey is survived by wife Carol (Fehr) McClure; sons James H. “Jim” McClure Jr. and spouse Rhonda, Nathan “Nat” McClure and spouse Kathleen, and Nicholas “Nick” McClure; daughter Jennifer Reed and spouse Clark; grandchildren Logan, Grant, Morgan, Regan, Houston, Sean, Kalyn, Henry, and Jaxon; sister Kathy Sturch and spouse Ernest; and many nieces and nephews.

For the full obituary, please visit [Bratcher Funeral Home](#).

**Patti Ann Atwood**

Patti Ann Atwood, 85, passed away Oct. 18, 2019.

Patti was born March 14, 1934, to Robin and Bertha Emmert.

She was preceded in death by her husband Jack Atwood; parents; sisters Betty Moline and Frances Purifoy; brother Jack Emmert; first husband Phillip Hust; and special niece and nephew Robin Emmert Neason and Hunter Neason.

She is survived by daughter Kathryn Butler and spouse Richard; sons Charles Hust and spouse Tisha, Richard Hust, and Boyce Hust; twelve grandchildren, fifteen great-grandchildren; brothers Bob Emmert, John Emmert and spouse Janie, Mark Emmert and spouse Florene; many nieces and nephews; and beloved dog Foxy.

For the full obituary, please see [McCarn Funeral Service](#).

**Glenda Bradshaw**

Glenda Bradshaw, 63, passed away Oct. 28, 2019.

Glenda was born Jan. 25, 1956 to J.D. “Chic” and Charlene (Gallagher) Bradshaw.

She was preceded in death by her father; grandparents and great-grandparents Charles and Eunice Gallagher, Les and Thula Markham, John and Myrtle Rider, Oscar and Willie Bascom.

Glenda is survived by son Dane Evans; grandson Brodie Evans, mother Charlene Bradshaw; brothers Lyle Bradshaw, Curtis Bradshaw and spouse Brenda; nephews Baron Bradshaw, Eric and Brandon Vanhook; niece Brase Bradshaw Booth; longtime friends and prayer warriors Mary Mathews Ramsey, Connie Littlefield, Peggy Mustin and Janet Ransom; special friends, Karen McAhern, Denise Regouby, Joyce Jones and other friends and relatives.

For the full obituary, please visit [Evans & Miller Funeral Home](#).

**Christine Lee Maxwell-Byrum**

Christine Lee Maxwell-Byrum, 94, passed away Sept. 30, 2019.

Christine was born June 14, 1925, in Whitefield, Okla., to Fred Thomas Cricklin and Mary (Jackson) Cricklin.

She was preceded in death by her parents; daughter Peggy Maxwell Gragg; son Paul Russell Maxwell; grandson Casey Gragg; brothers Joe and Claud Cricklin; and sister Annie Barrow.

Christine is survived by daughters Brenda Satterfield and spouse Bill, Paula Hebb and spouse Ron, Christie Maxwell, and Tracey Fields; sons, Danny Maxwell and spouse Teresa, and Tony Maxwell; 61 grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren; special friend Dean Chandler; and many nieces, nephews, other family members and friends.

For the full obituary, please visit [Biskinik](#).

**Linda Sue Campbell**

Linda Sue Campbell, 62, passed away Dec. 30, 2019.

Linda was born May 18, 1957, in Raymondville, TX., to Theodore “Ted” and Norma Nell (Cook) Boehm.

She was preceded in death by her father; and sister Debbie Browning.

Linda is survived by spouse Tony Campbell; sons Cody Campbell, Justin Permenter and Jason Permenter; one grandchild; her mother; brother Teddy Boehm; and sisters Cindy Helm and Annette Chambliss.

For the full obituary, please visit [Resthaven Funerals](#).

**Danny Matthew Johnson**

Danny Matthew Johnson, 53, passed away Dec. 4, 2019.

Danny was born Nov. 12, 1966, in Ada, Okla., to Murriel Johnson Sr. and Florence Leona Wall Johnson.

He was preceded in death by brother Murriel Johnson Jr.

Danny is survived by his parents; daughters Tabitha Johnson and spouse Alex, and Jena Johnson; sons Steven Johnson and spouse Eliza, and Devin Johnson and spouse Ally; the mother of his children Shawna Johnson; brothers Roy Johnson and spouse Lula, Randall Johnson, Terry Johnson, and Clark Johnson and spouse Michelle; sister Patty Daniels and spouse Oshiel; grandchildren Chrissy Johnson, Isabella Johnson, Carlisle Johnson and a grandchild on the way.

For the full obituary, please visit [Criswell Funeral Home](#).

Thomas Earl Stark

Thomas Earl Stark, 79, passed away Oct. 12, 2019.

Thomas was born June 13, 1940, in Oklahoma City, Okla., to John Thomas Stark and Francis Jane (Pegg) Oliver.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

Thomas is survived by sons Thomas Allen and spouse Sara, and Alan Stark and spouse Kimberly; special friends Tom and Mary Sloan; brothers Burl Oliver and spouse Judy, and Dan Oliver; grandchildren Abby, Davis and Trace Stark, Seth and Sawyer Wilson; great grandchildren Xander, Xaia and and Xarie Stark; and a host of family and friends.

For the full obituary, please visit [Alexander Gray Funeral Home](#).

**James O. Thomas**

James O. “J.O.” Thomas, 89, passed away Dec. 26, 2019.

He was preceded in death by his parents; wife, granddaughter; two brothers and one sister.

James is survived by daughters Tammie, Janice, Renee and Nelda; many grandchildren; numerous great-grandchildren; one brother and one sister.

For the full obituary, please visit [Twin City Funeral Home](#).

**Edith Geraline Thomas**

Edith Geraline (Talley) Thomas, 97, passed away Oct. 28, 2019.

Geraline was born Aug. 1, 1922, in Mead, Okla., to Marion and Annie Jeannette (McIntyre) Talley.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband J.H. (Jay) Thomas Jr.; son-in-law Bruno Leuzinger; and siblings Irene, Lorene, Pauline, Emmitt, Alton and Clovis.

Geraline is survived by daughters Deanna Leuzinger, and Natoma Stephens and spouse Buddy; grandson Brad Stephens and spouse Melanie; granddaughter Traci Miller and spouse Tim; grandson Jeffery Leuzinger and spouse Tara; great-grandchildren Devin Miller; Taylor Stephens, Kendall Miller; Nicholas Stephens, Brooke Stephens and Scott Miller; sisters Marlene Luter and spouse Karl, and Linda Boen and Joe Wakefield, Anna Sue Mooney and spouse Ronnie; and many nieces, nephews, and friends.

For the full obituary, please see [Brown’s Funeral Service](#).

**Steve Loring David**

Steve Loring David, 56, passed away Dec. 18, 2019.

Steve was born April 4, 1963, in Dequeen, Ark., to Arville David and Willa Dean (Dozier) David.

He is survived by spouse Becky; son Jody David and spouse Chandran; daughter Heather Perry and spouse Jason; sister Cindy Raney; brother Scott David and spouse Marie; brother-in-law Danny Allen; grandchildren Jaylee Perry, Camden Perry, Asher David, and Adler David; numerous nieces and nephews; and a host of other family and friends.

For the full obituary, please visit [Miller & Miller Funeral Home](#).

**Billy Hugh Moore**

Billy Hugh Moore Jr., 50, passed away Dec. 17, 2019.

Billy was born Aug. 20, 1969, in Talihina, Okla., to Dewena (McIntosh) Moore and Billy Hugh Moore Sr.

He was preceded in death by his father; grandfathers; grandmothers; uncles Anthony McIntosh, Jesse Brunson, John Crites, Paul Vannoy, Uriah Stephens; aunts Trudy McIntosh, Peggy Fassio, and Clara Crites; and special friend Henry Cathey.

Billy is survived by his mother; sister Elizabeth Ludlow and spouse Kenny; nephew Ryan Ludlow; niece Katelyn Ludlow; great-nephews Kenyon and Bryant “Cha Cha” Ludlow; cousins Coy and Whitney Stephens, Aidon and Camdon Stephens, Tamara Walker, Jeremy Whitlock, Brian and Colton Walker, Bradley and Tina Burnett, Jesse Clyde and Carolyn, Johnny, Jana, Joey, Jimmy and James Crites, Susie Fassio Ogren, and Bobby Fassio, Sam and Becca Brunson, Andrew and Shelia Wade, John and Acy Goggins, Jennifer and Bella; aunts Edna Vannoy and Toneya Brunson; sisters-in-law Lavernia Ludlow, Cheryl Ludlow Mills, Stella and Chester Dennis, Shellie Dennis, Cassi Dennis Miller, Brownie and Louis McIntosh and Alma Pickle; special cousins Corie Wall, Nyesa Cathey, Veronica Anthony and “Pootie” Lillie Brunson; and many friends.

For the full obituary, please visit [McCarn Funeral Services](#).

**Carl Edward McIntosh Sr.**

Carl Edward McIntosh Sr., 80, passed away Dec. 2, 2019.

Carl was born Oct. 17, 1939, in Talihina, Okla., to Clara Marie Robinson and Carl McIntosh.

He was preceded in death by his parents; wife Patsy McIntosh; daughter Geri Lynn McIntosh; and sister Coreen Sabala.

Carl is survived by sons Carl McIntosh and spouse Larrea, Brian McIntosh and spouse Julie, and James Walker; daughter Stephanie McIntosh; brother Alvin “Brownie” McIntosh; sister Stella Dennis and spouse Chester; eleven grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

For the full obituary, please visit [McCarn Funeral Services](#).

**Lewis Gene Jones**

Lewis Gene Jones, 65, passed away Dec. 24, 2019.

Lewis was born June 29, 1954, in Coalgate, Okla., to Myrtle Ann McGahey Jones and Gaston Claud Jones.

He was preceded in death by his parents; sisters Claudia Ann Mestan and Neva Irene Brumley; brother Fred Jones; and great-niece Jessica Powers.

Lewis is survived by wife Rosalinda Jones; daughters Dr. Carmen Jones and Dr. Gena Jones Archer; brother Luther Bernard Jones; four grandchildren; several nieces and nephews.

For the full obituary, please visit [Wooster Funeral Home & Cremation Services](#).

**Michael Ray Forbach**

Michael Ray Forbach, 58, passed away Dec. 24, 2019.

Michael was born March 14, 1961, in San Bernardino, Calif., to JoAnn Simpson Lewis and James Lewis.

He was preceded in death by his parents; and brother Darrell Lewis.

Michael is survived by daughter Savannah Chapman and spouse Kenneth; stepdaughter Tamra Nuckols; grandchildren Kobe Chapman, Terrian Harris, Lindsey Chapman and Bobbie Chapman; great-grandson Everest Chapman; brothers Jeff Lewis, Robert Lewis, Tony Lewis, Phillip Lewis and Mitchel Lewis; and sister Melissa Kilcrease.

For the full obituary, please visit [Criswell Funeral Home](#).



Ada Brown serves to inspire others

By Chris Jennings

The Choctaw people have a long history of a well-established legal system. Continuing in that tradition is Midwest City’s own, Judge Ada Brown, great-granddaughter of original enrollee Edward P. Snead.

Judge Brown was recently nominated by President Donald Trump to be a United States District Court Judge for the Northern District of Texas. The nomination makes Brown the first female African-American federal judge nominated by President Trump and confirmed by Senate.

Judge Brown said, “When I became a judge, I felt like I was part of that family history. It begins with my great-grandfather’s uncle who was a Choctaw Lighthorseman, and then my grandfather, who was a court reporter for a district court judge. His child, [Brown’s great-uncle] became a district court judge.”

With memories of hearing about court cases from her great-uncle and with a such a family presence in service to the law, Judge Brown largely forged her own path.

She attended Spelman College, where she received her Bachelor of Arts, magna cum laude, and her Juris Doctor from Emory University School of Law on a Presidential Scholarship.

Judge Brown’s first appointment to a judgeship made her the youngest sitting judge in Texas. In her case, though, her experience prior to that far outweighed any misgivings her young age might have presented.

After graduating from Emory, she became an Assistant District Attorney in Dallas, Texas, where she specialized in prosecuting felony internet crimes against children and tried over 100 jury trials as lead prosecutor. Then she served as a trial judge in Dallas County Criminal Court.

From there, Judge Brown transitioned to a civil career with McKool Smith in Dallas, where she specialized in prominent commercial litigation and patent infringement cases.

Judge Brown was appointed by Texas Governor Rick Perry to serve as Commissioner for the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement, and later as a Commissioner for the Texas Department of Public Safety.

When she left those posts to become an appellate court judge, Perry awarded her the Yellow Rose of Texas Award, reflecting the tremendous job she did in those positions. She was also made an honorary Captain of

the Texas Rangers.

In 2013, Brown was appointed to the Fifth Court of Appeals of Texas. There, she was the highest rated justice on her appellate court in four of the five areas of evaluation in a 2019 Dallas Bar poll. Judge Brown says her main goal as a judge is, “Whatever happens at the end of the day, the person who’s accused feels like the referee was fair.”

With a long list of experience at such an early age one might think Judge Brown knew her destiny from the beginning, but that was not the case.

It was at Spelman that Judge Brown discovered her passion for law. Enrolled as a biology student, she took a Women in Law class on a whim, and this is where she realized she had found her calling.

“Mainly what attracted me to it was that you spoke for others. That you took on the burden for someone who was either a victim or a client, and you listened to their story,” said Judge Brown.

Judge Brown does not take the responsibility lightly. “You’re determining whether or not they’re going to go to jail at the end of the day, so you just hope that your ears hear the truth and that you balance the need to protect society with the need for compassion when it’s appropriate,” said Judge Brown.

She continued, “I remember the first time I put on my robe, and I walked up the steps, and the judge sits higher than everyone else. You open up the door and the bailiff calls, and all of a sudden people stand up for you. You’re very aware of your responsibilities.”

Responsibilities that Judge Brown began learning as a young woman when she was elected Student Body President, a position she says was her first real leadership position. This is where she learned that you cannot do anything alone.

Knowing that her position could inspire young Choctaw men and women who are interested in law, Judge Brown encourages them to follow in her footsteps. Get



Photo by Mohammad Dezfuli

Judge Ada Brown is sworn in as United States District Court Judge for the Northern District of Texas as her parents look on.

involved in school and school politics. “Learn to become a leader. It’s a learned skill, like anything else...great leadership takes great practice,” said Judge Brown.

Even if you have a natural talent, Judge Brown is adamant that you still have to practice in order to be your best. God gives everybody a little special talent. Some people are meant to be judges and some people are meant to be artists. “Whatever it is that you’re supposed to do, do that with excellence and make your tribe proud,” said Judge Brown.

Beginning with the Choctaw Lighthorseman and up to present times with her service as a federal judge, Judge Brown is proud of her family’s history. She does not take it for granted though; she feels it is important to stay grounded and humble.

Helping to remind her of that goal of humility is a bust of Marie Antoinette in her office. Just like a federal judge, the young French queen had what should have been a lifetime appointment, but she ended up losing her head due to some poor decisions.

Judge Brown is determined to keep her head and her lifetime appointment by being smart, just and fair with all who stand before her.

Work Force Development offers tribal members tools to be successful in job searches

By Shelia Kirven

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma continues to be one of Oklahoma’s largest employers, with the current number of associates being over 10,000.

The Tribe has 23 recruiting and staffing coordinators throughout the service area ready to assist applicants who are looking for employment. They also assist tribal programs looking to hire new associates. Recruiters are officed in Durant, Idabel, Grant, Pocola, Talihina, Broken Bow and McAlester.

Services are also offered by Work Force Development, a new department that works as a liaison between Choctaw tribal members and the tribe’s recruiters. Rob Dromgoole, Senior Director of Recruiting, leads the team who assists with these services. Team members are Sharon Dodson, Work Force Development Manager; John Detten and Craig Northcutt, both Work Force Development Coordinators; and Brianna Longinotti, Work Force Development Analyst.

Work Force Development makes the tribe’s recruiting and hiring teams unique. It assists with services that provide Choctaws with opportunities to develop the comprehensive skills necessary to enter the workforce, including interview feedback, resume building, mock interviews, internships and training/education recommendations. They also partner with other tribal programs, including Choctaw Career Connect and Choctaw College Connect.

Additionally, Choctaw Nation Employment Training Services (previously known as the WIOA Program) partners with the program as well, as they can assist with temporary job placement outside the tribe in some cases.

The Work Force Development team assists with referrals to other agencies; they speak at conferences, attend job fairs and visit local high schools and colleges to talk about job opportunities with the tribe. In 2019, they visited over 60 high schools in the service area to inform students of job opportunities and internships available. They also hold resume workshops per year.

Advisement and advocacy are other services offered through Work Force De-



Photo by Deidre Elrod

Choctaw students who served as interns for tribal departments in 2019 pose outside the Tribal Headquarters in Durant.

velopment. The team works with applicants to ensure they have the necessary tools to apply for positions and be successful in interviews. They stress the importance of good, strong resumes, stating that it is important that a resume be directed for the particular position you are applying for and that the right kinds of experience be listed to show the hiring manager that you have the experience needed for the job.

Additionally, they recommend using tools like LinkedIn, a web-based professional recruiting tool that assists applicants with job searches and networking. The team also urges job seekers to watch the Choctaw Nation website constantly for positions that are posted.

Other tips the team shares are to have a professional email and voicemail set up with a professional sounding recording; answer your phone when it rings--don’t make the caller have

to go to voicemail as it could be a recruiter or someone calling about a position you have applied for; be punctual for interviews; and dress for success.

The team is planning a partnership with the Choctaw Nation Business Development Program and visits to chambers of commerce and local community businesses for possible opportunities. They have also been invited to speak at upcoming conferences in San Diego and Ft. Worth to share information on services their team provides, including speaking about servant leadership.

Job fairs will be coming to all 10½ counties soon. More information will be posted as information is available.

To view and apply for open positions, applicants can go to jobs.choctawnation.com, build a profile, complete the application and upload a resume, and then start applying for positions. Please note that when viewing open positions, there may be multiple openings of the same position. For example, you may see only one posting for a cashier, but there may be 20 of that job available.

Applicants are welcome to visit with a recruiter, a Work Force Development staff member, or a Choctaw Nation community center representative where they can receive personal assistance if they prefer not to utilize the website themselves.

For questions, call 800-522-6170, visit with one of our recruiters, a member of the Work Force Development staff, or a representative from your local Choctaw Nation community center.

Help Choctaws get counted during the 2020 census

The U.S. Census, which is conducted every ten years, will take place in 2020. Field workers hired by the Census Bureau will be coming to neighborhoods between now and next spring to verify residential addresses. If they come to your home, please make sure they have your address correct.

The Census questionnaire, due to be mailed on April 1, 2020, will include a question about the respondent’s ethnic heritage. Federal agencies use the official Census results to determine the amount of money made available to the tribe through grants. The first step to correctly filling out the Census will be to ensure every potential recipient receives it.

Only 24,000 Choctaw Nation tribal members indicated their tribal affiliation in the 2010 U.S. Census. The tribal membership is over 200,000.

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Choctaw Nation Cultural Services

ITI FABVSSA

Strategic Development strengthens the future of the tribe

Over the next few months, Iti Fabvssa will reflect on each division of our executive branch of government: Legal & Compliance, Strategic Development, Commerce, Integrated Services, and Tribal Services.

While our needs today differ from the past, these services have deep roots in our Choctaw history. This article focuses on the Division of Strategic Development for the Choctaw Nation. Established in 2019, the Division of Strategic Development coordinates the various parts of the Choctaw Nation to work together to grow our businesses, government and communities. Whether managing casinos or taking on government contracts, this division ensures that the Choctaw Nation has the resources it needs to ensure our long-term well-being and the tools to achieve operational excellence.

Over the past 30 years, economic development by the Choctaw Nation has vastly improved Choctaw people's lives. Our current economic successes also show how far we have come since the beginning of colonization and our removal from our ancestral homelands. Despite ups, downs and close calls with tribal dissolution and termination, Choctaw leadership has made key strategic decisions to ensure that Choctaw people and lifeways would always exist. In this month's article, we will review three moments and strategies that Choctaws have undertaken to secure our ability to govern our land and ensure the endurance of Choctaw people and ways of life throughout time. The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma of today would be nothing if not for the decisions that Choctaw ancestors and past leadership made regarding Choctaw survival.

TRADE

The arrival of European settlers to North America was a key point in Choctaw history, especially since the introduction of the market economy caused immense changes to Choctaw political structures and the land's environment. The market economy, which brought in the idea of private property, was a stark difference from the traditional Choctaw economy. European traders, particularly the French who allied with Choctaws, learned to participate in Choctaws' subsistence-based traditional economy with its practice of gift-gifting steeped in our values of reciprocity and generosity. But things did not stay the same for long. As Choctaws increasingly traded with Europeans, these trade networks reshaped the land and availability of the plants and animals that the Choctaw traditional economy had been built around for so long. Over time, Choctaws became increasingly dependent on European trade for their survival as their subsistence lifestyle became harder to maintain due to increased pressures on land and food sources. For instance, demand for deerskins supplied by Choctaws led to over-hunting and a decline in white-tailed deer populations. In response, Choctaws began to move into their borderlands and increasingly engage in farming meant for selling crops in a market to ensure steady food supplies. The shift in agricultural practices was a response to the changes in the land as well as dealing with Europeans' growing political power and demand for Indigenous land.

TREATIES

While Choctaws benefited from trade with Europeans that brought in new goods, it also was a period of massive political, economic and environmental change. Soon Choctaw leaders had to make unprecedented decisions and enter new terms of engagement with Europeans in order to maintain peaceful relations. This resulted in the signing of treaties, which recognized Europeans (and later Americans) and Choctaws as sovereign political entities. As Choctaws increasingly engaged with Euro-Americans, whether through marriages or sending delegates to Washington, D.C. to negotiate with American leaders, they realized the importance of understanding how Euro-American society worked.

EDUCATION

As British, and then American, power increased on the continent, Choctaws turned to Euro-American-style education. As previous Iti Fabvssa articles on Choctaw education and historian Clara Sue Kidwell's book "Choctaws and Missionaries in Mississippi, 1818-1918" have shown, missionaries were an important resource for Choctaws to learn English and the European ways of life to give them an advantage. Choctaw leaders like Pushmataha sent their children to missionary schools where they were educated in English and Euro-American ways. When Choctaws first arrived in Indian Territory, they had to recreate Choctaw society in a new land that they knew little about. Among the first things Choctaws built were schools. We built the first schools in Indian Territory, using the missionaries to ensure that Choctaw children would have an education. These schools helped Choctaws raise the next generation of leaders to govern and sustain us in our new lands.

DEVELOPMENT

Despite removal and Choctaw leaders' best efforts to protect our lands promised by treaties, our land in Indian Territory was under constant threat. Following the Civil War, Choctaws were forced to accept the Treaty of 1866. One of the treaty's most significant compromises was allowing a North-South and East-West railroad through Choctaw territory. Already dealing with issues with white intruders coming into Choctaw territory, Choctaw chiefs responded to this problem by crafting a new strategy that recognized the potential of industrial development for our people.



Submitted photo

As British, and then American, power increased on the continent, Choctaws turned to Euro-American-style education. In 1835, Ebenezer Hotchkins and Cyrus Kingsbury, Presbyterian ministers, established the Yakni Achukma "Good Land" Mission station. In 1838, William Fields, a full-blood Choctaw, built the first home on the Goodland Academy campus.

In 1875, Chief Coleman Cole proposed in the Star Vindicator, the then McAlester-area newspaper, that the Choctaw Nation should begin developing their mineral resources in order to establish more boarding schools for Choctaw children. In this period, mining was new and growing. Chief Cole saw an opportunity for the Choctaw Nation to be at the forefront of the mining industry in our territory. He stated, "Let us educate, or we will be a lost people. Let our rising generation be prepared to meet the great change that will in course of time take place with the United States Government. At present, we are in no condition for that change." For Chief Cole, mining was an early form of economic development that could be used toward the betterment of Choctaw children who would have to deal with the United States government just as Cole's and previous generations had done.

Cole's decision to develop this industry was an important claim to our territory. This decision turned all coal lands into Choctaw property. This is significant not only because mining revenue provided funding for schools, but it also made certain the federal government would have to deal with Choctaws as a sovereign entity. While the Choctaw Nation was seen not to exist on paper after Oklahoma statehood, it still existed in practice. While operating in a minimal form via the office of the chief, the Choctaw Nation continued to live this way up into the rebirth of our government in the mid-1900s. Thanks to the diligence and commitment of Choctaw community members, Congress stopped termination and legally restored tribal government.

Despite multiple attempts by the U.S. government to eliminate Choctaws as a sovereign nation, we have survived and continue to exist as a people. Key decisions by Choctaw leadership like Chief Cole ensured that Choctaws existed legally while Choctaw people held onto our ways of life even though the U.S. government stated that we no longer existed. Today, Choctaw Nation leadership has created divisions like Strategic Development to carry on the legacy of making decisions for the betterment of Choctaw people. While departments like Strategic Development are new, they follow a long tradition of maintaining Choctaw lifeways.

In the upcoming articles, we will reflect more on the ways that the Divisions of the Choctaw Nation Executive Branch carry on ancient and important functions to the benefit of our community today. For more information, please contact Megan Baker at (580) 380-0880, or at meganb@choctawnation.com. To read past issues of the Iti Fabvssa, including articles on the Choctaw schools and education, visit choctawnation.com/history-culture/history/iti-fabvssa.

For additional reading:

Kidwell, Clara Sue. 1997. Choctaws and Missionaries in Mississippi, 1818–1918. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.

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Miner, H. Craig. 1989. The Corporation and the Indian: Tribal Sovereignty in Indian Territory, 1865–1907. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.

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Lisa Billy honored with Inter-Tribal Council resolution



By Kellie Matherly

During the general session of the quarterly Inter-Tribal Council meeting, the leaders of the Five Civilized Tribes recognized Lisa Johnson Billy (Chickasaw/Choctaw) for her service as Oklahoma's first Secretary of Native American Affairs.

Gov. Bill Anoatubby of the Chickasaw Nation said, "In this position, Secretary Billy was an excellent representative of Native American culture, values and politics in Oklahoma's government. Mrs. Billy is, was and remains an individual of great knowledge, humor and kindness but also a woman of immense resolve, driven to fight for all Native people, no matter the cost to her personally."

Anoatubby read Resolution #20-6, which states in part, "Lisa J. Billy worked tirelessly to develop productive, constructive and meaningful partnerships between the State of Oklahoma and Tribes in numerous areas of mutual interest, and Lisa J. Billy served both the citizens of Oklahoma and tribal nations with honor, integrity, wisdom and distinction."

Tribal leaders presented Billy with a medal, a drum, and a copy of the resolution honoring her service.

Billy opened her acceptance speech by thanking tribal leaders in each of their Indigenous languages and reinforcing the steadfast unity of the tribes. "We will win. We are the hosts of this land. We are the sovereign nations. We are the leaders. God put us here, and we are here for a purpose and a reason, so let our unity of

message be mighty and powerful as we move forward," she said. In closing, Billy remarked, "It was an honor to serve. I wish I could have gotten the job completed, but we will continue to move forward."

In a letter to Gov. Kevin Stitt dated Dec. 23, 2019, Billy resigned her post as Secretary of Native American Affairs.

Billy's abrupt exit came at the height of the escalating dispute between the governor and tribal leaders over the renewal of the gaming compact, which guarantees Oklahoma tribes the exclusive right to operate gaming facilities in the state. She resigned just three days after Gov. Stitt announced that Oklahoma Attorney General Mike Hunter had stepped away from negotiations on the gaming compact and that Stitt would be taking over.

In her resignation letter, Billy accuses Stitt of being "committed to an unnecessary conflict" with tribal partners that "poses a real risk of lasting damage to the State-Tribal relationship and to our economy." Tribes paid the state just over \$148 million in gaming fees alone in 2018, up \$10 million from 2017. The overall economic impact of the tribes Oklahoma has neared \$13 billion. Figures for 2019 have not been finalized.

In a recent press conference, Stitt suggested that he might be open to the idea of allowing private, out-of-state gaming operators to replace tribal facilities if the dispute is not resolved. He also suggested that vendors doing business with tribal casinos after Dec. 31 would be operating illegally. Billy has suggested the governor was advised against this approach, but that he has "remained intent on breaking faith with the Tribes."

In a written statement following Billy's resignation, Governor Stitt stated that his administration "has been and remains committed to working collaboratively with the Tribes. We regret that we won't have the wisdom of Lisa Billy's counsel in that endeavor." However, Billy stated in her letter that Stitt has "dismissed advice and facts that show the peril of [his] chosen approach."

"All my efforts have focused on improving the health of the State-Tribal relationship," said Billy in her resignation letter. "Your actions have shown that my continuing in service on your cabinet is unnecessary to you and impossible for me."

Though she served in the governor's cabinet for just under a year, Billy is no stranger to public service and politics. Billy served in the Chickasaw Nation Legislature from 1996-2002 and the Oklahoma House of Representatives from 2004-2016 prior to her appointment to the governor's cabinet. During her time in Gov. Stitt's cabinet, she traveled across Oklahoma, meeting with elected tribal leaders and speaking at Inter-Tribal Council meetings. She also hosted a tribal youth summit and

arranged for members of the governor's cabinet to tour tribal facilities.

Upon the public release of her resignation letter, Gov. Bill Anoatubby said, "Lisa Billy is a dedicated public servant whose work in the Oklahoma legislature and the Chickasaw Nation legislature has drawn accolades from all who are familiar with her career. She worked diligently to strengthen the relationship between the State and the Tribes long before she began her tenure as the secretary of Native American affairs. While we are saddened by the situation that led Lisa Billy to resign, we commend her for demonstrating the courage of her convictions by taking this principled action."

Southeastern Oklahoma Indian Credit Association & Choctaw Revolving Loan Fund

The Southeastern Oklahoma Indian Credit Association offers small business, home, home improvement and agriculture loans. The Choctaw Revolving Loan Program offers micro-loans, available for emergency home improvements and small businesses.

For more information, please contact Susan Edwards at (580) 924-8280 ext. 2161, ext. 2158 or toll-free (800) 522-6170.

Southeastern Oklahoma Indian Credit Association Loan
To Be Eligible to Apply:

- Must live within the 10.5 counties of the Choctaw Nation
- Must possess a CDIB card from a federally recognized tribe

Choctaw Revolving Loan Fund
To Be Eligible to Apply:

- Must live within the 10.5 counties of the Choctaw Nation
- Must possess a CDIB card from the Choctaw Nation

If you are interested in applying for a loan a representative will be available at the:

McAlester Community Center
February 14, 2020
9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.



Stalking awareness

January 2020 marks the sixteenth annual National Stalking Awareness Month (NSAM), an annual call to action to recognize and respond to the serious crime of stalking.

Stalking is any unwanted contact between two people that directly or indirectly communicates a threat or places the victim in fear.

Stalking is a serious, prevalent and dangerous crime that impacts every community in the United States. While awareness and public discussion of

intimate partner violence and sexual assault have increased in recent years, stalking remains frequently misunderstood and rarely discussed – both within the fields of domestic and sexual violence and among the broader general public.

It is essential for victims, survivors, service providers and the criminal justice system to be able to identify and name stalking. Stalking is a unique crime that calls for particularized safety planning, investigation, charging and prosecution, as well as the development and implementation of policies and protocols to ensure an effective response. For victims, it can be very empowering to accurately name their experiences as “stalking;” it enables them to make sense of what they are going through and helps them identify and seek appropriate help and resources.

A collective community response is required to end stalking. Friends and family members are usually the first people a stalking victim talks to about what’s going on, and their responses heavily influence whether a victim seeks further help. When friends, family, neighbors, teachers, mentors, and colleagues know how to identify stalking, they are better able to support victims and help keep them safe.

Choctaw Nation Outreach Services is moving forward this year to try and help raise awareness of crime victimization across the Choctaw Nation Service area. For the month of January, the department displayed silver ribbons on trees outside of Outreach Service for stalking awareness month. For more information contact the Victims Service department at (877)285-6893.

Choctaw Nation Tribal Victims Assistance Vicki Perez, Director, Project Empower, Tasha Mitchell, Director; Project SERV, Teola Maytubby, Director, Linda Goodwin, Senior Director.

Choctaw Nation adds more affordable housing

By Bobby Yandell

The Choctaw Nation expanded by 30 Affordable Rental units, 10 Independent Elder units and 10 LEAP homes in January, 2020 as ribbon cuttings were conducted by tribal leadership in Savanna, Calera and Idabel. The affordable rental homes are approximately 1,200 square feet, the Independent Elder units approximately 850 square feet and the LEAP homes 1450 square feet (1550 for a 4 bedroom). They are open to tribal members who meet the income guidelines for each program.

Chief Gary Batton spoke at each ribbon cutting and praised the Tribal Council for their work in planning and appropriating the money for these and the other housing projects currently being built. Chief Batton thanked them for their efforts to provide housing solutions for our tribal members as 190 new rental units, both Independent Elder and Affordable Rental either have been built in the last two years or are currently being built, with at least 60 more being planned for 2020. To date, 230 LEAP homes have been opened since 2018.

One of the recipients of an Affordable Rental unit in Savanna was Jerri Pierson. “By receiving one of these homes, my family has been able to get back on our feet. My children have room to grow and play in our beautiful new spacious home. My family is so thankful for the opportunity to have a beautiful new home thanks to the Choctaw Nation,” said Pierson.

Locations still to be opened this year for rental property and LEAP homes include: Stigler, Antlers, Broken Bow, Wilburton, Calera, Hugo and Atoka. Applications for all housing programs can be picked up at any community center, at the Housing Authority office located at 207 Jim Monroe Road in Hugo or can be found online at the Choctaw Nation website.



Member Legal Assistance Program adopts new intake process

by Kellie Matherly

The Choctaw Nation’s Member Legal Assistance Program (MLAP) was created to “assist tribal members who have limited or no access to legal assistance and have no other option when certain legal rights are at issue.” The program assists qualified applicants with drafting legal court documents for a variety of issues. A new streamlined intake process will help the program fulfill that purpose and ensure resources are devoted to those qualifying members.

Costs for legal services can be steep, often climbing into the thousands. According to Samantha Guinn, attorney for the Member Legal Assistance Program, “Not everyone has an extra three to four thousand dollars lying around to hire a private attorney, and that is why the tribe provides this service.”

Seeking Help

Tribal members seeking help with drafting legal documents will now fill out an application online designed to determine their eligibility for services. Since MLAP can only assist with drafting court documents in certain types of uncontested cases in Choctaw Nation district court or Oklahoma state district court, questions on the application cover residency, membership status, and the type of legal assistance needed. Once applications are complete, they are submitted to Samantha Guinn for review.

If a member qualifies for assistance, they will be contacted by MLAP staff. Guinn will then advise the member on whether they can file in Choctaw Nation court or Oklahoma state court and will prepare the necessary legal documents. The member is responsible for filing the legal documents with the appropriate court, paying any filing fees, and appearing at any hearings. MLAP attorneys cannot go to court with members or serve as their attorney of record.

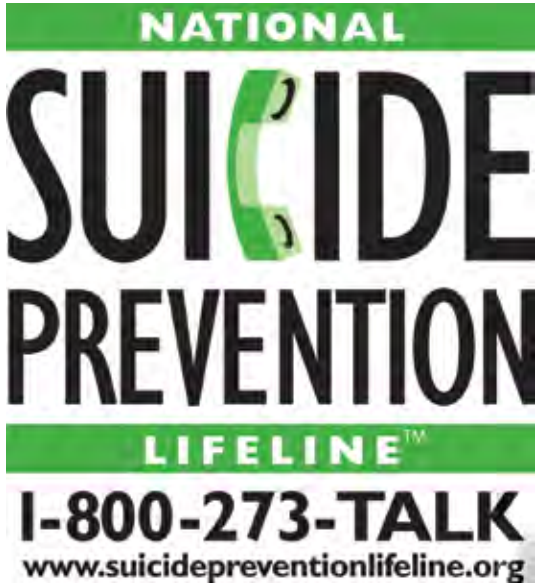
What MLAP Can and Cannot Do

MLAP provides preparation of legal documents for matters such as divorce petitions and responses, guardianships, child custody, grandparent visitation, and name changes. It’s important to note that due to legal and practical limitations, MLAP can only provide assistance for these cases if they are uncontested, meaning the parties agree on how to resolve their issues and just need to file the correct documents so that their agreement is legally binding.

There are some legal issues for which MLAP cannot provide any assistance. MLAP cannot provide assistance for criminal cases, protective orders, real estate or tenant issues, contract disputes, collections, workers’ compensation, membership issues, probates, or estate planning. Tribal members looking for help in these areas can visit the MLAP webpage on the Choctaw Nation website. The link to the MLAP webpage is under the Tribal Services tab and the webpage has links to other available legal resources.

Applying Online

Tribal Members who need legal document drafting help in the listed areas can find the application at the MLAP website (www.choctawnation.com/tribal-services/member-services/member-legal-assistance-program). At this time, the application is only available online, but anyone who does not have internet access at home can access computers at their Choctaw Nation community center or public library.



The word can bring hope

By Wayne Burden

“In the beginning was the Word,” (John 1:1 KJV), what a phrase to begin a letter with. The word, whether spoken, written, sung or signed has always held a central importance throughout the history of humanity. With the word, the Creator brought everything in the known universe into existence. With it, the Creator reached down from his lofty position to expound his will toward humanity. During creation, one of the things the Creator granted to

humanity was the ability to use the word to communicate with each other even across language barriers. The word has been the single most important thing for the growth of humanity over the millennia.

The amazing thing about the word is that it has the unique ability to both build and destroy. As we begin both a new year and a new decade let us decide as a people to use our words to build. There is enough destruction and negativity in our world as it is. In the Choctaw Nation we have the power to choose to transcend the destruction through the power of the word, whether spoken or not. In our families and in the greater communities we can decide to use our words to edify, empower and encourage each other to create a better nation for our future generations. That is the true power of the word. We can cast it well beyond ourselves and well into the future. Perhaps the encouraging words we speak today will be repeated to generations of people that we can’t even imagine at this time, making a better world for them.

At the Tomorrow’s Hope group, we have both counselors and community outreach with the purpose of increasing the number of edifying, empowering and encouraging words among the people of the Choctaw Nation.

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Textile Workshop Series

February 15 10am-2pm, Durant

Join us for a hands-on workshop about preserving historic textiles. Activities will include a demonstration and discussion of wet cleaning historic textiles and quilts, a burn-test activity to identify unknown fibers, using yarn picks (magnifying lenses) to identify fabric structures and basic weaves, learning how to repair damaged places in fabrics, and an opportunity for participants to show, tell and discuss their own historic textiles. Presenters are Dr. Celia Stall-Meadows and Jennifer Byram, both employees of the Choctaw Nation of OK.

This is part of a series of community workshops aiming to reawaken Choctaw traditional textiles. Contact us to join the email list or Facebook group for more events.

FOR REGISTRATION AND LOCATION INFORMATION:
CONTACT JENNIFER BYRAM, HISTORIC PRESERVATION
JBARAM@CHOCTAWNATION.COM OR 580-924-8280 EXT. 2512

ENVISION CENTER MEET AND GREET



GET YOUR TAXES PREPARED

SPEAK WITH RECRUITERS FROM:
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, HUMAN RESOURCES, US CENSUS

Feb 3	Atoka Community Center	Feb 19	McAlester Community Center
Feb 5	Wilburton Community Center	Feb 24	Hugo Community Center
Feb 10	Wright City Community Center	Feb 26	Idabel Community Center
Feb 12	Poteau Community Center		

All times are 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Feb 6, 13, 20, 27 CNO HQ - Durant (BY APPOINTMENT ONLY)
(Other locations available by appointment)

FOR APPOINTMENTS CALL OR TEXT

580-579-9987 OR 580-380-9370

Choctaw Nation Housing Authority

FUTURES OF FOOTBALL SHOWCASE



MARCH 8, 2020 | PAUL LAIRD FIELD
SOUTHEASTERN OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY | DURANT, OK

REGISTRATION AT 9:00 AM | SHOWCASE 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM
IN CASE OF INCLEMENT WEATHER, SHOWCASE WILL BE IN BLOOMER SULLIVAN ARENA.

- Grades 9 - 12
- Athletes will receive instruction and evaluation from regional college coaches
- Lunch will be provided
- Athletes will need to bring comfortable clothing, cleats, and tennis shoes. No other equipment will be necessary.

- Completed Player Profile
- Signed Consent Form
- Recent headshot photo
- Tribal Members must provide a copy of Tribal Membership Card

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: MARCH 2, 2020
CHOCTAWNATION.COM/YOUTH-EVENTS-AND-ACTIVITIES

CONTACT

800-522-6170 EXT. 2636 | MCLAPP@CHOCTAWNATION.COM

Choctaw Nation

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