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CHOCTAW NATION

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The Official Publication of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

January 2012 Issue Serving 211,260 Choctaws Worldwide Choctaws ... growing with pride, hope and success

Corps of Engineers, Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations enter water study agreement

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Tulsa District and the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations recently entered into an agreement to develop the first phase of Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations Regional Water Plan.

This science-based regional water plan will assess the water resources of the Nations’ treaty territory, an area that roughly covers the 22 counties of southeastern and south central Oklahoma.

The plan is designed to develop strategies for the sustainable management of the region’s water resources by considering current and future water needs as well as the condition and adequacy of infrastructure throughout the region.

The \$180,000 cost of the study is federally authorized through the Planning Assistance to States and Tribes program and will be shared equally between the Corps of Engineers and the two Nations.

“We are proud to partner for the first time with the Chickasaw and Choctaw Nations,” said Col. Michael Teague, Tulsa District commander. “Our goals of environmental stewardship and sustainability are very closely aligned and we look forward to a continued partnership.”

The first phase of the study
See WATER Page 5

2012 Annual Choctaw Nation Livestock Show

- Wilburton Show (EOSC Campus)**
- Saturday, Feb. 4
- * Market Swine
 - * Market Sheep
 - * Market Goats
- Sunday, Feb. 5
- * Steer Show
 - * Heifer Show
- Durant Show (Event Center)**
- Saturday, Feb. 4
- * Market Swine
 - * Market Sheep
 - * Market Goats
- Sunday, Feb. 5
- * Steer Show
 - * Heifer Show

For more information visit www.choctawnation.com or call 918-297-2518

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The Mission of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

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

Choctaw gift assists in improvements to SOSU’s auditorium

The future looks bright for Montgomery Auditorium on the campus of Southeastern Oklahoma State University.

Thanks to a generous gift from the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and university funding, the facility will see \$386,000 of improvements that will include the installation of new lighting and theatrical rigging systems.

The auditorium, located inside historic Morrison Hall, plays host to a number of events – both university and community-related. Over the years the venue has hosted politicians, principals, and Pulitzer Prize winners, as well as grand choirs and Grammy winners. Its theatrical productions have included musicals from Oliver to Oklahoma, and playwrights from Dr. Seuss to William Shakespeare.

The auditorium was named for T.T. Montgomery, the 12th president of Southeastern, during a ceremony in June 1953.

The Choctaw Nation is contributing \$257,000 toward the improvements, with the university funding the remainder.

“We are very appreciative of this gift from the Choctaw Nation,” said Southeastern president Larry Minks. “It is a gift not only to the university, but to the community as a whole. This area is very fortunate to have leaders such as Chief Pyle – leaders who never waver in making the commitment to give back to their communities. As a university,



Choctaw Nation: JUDY ALLEN
Southeastern President Larry Minks, left, accepts a gift from Chief Gregory E. Pyle as Southeastern Vice President of Business Affairs Ross Walkup looks on.

we have worked with the Choctaw Nation on a number of what we call ‘win-win projects,’ and we look forward to continuing that partnership.”

“The auditorium’s major systems have, with so much use, become in need of replacement and repair,” said Dell McLain, Chair of the Department of Art, Communication and Theatre. “This enhancement project includes replacing the incandescent theatrical lighting system with a state-of-the-art, all-digital, Intelligent LED lighting system. Once fully operational, the system will be able to support multiple events with greater safety, at a fraction of the energy consumption, heat generation, and cost.”

Tribe presents \$1 million donation to cancer center

To enhance care services for cancer patients and their families, the Choctaw Nation presented a \$1 million gift to the Peggy and Charles Stephenson Cancer Center. In recognition of the gift, the center’s fifth floor, the fifth floor reception area, which offers sweeping views of the Oklahoma City skyline, and the fifth floor seminar room have been named to honor the Choctaw Nation. The seminar room bears the name of Charlotte Jackson, a Choctaw Nation Council person who passed away in 2011 after a battle with cancer.

A reception to celebrate the gift was held Dec. 20, in the fifth floor reception area of the Stephenson Cancer Center in Oklahoma City, on the OU Health Sciences Center campus. Speaking at the reception were Chief Gregory E. Pyle, OU President David L. Boren and Dr. Robert S. Mannel, Director of the Stephenson Cancer Center.

“This generous gift from the Choctaw Nation will support the Patient and Family Services Program and allow the Stephenson Cancer Center to enhance supportive care services and increase staff to meet the needs of cancer patients and families,” said Boren. “More Oklahomans will be able to receive world-class care close to home.”

“It is a privilege for the Choctaw

Nation to be a partner with the Stephenson Cancer Center. The increase in new cases of cancer in the Native American population in general is a graphic illustration of the need for a state-of-the-art cancer treatment center in Oklahoma. We want to be more than a user of the service. The Choctaw Nation wants to be an active part of the solution in the fight against this deadly disease,” added Chief Pyle.

“The Stephenson Cancer Center is deeply grateful for the generosity of the Choctaw Nation. This gift will benefit cancer patients, caregivers and families from every county in Oklahoma,” Dr. Mannel said.

The Patient and Family Services Program addresses the financial, emotional and psychological needs of cancer patients and their fami-



Choctaw Nation: LISA REED
Assistant Chief Gary Batton and Tribal Council members joined University of Oklahoma President David L. Boren as he presents a Seed Sower statue to the tribe as a symbol of its membership in OU’s Seed Sower Society honoring donors of \$1 million or more. Boren and Batton display the statue above.

lies, by offering a wide variety of supportive services, including patient navigators, nurse navigators, social workers, registered dietitians, financial counselors and a patient resource coordinator.

As Oklahoma’s only comprehensive academic cancer center, the Peggy and Charles Stephenson Cancer Center at the University of Oklahoma is raising the standard of cancer treatment in the state and region through patient-centered care, research and education. In association with the Oklahoma Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust, the Stephenson Cancer Center is decreasing the burden of cancer in Oklahoma through innovative laboratory, clinical and populations-based research. Cancer Center
See DONATION Page 11



Choctaw Nation: LARISSA COPELAND

Choctaw Defense holds legislative open house

Touring the Choctaw Defense plant are Chief Gregory E. Pyle; Rep. Richard Lerblance, District 7; Rep. Jeannie McDaniel, District 78; Paul Hood; Rep. Jerry McPeak, District 13; Rep. R.C. Pruett, District 19; Rep. Marian Cooksey, District 39; Rep. Brian Renegar, District 17; Rep. Dustin Roberts, District 21; Steve Benefield, CEO/President, Choctaw Defense; Rep. Weldon Watson, District 79; Bill Case, legislative consultant; Rep. Donnie Condit, District 18; and Bob Henry, V.P. of Operations, Choctaw Defense. Not pictured, Assistant Chief Gary Batton.

Congressional Legislation has positive effect on Jones Academy

From the Desk of
Chief Gregory E. Pyle

It is great to share the news that Jones Academy has been included in U.S. legislation that has restored the school’s eligibility for additional funding through the Bureau of Indian Education.

In 1953, during a period of Tribal termination, many Native American schools, including Jones Academy, were removed from the Bureau of Indian Education school system. This legislation allows Jones Academy to once again be a part of the Bureau of Indian Education system and be reinstated to receive the support of additional federal funding this designation affords.

Thanks to Oklahoma’s 2nd District Congressman Dan Boren, the sponsor of the groundbreaking legislation to reinstate Jones Academy to the BIA funding eligibility, our students will continue to receive a complete academic education in a culturally rich setting.

We are blessed to have a tremendous staff at Jones Academy who are devoted to giving the students the best possible care. The additional funding will be available an the next school



year, and enable an even higher level of success.

Jones Academy has been in important part of the Choctaw Nation since 1891 – first established as a male academy, it now serves as a residence and school for up to 200 students each year from about 29 tribes across the United States.

It was wonderful to hear Congressman Boren say that restoring Jones Academy to the BIA was a priority of his. Providing a successful future for the youth is certainly a priority of ours!

Choctaw Casino Resort KOA receives top service scores

The Choctaw Casino Resort KOA Campground in Durant was recently recognized for receiving the top customer service scores in the 488-park Campgrounds of America system in North America.

The Durant Choctaw Casino Resort KOA is managed by Charlie Tyree. He was recognized as receiving one of the top three customer service scores in the KOA system during the annual Campgrounds of America International Convention last month in Las Vegas, Nev. “My customer service philosophy is simple,” he says. “Make them as happy as I can and make their stay a good one.”

Each year, more than 200,000 KOA campers provide extensive feedback surveys regarding their stays at each KOA campground. Those scores provide the basis for KOA’s annual President’s and Founder’s Awards. The Durant Choctaw Casino Resort KOA received both of those honors for their performance in 2011.

Kampgrounds of America, founded on the banks of the Yellowstone River in Billings, Mont., in 1962, is now the world’s largest system of open-to-the-public family campgrounds. KOA has 475 locations in the United States and Canada.



Chaplain’s Corner Beginning of Sin

For the next few moments let us turn our thoughts to Genesis chapter three. We are going to study the “Beginning of Sin.” We read from Genesis 3:1:

“Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, yea, hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?”

You will notice as you read the book of Genesis that this is the first verse in the Bible with a question mark after it.



REV. BERTRAM BOBB
Tribal Chaplain

The Bible taking this view of sin declares in Romans 3:10: “As it is written, there is none righteous, no not one.”

It will do no good to measure ourselves by the standards of men, for after all, we are going to be judged by the standards of God and His Word. In God’s sight all are sinners and need the cleansing blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no other.

I repeat, Eve first sinned when she doubted God’s Word and God’s goodness and fairness and listened to the devil. All the rest of the acts followed in a natural way.

Notice what Eve said to the serpent in Genesis 3:2-3:

2. “And the woman said unto the serpent, we may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden:

3. But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.”

Right there Eve fell, right there Eve sinned, and the eating of the fruit was only the result of this first sin.

The first sin of Eve was doubting God’s character and justice, and the next was lying. Eve was a liar. Before she was a liar she was an unbeliever.

You might ask how did Eve lie? What Eve quoted God as saying was not the truth. Let’s look at what God had said in Genesis 2:16-17: “And the Lord commanded the man, saying, of every tree in the garden thou mayest freely eat.

“But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”

Compare that with Eve’s statement, “Ye shall not eat of it, lest ye die!” God said, “Thou shalt surely die.” There is a big difference in those two statements. Eve misquoted God’s Word, she lied and quoted God as saying something He had never said. God says surely; the devil says not surely; Eve says, “lest ye die.”

Now as we look closely at the statement of Eve we find that she changed something in the Word of God. She changed certain death to just the possibility of death by saying, “lest ye die” instead of, “thou shalt surely die” And finally, she left out the most important part of God’s Word, surely. God said, “Thou shalt surely die.” From there on the rest was easy, Satan had convinced her that she wouldn’t really die. The record goes on to say that she looked at the tree, desired it, and ate of it, and fell and found out that in spite of her own interpretation of what God meant, it was still true and she died.

In this Eve acted the part of a modern unbeliever. Here is where unbelief begins and it always follows the same course.

Notice the enemy, Satan, quickly detects Eve’s weakness and gives the reply in Genesis 3:4-5:

“And the serpent said unto the woman, ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.”

Notice how Satan twists God’s Word to gain Eve’s mind and then He gives a wrong idea of God. He says, “Yea, hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree in the garden?”

Satan claims that God is unfair in not allowing Adam and Eve to eat of all the trees. Because he has forbidden them to eat from one tree. He is unfair to Adam and Eve is Satan’s method of deceiving Eve.

Notice the answer Eve gave. In this answer we have the beginning and character of all sin. Most people think of sin as only an act rather than an attitude. It is generally believed that Eve sinned first when she ate of the tree which God tad forbidden them to eat. This is not true.

Eve’s first sin was committed before that; she believed the devil instead of God when she believed that God was unfair in not allowing her to eat of all the trees, even the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. That was the root of her sin, and the act of taking the fruit was only the natural result of her questioning the Word of God. Sin is not just an act but an attitude towards God.

We think of murder as a sin, but the Bible says, “Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer...” (1 John 3:15). We think of immoral acts as sin, but Jesus said, it is more. He said “That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” (Matthew 5:28).

Stealing is an outward sin, but it is covetousness or greed in the heart which causes it. Sin is not only in the hand that takes the forbidden fruit, but also in the heart which does not believe God’s Word. This is summed up in the Epistle of James when he says:

“But every man is tempted when he is drawn away from his own lust and enticed, Then when the lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. (James 1:14-15)

Just because a man has not been guilty of some outward act of sin does not mean that he is not a sinner. The act is that which only man sees. God sees both the heard and the act. Man looketh on the outward appearance, but God looketh upon the heart.

If ever there was a time and need for preaching on this view of sin, it is today when man boasts of their goodness and self-righteousness, and just because they live outwardly good and moral lives, deceive themselves into thinking they are not sinners, and do not need a Savior. But once we look at sin as God sees it, as both inward and outward, we can agree with Paul in Romans 3:23: “For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”

God bless individuals who share time and energy to help at Jones Academy

From the Desk of
Assistant Chief
Gary Batton

Visiting Jones Academy each year to deliver Christmas gifts from Chief Pyle and myself and the Choctaw Nation staff is a special blessing. When I arrived this year, the youth were gathered in the dorm (which the kids decorate with Christmas lights, tinsel and a tree) and as I walked in this year, as always, the first thing I saw was the bright smiles of about a hundred children.

Since I have a December birthday, they greeted me by singing “Happy Birthday,” which I thought was grand, then they cheered loudly when the administrator of the academy announced that the envelope I had brought contained a \$3,000 check to help purchase their special Christmas presents. In addition, the volunteers and staff at the school and the employees of the Choctaw Nation had been working for several weeks to purchase and wrap gifts to make sure each and every one of the 170 students at Jones Academy had one of the best holidays they could remember!

By the sparkle in their eyes and the laughter I was hearing, the gifts were very much appreciated!

The presents are just an outward example of the care that is shown these children at the Choctaw Nation – the wellbeing of the youth is truly at the heart of the people involved in every area of the academy. After the presentation in the dormitory, service awards were given to Jones Academy staff employed by the Choctaw Nation from five to 25 years.

As I shook the hands of the recipients



Choctaw Nation: JUDY ALLEN

Jones Academy Administrator Brad Spears accepts a check from Assistant Chief Gary Batton on behalf of the tribe to assist in purchasing Christmas presents for the students.

of the service awards for their many years of work, I had a special appreciation for the special love and dedication that helped them change and improve lives of many individuals.

In addition to the paid staff who work with the students at the academy, volunteers are at Jones each day to help with the children. Attorneys, lobbyists, Congressmen and Senators as far away as Washington, D.C., worked on legislation to change the way funding arrives to the school so that we can improve the campus of our school. And the Tribal Council and Chief are continuously discussing Jones Academy as a priority project, as demonstrated by the recent construction of the beautiful classrooms for grades one through six.

Yes, our youth are certainly a primary concern, and their future is important to our tribe. And I can say with confidence that our leaders are “Walking the Talk,” thanks to the support of a lot of tremendous individuals who share their time and energy. May God bless you all.



Choctaw Nation: LISA REED

Council Speaker Delton Cox presents Lee Hester of Oklahoma City with certification as an instructor for the Choctaw language. Also pictured are Dora Wickson, administrative assistant for the School of Choctaw Language; Richard Adams, assistant director of the School of Choctaw Language; and Assistant Chief Gary Batton.

Council awards certification to new language instructor

The Choctaw Nation Tribal Council met in regular session Dec. 10 at Tushka Homma. New business kicked off with awarding Lee Hester of Oklahoma City certification as an instructor of the Choctaw language. The Choctaw Nation now has 48 certified language instructors.

Councilmembers approved applications for the Upward Bound and Upward Bound Math and Science programs and grants through the Department of Health and Human Services for Environmental Regulatory Enhancement, Assets for Independence Program and Social and Economic Development Strategies.

Budget modifications were approved to the DHHS Administration on Aging and Capital Projects.

Three Council bills related to CDBG grants were passed as well as bills to approve assistance to the Boys & Girls Club of Durant, provide supplemental training and technical assistance for Head Start, and dispose of surplus equipment.

NOTES TO THE NATION



Kuzinz takes first place

I would like to thank the Choctaw Nation, the donation committee and Tony Messenger for their assistance in entering the Chickasaw Nation Festival Women's Fast Pitch Softball Tournament held on Oct. 1 and 2. I am pleased to announce that the Kuzinz fast pitch team achieved first place and received jackets and a trophy. Thank you for your assistance and support in achieving this goal.

Brandon Bohannon, coach

Looking for sister

I am writing this on behalf of my father and myself. My name is Elizabeth Bayer and my father's name is Timothy Bayer. We are both members of the Winnebago tribe of Nebraska. We are writing because we are looking for my little sister, Amelia Diane Bayer. She is a member of the Choctaw Nation and we would like to know her whereabouts. Contact me at 402-987-6504 or my father at 651-292-8899 or 612-670-1225. If you have any information, please give us a call, we would appreciate it. Thank you.

Gift of life

My husband's name is Jerry Thompson. In 2010, we made three trips to Mercy Hospital in Oklahoma City for testing and evaluation of a medical condition in Jerry's stomach. On Feb. 22, 2011, Jerry had a major surgery to remove a cancerous growth in his stomach. After 10 months, a recent evaluation revealed no cancer in his body at this time. We are so thrilled and with that in mind, we give thanks and praise to Chief Pyle and the Choctaw Nation as well as the Chickasaw Nation for their concern and support for the costly operation. It is great to have someone who cares and gives support to tribal members. Thanks again for the generous gift of life to my husband.

Jerry and Ruth Thompson

Thanks for care package

Thank you for my package! I wasn't expecting anything and it was a delightful box of goodies. We really enjoy the Propel water flavor. I shared my beef jerky with some infantry soldiers traveling through. They appreciated it, too.

Also, thank you to Chief Pyle and Assistant Chief Batton. The knife and mini-maglite have both been very handy already. I appreciate all you do for our troops over here. You don't have to, and yet you take the time to think about us.

Katie Latendresse, CPT, U.S. Army

Thankful for ornament

Once again, year after year, you all make me so proud to be a descendant of the Choctaw tribe. I got the lovely Christmas ornament on Nov. 17. How interesting about the drum beginnings. Yakoke!

Cecilia Robinson

Gregory E. Pyle
Chief

Gary Batton
Assistant Chief

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

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



BISKINIK 2012

Thank you

I would like to thank Chief Pyle and the Choctaw Nation for all the wonderful services they provide. My husband and daughter would not have the dentures they own if it were not for the Choctaw Nation. Our grandson is now working at TAFB due to the money for his schooling. Our great-grandsons have clothes for school and you have also helped our granddaughters. There are so many reasons to thank you. I would also like to thank you for the beautiful Christmas tree ornaments, we have six and put them on our tree every year. Thank you so much for everything. Merry Christmas and happy new year to all!

Walter L. Girty

New history concerning William Stanton

New history has been uncovered concerning the death of William Stanton, born 1835-1840 in Arkansas (early Indian Territory). He is buried in the No Town Cemetery in McAlester and many of his ancestors have been researching his family genealogy. This update will be of interest to many of them.

Genealogist Nancy Stanton Lasater of Muskogee has discovered an article from the Daily Arkansas Gazette dated Aug. 22, 1886, which tells the story of Stanton's murder in a north McAlester saloon. It reads: "A fatal shooting affray occurred at McAlester yesterday in which two men were shot - one instantly killed and the other fatally hurt. The difficulty arose over a game of cards. Sheriff Moore was fatally wounded, the shot taking effect in the right temple. One Stanton, a saloon keeper, was shot and instantly killed, two shots striking him, the first taking effect in the right breast, the second entering the mouth and breaking his neck. Sheriff Moore received his wound in trying to separate Stanton and a man named Smith who were fighting. After Smith had fired the shot that hit Moore, Stanton rushed to the back door of the saloon to intercept Smith, who was making for his horse to get away, and fired three shots at him, none of them taking effect. Then Smith opened fire on him with the above effect. Deputies and a posse are scouring the woods for Smith and if found, he will meet with little sympathy. Moore's case is hopeless."

William Stanton was the son of Allen Stanton, born 1795 in Kentucky, and Susanna Lyles, who were married in 1829 in Alabama. Susanna was half-Choctaw and Allen was white. William first married Nancy Watson in Arkansas and had a daughter, Mollie. He is found on the 1870 census living in Texas with his second wife, Sarah Kirk Stanton. William served in the Choctaw/Chickasaw Mounted Rifles during the Civil War. He married a third time to Martha Estep, the daughter of David Estep of Indian Territory. He leaves many ancestors who are researching this Stanton family. For further information on this family, please write to: marty_dar1776@yahoo.com.

Traditional dress, dancers

Pictured at the 2011 Choctaw Nation Pow Wow are the top dancers in the Choctaw Traditional Dress category. They participated in the grand entries and inter-tribals as well as competed in the afternoon and evening sessions. The ladies sincerely thank Michael Roberts, Willard Polk and committee for including the Choctaw traditional dress as a dance category. From left to right are Stephanie Tehauno, Debra Belt, Perrin Deal and champion Shema Yearby-Lincoln. Not pictured is Ms. Yellowfish, who rounded out the top five.



Seeking information

I am looking for any information on Peter Lue Huss, he goes by Lue. He would be around 64-65 years old right now, in his early sixties. If you have any information at all about him, please contact me at 256-350-7560 or 1414 Jackson St. SE Decatur, Ala. 35601.

Mary Gibson

Seeking students

Bryan College in Dayton, Tenn., is a high-level Christian school interested in offering scholarships to diverse students who seek a quality education and qualify. A talent in athletics would also be considered. Any Native American who is interested can request Bryan College brochures by calling 800-277-9522. Thank you.

Thank you to Career Development

I would like to thank the Career Development Program for the grant I was awarded. I was able to put this grant money towards my tuition and I am happy to say that I will soon be graduating from American Commercial College, double certified. Thank you for everything.

Janie Brooks

Thank you for aid with presentation

I would like to personally thank Lisa Reed, Ryan Spring and all staff from the great Choctaw Nation that helped me with a cultural awareness presentation for Phi Theta Kappa honor society. My booth was very successful in educating people about our Choctaw culture, and they loved the Tonchi Labona. Thank you, Auntie Mabel Jacob, for passing the knowledge. I hope to continue my education here in Minnesota and continue to educate others about the wonderful diversity of Native Americans.

Kyndall Shane Noah

40-Year Concert Celebration

The 40-Year Gospel Concert Celebration will be held Jan. 28 at the Portland Ave. Pentecostal Holiness Church at 3636 SW 39th, the corner of SW 39th and Portland, in Oklahoma City at 7 p.m. with concession opening at 6 p.m.

The concert will be broadcast live on AIC.TV. There will be performances by the host group, The Master's Touch; The Kingdom Messengers of Anadarko; The Harjo Family of Ada; Faith, Hope and Love of Durant; Andrea Carpitcher of Tahlequah; Delivered 24/7 of Oklahoma; and Yellowhill Youth Choir of Cherokee, N.C. The Jonathans of Bremen, Ga., are the featured guests and the emcee for the evening is Henry Battiest Jr., of Hollywood, Fla.



Seeking information about photo

The young boy standing in the picture is my grandfather, George Issac, about 3 or 4 years old. The lady in the white dress to his right is his grandmother, Emma Loud. Grandfather Thomas Loud is not pictured. They are on the 1845 census around the town of Tom in southeastern McCurtain County. This picture was taken sometime around the early 1890s around Antlers. We don't know who the rest of the people in the picture are and would appreciate anyone's help. The names Edwards and Davis are somehow associated with my grandfather. If you have any information, you can contact me, Ray Issac, by mail at 1501 SW 48th St., Oklahoma City, OK 73119 or email at ray_issac@yahoo.com. My cell phone is 405-812-0109. Thank you.

Thankful soldier

I write on behalf of the entire 45th Infantry Brigade Combat Team to express our sincere gratitude for the care packages the Choctaw Nation recently provided to us at Forward Operating Base, Gamberi, Afghanistan. We all appreciate the kindness and generosity of the Choctaw people.

We are fortunate to have good facilities and services, including mail, here where I am stationed. That is not the case for all the Oklahomans at the various installations in our part of this country. You will be happy to learn that we chose to forward the majority of your contributions to our fellow soldiers at more distant posts who may not have received care packages in quite some time. No doubt they are grateful to you as well.

On a personal note, as a Choctaw citizen, I am pleased and proud of my tribe for remembering Oklahoma's troops, including myself. I particularly appreciated the peanut butter.

You have all made our time in Afghanistan an even better experience. Again, thank you.

SSG Lloyd Brent Palmer

Very thankful for educational help

I would like to thank everyone at the Choctaw Nation, and especially Robin Counce, for their assistance during my education. I am thankful to the Choctaw Nation and Chief Pyle for working so hard to put programs in place to assist adult students that have had to put off their education or are facing unexpected career changes.

It was a little over three years ago when I found my true calling in life and set out to pursue nursing. It was a huge blessing in my life to have the assistance of the Career Development Program at the Choctaw Nation. Robin Counce always answered my e-mails and promptly returned information to my school and made the difficult financial part of my education seem so easy. I do not know what I would have done without her assistance.

I look forward to continuing my education and becoming a nurse practitioner and I know this dream would not have been possible without the assistance that I have been provided. This experience has been a huge sacrifice to myself and family and has made our bonds that much stronger. I look forward to serving those in need and doing my best to make a difference during the most traumatic times of their lives. Pictured is me at my graduation service. This has been one of the most challenging and joyous times in my life. Thank you for all that you do.

Tommy Walls



Seeking information on relative

I am seeking anyone knowing Edgar L. Woods or any relatives of his. My name is Glenda Fay Wood, and I am in the process of seeking other family members and knowing about their heritage. All I know for sure is that my mom's name is Margene Wood, from Hugo, and her mom, Ovary Marie Sexton, was married to Edgar.

Please contact me at P.O. Box 327, Superior, Montana 59872 or 406-822-0166. Thank you, any information would help.

Glenda (Wood) Harris

Seeking pictorial history book

I am seeking McCurtain County: A Pictorial History, volume one, written by author Louis Coleman. This author is now deceased and volume one is no longer printed. I am willing to purchase or borrow it. Please contact Coleen Shelton at 1715 Shady Dell Lane, Idabel, OK 74745 or at 479-221-4299 if you have any information regarding volume one. Thank you.

Ways of the past making a healthier future

The New Year is upon us, and while most are looking to the future with a clean slate and what can be done to improve themselves; this just may be the best time to reflect on the past. Not necessarily our own personal past, yet that of our elders. For many of our elders, diabetes and heart disease were unheard of when they were in their youth.

Some say due to improved screening and health care we are better able to catch the diagnosis. Yet, the lifestyles of the past are the largest influence of these diseases being so rare. Physical activity was not for making time to go to the gym, yet it was a way of daily life working to ensure the health and wellbeing of the family. The meals prepared and shared by the family were also true physical labor, beginning to end. The foods relied on to nourish the family were just that, to nourish the body. There were fresh fruits and vegetables, lean meat and most often to drink, water.

We can truly learn great knowledge from our elders. So during this time of year when looking to a fresh start let us turn to our elders and enjoy their stories from their youth. This can be a wonderful time of sharing and enjoyment as well as enriching our knowledge for a better quality of life. The recipe that follows would be nice to enjoy while gathered with family on a cold winter day.

Recipe of the Month

Choctaw Hunter’s Stew

Recipe provided by choctawnation.com/culture-heritage

Ingredients:
2 lbs. deer meat
2 tbsp. beef suet
½ tsp. salt
½ tsp. pepper
6-8 medium carrots, chopped
3 ribs celery
2 lg. onions
2 lg. potatoes
1 lg. can tomatoes
1 lg. can whole kernel corn

Directions:
Cut the meat into bite-size pieces and brown in suet then add the salt and pepper, cover with water and cook until done. In the meantime, prepare the

vegetables and cut into bite-size pieces. Add these to the tender meat and simmer until done.

Nutrition Facts: serving size 1 cup
Amount per serving:
Calories - 258.1, Total Fat - 5.3g, Cholesterol - 76.2mg, Sodium - 313.8mg, Sat. Fat - 1g, Total Carb - 29.4g, Potassium - 890.7mg, Unsaturated fat - 1.4 g, Fiber - 4.8g, Protein - 24.2g

For more information you may contact: Erin Adams, RD, Choctaw Nation Diabetes Wellness Center, 800-349-7026 ext. 6959.

The three P’s of eating on a budget

PLAN

- Plan meals and snacks for the week according to an established budget.
- Find quick and easy recipes online.
- Include meals that will “stretch” expensive food items (stews, casseroles, stir-fried dishes).
- Make a grocery list.
- Check for sales and coupons in the local paper or online and consider discount stores.
- Ask about a loyalty card at your grocery store.

PURCHASE

- Buy groceries when you are not hungry and when you are not too rushed.
- Stick to the grocery list and stay out of the aisles that don’t contain items on your list.
- Buy store brands if cheaper.
- Find and compare unit prices listed on shelves to get the best price.
- Purchase some items in bulk or as family packs which usually cost less.
- Choose fresh fruits and vegetables in season; buy canned vegetables with less salt.
- Pre-cut fruits and vegetables, individual cups of

WIC
WOMEN, INFANTS AND CHILDREN

yogurt, and instant rice and hot cereal are convenient, but usually cost more than those that require a bit more prep time.

- Good low-cost items available all year include:
 - Protein: beans (garbanzo, black, cannellini)
 - Vegetables: carrots, greens, potatoes
 - Fruit: apples, bananas
- PREPARE**
 - Some meal items can be prepared in advance; pre-cook on days when you have time.
 - Double or triple up on recipes and freeze meal-sized containers of soups and casseroles or divide into individual portions.
 - Try a few meatless meals by substituting with beans and peas or try “no-cook” meals like salads.
 - Incorporate leftovers into a subsequent meal.
 - Be creative with a fruit or vegetable and use it in different ways during the week.

– Provided by: ChooseMyPlate.gov.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION

ANTLERS
Market open weekdays Feb. 1-24
Feb. 6 : Idabel 9-11 a.m.; Broken Bow 12-2 p.m. (market open)
Feb. 13: Bethel 9-10:30; Smithville 12-2 (market open)
Closed Feb. 20 for holiday and 25-29 for inventory
Cooking with Carmen: Feb. 3 & 17, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

DURANT
Market open weekdays: Feb. 4-26
Closed Feb. 20 for holiday and 25-29 for inventory.
Cooking with Carmen: Feb. 9 & 21, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

McALESTER
Market open weekdays Feb. 1-24
Closed Feb. 20 for holiday and 25-29 for inventory.
Cooking with Carmen: Feb. 1 & 13, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

POTEAU
Market open weekdays Feb. 1-24
Closed Feb. 20 for holiday and 25-29 for inventory.
Cooking with Carmen: Feb. 7 & 15, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

CHOCTAW NATION FOOD DISTRIBUTION

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

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

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

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Study looks at closing off vents and rooms to save energy

Years ago, people would save energy use by closing off portions of their homes that were not being used. This occurred usually in the winter when people would huddle around a fireplace or wood stove and close off other non-heated rooms.

Some people still think that by closing off an unused room and its register saves energy. Some people close off all registers except for the one in the living room.

While this may have worked with older, non-insulated homes, it doesn’t work with today’s energy systems – forced air heating and cooling systems.

According to a 2003 study by the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory:

“Closing registers in forced-air heating systems and leaving some rooms in a house unconditioned has been suggested as a method of quickly saving energy for consumers. This study combined laboratory measurements of the changes in duct leakage as registers are closed together with modeling techniques to estimate the changes in energy use attributed to closing registers.


“The results of this study showed that register closing led to increased energy use for a typical house over a wide combination of climate, duct leakage, and a number of closed registers. The reduction in building thermal loads due to conditioning only a part of the house was offset by increased duct system losses, mostly due to increased duct leakage. Therefore, the register closing technique is not recommended as a viable energy-saving strategy for California houses with ducts located outside conditioned space.

“The energy penalty associated with the register closing technique was found to be minimized if registers farthest from the air handler are closed first because this tends to only affect the pressures and air leakage for the closed off branch. Closing registers nearer the air handler tends to increase the pressures and air leakage for the whole system.

“Closing too many registers (more than 60 percent) is not recommended because the added flow resistance severely restricts the air flow though the system leading to safety concerns. For example, furnaces may operate on the high-limit switch and cooling systems may suffer from frozen coils.”

NURSERY NEWS


Allee Rolen



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


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

Derek Durant



Derek Jerald Durant was born at 6:58 p.m. on Nov. 18, 2011. He weighed in at 7 pounds 6 ounces and was 19 inches in length. His proud parents are Justin and Heidi Durant of Reno, Nev. He is the grandson of Randle and Cindy Durant and great-grandson of Randle and Margaret Durant. Welcome to the world Derek!

Kenadie Austin



Kevin and D’Andra Austin of McAlester welcome Kenadie Aerabella Austin, born on Sept. 21, 2011, at the Choctaw Nation Health Care Center in Talihina. She weighed 7 pounds 10 ounces and measured 19.5 inches long.

She is the granddaughter of Jordon Sr. and Mable Austin of McAlester, as well as Nancy Scott and Bill Kos of McAlester. She is the great-granddaughter of Don and Dixie Scott of McAlester and Dorothy Shirley of McAlester. She is also the great-great-granddaughter of Lillian Slover of Tannehill.

Space heater safety

Space heaters carry a much greater risk of causing a fire than central heating, such as furnaces. Space heaters present a greater potential for human error such as leaving them too close to combustible materials or leaving them unsupervised. Space heaters should not only be kept at least three feet from any flammable cloth, but should also be kept off of carpeted surfaces and rugs, which can also catch fire after being exposed to excessive heat.

In addition to the obvious fire hazards, space heaters also pose a significant risk of electrical fires at the outlet and breaker box. Space heaters pull a great amount of electrical current and when placed on an undersized or defective breaker/outlet will overheat and trip the breaker. The wiring from the panel to the outlet overheats and breaks down the integrity of the insulation. This will result in an electrical fire in the attic or wall.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that more than 25,000 fires every year are associated with the use of space heaters, causing more than 300 deaths. An estimated 6,000 persons receive hospital emergency room care for burn injuries associated with contacting hot surfaces of room heaters.

It is strongly recommended not only by the Safety Department but also by our insurance provider that the use of space heaters in the workplace be prohibited.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact Daryl Holaday, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Director of Safety at dholaday@choctawnation.com or 580-924-8280 ext. 2501.

Help prevent domestic violence


February 5, Super Bowl Sunday, is a time of great excitement and expectation. Many of us get together and cheer a favorite team to victory with our families and friends.

While many families provide safe environments to live, some families have households that are characterized by violence and fear. Throughout the year, nearly 4,000 women are killed and hundreds of thousands of women and children are physically injured and emotionally scarred as the result of domestic violence.

Each year, Durant’s Crisis Control Center Inc. provides a safe place for hundreds of women and their children who are attempting to escape the ravages of domestic violence. Along with shelter services, the CCC also provides counseling, advocacy, and a twenty-four crisis hotline to individuals in need of emergency assistance. The CCC is a non-profit organization that relies on community contributions to provide services to these families seeking a place of protection.

“How can I help?” The answer is as simple as this: Host a Super Bowl Party! The Board of Directors of the Crisis Control Center is asking individuals, organizations and businesses to host Super Bowl parties that raise money to assist with the operations of the CCC. Each party can have its own way of raising money – some may simply ask for donations. Others may have a “cover charge,” games based on the score with half of the proceeds going to the CCC, or any other type of fundraiser connected to the Super Bowl. Be creative, no monetary donation is too small or too large. The only thing we ask is that before the game the host requests a moment of silence to recognize that there are families suffering abuse in their homes and take a moment to reflect on the challenge of their plight. Then have fun, root for your team and raise money! 100 percent of all funds raised will go to shelter operations.

If you would like to host a party, please contact CCC Board Members Melissa Middleton 924-8282 (2550) or Larry Behrens 924-8282 (2331) at the Choctaw Nation and they will bring you a “Tackling Domestic Violence” packet and sign to place on your door. On Feb. 6, you can call and someone come pick up your donation. Or, you can deliver your donation to Melissa, Larry, or the Crisis Control Center offices behinds Salitas on Main Street in Durant. At that time you will receive a receipt for your donation and the satisfaction of knowing that you have made a difference in the lives of hundreds of women and children.



Choctaw Nation WIC

WOMEN, INFANTS AND CHILDREN

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

What’s cookin’ with Carmen

By BRET MOSS

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma (CNO) Food Distribution has made many efforts in recent years to improve the health of its members and employees. From cooking videos and health brochures, to health fairs and 5k runs, CNO is highly invested in the well being of its people.

One of the most effective assets the CNO has in this initiative is a highly energetic woman with a love for her profession named Carmen Robertson, who is most known for her work doing an event at the four food distribution centers around the Choctaw Nation called Cooking with Carmen.

Cooking with Carmen is a four-hour educational event, occurring from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., eight times each month, twice at each distribution center. There are distribution centers in Antlers, Durant, McAlester and Poteau.

At these events, Carmen will take a common recipe she has modified to include healthy alternatives to substitute for some of the unhealthy original ingredients and demonstrate how to prepare it to perfection. She will sometimes even cook her original recipes she has concocted with creativity and experimentation.

She always cooks a full meal, including side dishes and desserts. All the meals have low/no sugar content and are fat free. She uses recipes likely to expand the palette of those attending without using hard to find or expensive ingredients.

By showing her audience, which usually consists of

about 30 or 40 people, how to prepare the common commodities they already have in a healthy way, she hopes to make eating healthy an everyday occurrence for the Choctaw people.

When developing and preparing meals at her cooking events, Carmen sticks to three main points – for all meals to be quick, easy and inexpensive. She believes if she sticks to these criteria people will be more apt to attempt these recipes on their own.

Carmen believes just teaching healthy cooking and eating habits is not enough. “A lot of them will not try a recipe if they haven’t tasted it. So I have been trying to introduce different types of food and ways to prepare it,” said Carmen as she explained the importance of tasting a new recipe.

While she is cooking, she is also taking questions from the audience and educating them on the nutritional aspects and the effects different foods have on the body. It has become common for her to take mailing and e-mail addresses so she can modify recipes by request.

Three of the four distribution centers are equipped with a full kitchen allowing her to simulate a common setting for the average audience member. The ingredients and utensils used on the set are those most familiar to the largest portion of the audience.

Carmen not only teaches at the Cooking with Carmen events, but plays a role in the Cooking with Council videos produced by the Lifetime Legacy staff, the Going Lean Team, health events at the wellness centers and after-school specials.

She deems working with

the kids at the schools and the younger generation of the utmost importance. She knows if she can spark healthy lifestyles in them, those ways will be instilled for a lifetime and hopefully passed on to generations to come.

“In order to stop the childhood obesity, we’ve got to hit these young mothers, and that’s what I’m trying to do,” said Carmen as she explained how health issues in children are a serious problem she would like to see subside in the near future. By teaching young parents to prepare foods with a knowledge of the effects each dish has on a person, particularly the children, she hopes to stop bad habits before they even begin.

Carmen is not only equipped with the knowledge of recipes and nutrition, her expertise is reinforced with experience. She grew up in the small town of Opal, Wyo., with a large family. She mentioned in the winter the snow would make it hard for people to get groceries and they would have just one bag for a long period of time.

She and her family would make bread and other dishes from scratch, can food and grow produce. At her young age, she learned how to create meals with various ingredients and be creative with her combinations.

She graduated from Kimmerer High School in 1989 and moved to Oklahoma in 1999. She worked as a phlebotomist, drawing blood and working in a lab when she first arrived. She eventually went to work for the OSU Extension Office in Atoka. “We would go into the homes and I would teach low-income families basic nutrition and different life skills,” said Carmen as she explained her beginnings in the art of food demonstration.

Many of the commodities she used to cook came from the CNO distribution center, which is how she got her connection to Lisa Mullens, director of Choctaw Nation Food Distribution. After 3.5 years with OSU, Lisa offered Carmen the job, and she began her work in 2007.

While she worked at the OSU office, Carmen struggled with a weight issue herself, weighing 325 pounds. As she taught people how to prepare nutritional meals, she



Choctaw Nation: BRET MOSS

Carmen holds her dessert of the day, brownies made with black beans. By rinsing and pureeing the beans, their taste is disguised while their benefits for helping maintain healthy blood sugar remain in full. She also prepared pot roast and biscuits containing sweet potatoes, creating a full meal with a short preparation time of only 45 minutes.

made a commitment to practice what she preached, and in 15 months, she had lost 150 pounds.

She is sure this aspect of her life has helped her encourage, relate to, and better teach others about healthy choices. “It’s hard for somebody who has a weight issue to listen to somebody that never has... but when people know that I have been there, and done it, they want to know how I did it,” Carmen exclaimed.

Carmen has also recently earned her bachelor’s degree in Science, Nutrition and Dietetics from Kaplan University. What she learned through life experiences and her collegiate education combined with her general love for cooking and creativity in the kitchen make her well qualified to give health advice to anyone seeking a healthier way of life.

She teaches many things to those around her, one of which is the 28-Day Rule. It has been proven that a person can break a bad habit or create a new one after 28 consecutive days of committing an action. Carmen gives an example, saying if you ride your bike every day for 28 days in a row, it will become habit and therefore make it easier to ride daily.

The act of “eat less, more often,” she deems most important of all her advice. If you consume a small amount of calories on a usual basis,

you keep your metabolism working regularly while keeping the over-eating and splurging at bay. She keeps a small amount of food on hand wherever she is to practice this act.

She also teaches that everyone eats with their eyes first. If food is made more appealing to the eyes, it is more likely the viewer will desire it. This is particularly true for children. This is something she practices with her 10-year-old daughter, Jeannie. The two will cook healthy dinners using different foods in creative and colorful designs to make healthy eating fun.

The act of eating in proportion to one’s activities for the day is also something she stresses. Carmen and Jeannie are regulars at a tae kwon do gym in Atoka. Carmen eats more whole grain carbohydrates for energy if she knows they will be doing a highly strenuous activity along with protein after, but a lighter meal if the exercise is of a lower difficulty.

Since finishing her education, Carmen now has more time to share her skills in the kitchen and plans to finish a cookbook, which is already under way, as well as increase her involvement in the education of healthy living.

It is her hope to spread her knowledge and love of healthy lifestyles to not just Choctaw members, but to everyone she meets.

WATER

Continued from Page 1

will focus on developing methods to evaluate in-stream flows and infrastructure.

A panel of scientists selected by the Nations natural resources committee from federal agencies, academia and other highly qualified individuals will conduct the study of in-stream flow.

“It is envisioned that the recommended methodology will be used to establish minimum stream flow levels necessary for highly valued water supply and hydropower,” said Cynthia Kitchens, tribal liaison and project manager for the Corps of Engineers. “But just as important, these flows will help sustain natural resources, cultural, and recreational needs that are also extremely important to the Nations and the region for economic as well as other reasons.”

The infrastructure assessment methodology will be developed to determine data gathering procedures that will help regionalize and prioritize improvements to aging infrastructures.

“This can be challenging when you consider gathering data from tribes, municipalities, counties, rural water districts, and others who employ a multitude of consultants,” Kitchens said. “This phase of the study will identify how to gather data and what data should be obtained. The results will have broad reaching impacts within the region and the Nations.”

The first phase of the study is expected to be completed in summer 2012.

The All Nations Breath of Life: quit smoking success for Choctaw tribal members

Eight months ago, James (Choctaw) made a commitment to quit smoking. After reassurance from his family and friends, James attended his first group meeting with the All Nations Breath of Life Quit Smoking Cigarettes program, a community-based research study that enrolls American Indians ages 18 years and older who currently smoke and want to quit smoking. James said that his main reasons for quitting were to improve his health and to reduce the amount he was spending on cigarettes, but that he has always had trouble quitting smoking in the past.

“Before, when I tried to quit on my own cold turkey, I was very irritable, but with the help of the ANBL program and the medication provided, I didn’t experience any side effects and enjoyed the group support of my fellow participants,” James said.

The purpose of the research study is to examine the effectiveness of a culturally tailored smoking cessation program such as “All Nations Breath of Life,” compared to the Current Best Practices program. The study is funded by the National Cancer Institute and conducted by the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center/ Oklahoma Tobacco Research Center. All eligible participants are randomly assigned to either the All Nations Breath of Life program or Current Best Practices.

ANBL kicked off its recruitment in April of 2011 in McAlester, followed by Hugo,

Want to Quit Smoking?

Are you....

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

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

All group sessions held in McAlester, Atoka, and Hugo

Call 1-855-552-2424 ext. 3303

10001 12044

with eight group participants at each site, including James. ANBL draws on the latest smoking-cessation methods but also addresses culturally specific elements, including traditional use of tobacco vs. commercial tobacco use, stress reduction and management, and discussion of how traditional world views and behaviors aid in the quitting process.

Lisa Leflore and Maranda Surginer, both Choctaw, group facilitators in McAlester, provided the support needed to guide their participants toward quitting smoking. “I am very pleased that many of our participants have quit smoking, and have quit for all the right reasons,” said Lisa, who has been a champion facilitator for ANBL and meets participants once a week for group sessions at the Choctaw Community Center in McAlester. Lisa has been known to work around her participants’ schedules and provides as much support as needed to help group participants succeed in kicking the smoking habits. “I hope that we can recruit more participants into the program, as this service is greatly needed in the McAlester area and within

the Choctaw Nation,” she said.

Jasen Baker (Choctaw), an ANBL group facilitator for the Hugo area, is making progress with his participants, who meet once a week at the Choctaw Nation Wellness Center. “We are looking forward to serving more Choctaw participants in the Hugo area,” he said. “The ANBL program has been a life-saving experience for my group.”

“I was so ready to quit. I could not wait for the group to get started,” said Robyn. Like others in her group, Robyn was a heavy smoker, but as the weeks went by, she was able to stay smoke-free by week eight of the program. “I can finally breathe, and my lungs are clear,” she said. “The program was not only about quitting smoking. We also developed a strong relationship with Jasen and the other group members. We had fun and joked around, and that is what made the program so great.” Participants who receive the current best practices intervention for smoking cessation are led by Andrea Hart (McAlester), Michele Wilcox (McAlester) and Kelis Whisenhunt (Hugo/Atoka). CBP is an individual support program consisting of individual telephone counseling to see how participants are doing and educational curriculum on the latest smoking cessation methods of current practice guidelines.

CBP participant Ren-

odda said, “My decision to quit smoking was due to my health problems and promising my dad that I would quit after he passed away.” Saying she wished that she had never picked up the habit, Renodda said that once she made a promise to quit, she pushed forward for health reasons. “The thing that I loved about CBP was the facilitator, Michele Wilcox,” she said. “Michele would call me every week and just listen to all the problems that I was facing and provide support and encouragement that I needed to stay quit. Michele made sacrifices of her time. She quit exercising just to call her participants. She also made herself late because she was talking me through another tough session. Michele’s willingness to stop what she was doing impressed me so much that it gave me the will power to stop smoking, I just love her!”

“The combination of a participant with a positive attitude, along with a dynamic facilitator, is the key to making the All Nations Breath of Life a success,” said Michelle Hopkins (Seminole), field coordinator for the ANBL study.

Laura Beebe, principal investigator for the study, agrees. “It’s so nice to hear about the success of our participants, and it is so rewarding for our staff to know that they are impacting the health of tribal communities who have the highest smoking rates in the United States,” she said.

Currently, the study continues to recruit in the McAlester,

Hugo and Atoka areas, with plans to expand further within the state in the next year. For more information and eligibility requirements, call Melanie Johnson toll free at 855-552-2424, ext. 3303.

For more information about the project contact Melanie Johnson, M.Ed., All Nations Breath of Life 801 NE 13th St., CHB 235, Oklahoma City, OK 73104. Phone: 405-271-2229, ext. 50481, Melanie-Johnson@ouhsc.edu.

Choctaw Nation Head Start recruiting for 2012-13

The Head Start Program of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma (CNO) is recruiting prospective students for the 2012-13 school year. Although the program accepts applications year-round, each year, beginning in January, a concerted effort is made to identify children who might be eligible for the unique services provided by Head Start. Families of children who will be 3, but not 5, years old by Sept. 1, 2012, are eligible to apply.

This program serves children from 3 to 5 years of age. Our program serves children of all nationalities, although we do have a Native American preference policy. The Head Start program is directed primarily toward low-income families.

Families of children with special needs are encouraged to apply. The Head Start program assists families in obtaining needed support services for children with special needs.

CNO Head Start provides families with assistance in their efforts to obtain educational, health and social services. The program provides a nutritionally sound breakfast and lunch each day.

For more information and to obtain an application, contact the CNO Head Start Centers in Antlers, Atoka, Bennington, Broken Bow, Coalgate, Durant, Hugo, Idabel, McAlester, Poteau, Stigler, Wilburton and Wright City. Applications are also available on the CNO web page, at choctawnation.com; see the education services page to find a link to the Head Start program enrollment application or contact the Durant Administration office at 1-800-522-6170, or in the Durant area, 924-8280, ext. 2353.

PEOPLE YOU KNOW

Pitchlynn featured at national museum

Submitted by:
Tommy V. Whiteman

The National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum in Fort Worth has a great collection of the Old West to modern history of America. Once a year, it inducts an individual, living or deceased, into the museum’s hall of fame to honor those men and women who made a significant contribution to western heritage, past and present.

I nominated Peter P. Pitchlynn back in December of 2009 and on Nov. 19, 2011, he was inducted into the NMWHM Hall of Fame with seven others, including William “Will” Rogers, part Cherokee, a performer, actor and celebrity; Glynn Turman, actor and cowboy; Walter Clarence “Buck” Taylor, another famous actor; and Ruth Roach, a professional world champion rodeo performer.

The hall of fame induction ceremony was held at the Worthington Renaissance Hotel in downtown Fort Worth.



Photo submitted

Tommy V. Whiteman accepts a plaque in honor of hall of fame inductee Peter Pitchlynn. Pictured left to right are James N. Austin, Whiteman and Gloria Reed Austin.

One of the main speakers was Fort Worth Mayor Betsy Price.

The NMWHM co-founder and curator is James N. Austin Jr. and co-founder and executive director is Gloria Reed Austin. The museum has plans for a new building in the near future.

Peter Pitchlynn’s mother

was Sophia Folsom. Her father was Ebernezer Folsom, a white, and her mother was a full-blood Choctaw, Ni-ti-ka Te-ho-na, the daughter of Ho-mas-tubby (Red Chief Killer) and a sister to Chief Mo-shu-la-tubby (He Who Preserves And Kills). Peter’s Choctaw name was Ha-chu-tak-ni, meaning Loggerhead Turtle.

His clan was recognized as the Royal House Clan, or The House of Kings.

Pitchlynn’s sister was Elisa Ann C. Pitchlynn Harris, my great-great-great-grandmother. Her son was Judge Henry C. Harris, a prominent Choctaw leader. His daughter was Mattie J. Harris, who married William J. Whiteman, another important figure in the Choctaw Nation (McCurtain County).

Their son was my grandfather, Choctaw enrollee Henry H. Whiteman, a veteran of World War II. He married Celia Tovar of Mexico City, Mexico, who is part-Indian. Tommy is married to Delphie, who is part-Indian. They have two children and four grandchildren. These are my direct Choctaw/Indian blood line family/ancestors.

The information on Pitchlynn is displayed at the NMWHM. For more information on him, listen to the history recording by calling 202-747-3474 then dial 24#.



Peter Pitchlynn - Choctaw leader

A prominent Choctaw leader during the removal period, Peter Pitchlynn played a major role in building the national tribal government in the 19th Century. He was the son of John Pitchlynn, a white trader, and Sophia Folsom, a mixed-blood Choctaw. Educated as a youth at local schools, he attended the Choctaw Academy in Kentucky and the University of Nashville in 1827-28. Pitchlynn thrived as a farmer, stock raiser, slave owner and member of a small landed elite. Active in tribal affairs, he allied with Moshulantubbe against the missionaries and Greenwood LeFlore. Despite his opposition to the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek, he sold his land holdings, led an emigrant party west in 1831 and settled his family on the Mountain Fork River near Eagletown (in present McCurtain County) in 1834.

In the past removal era, Pitchlynn emerged as an influential politician and diplomat. He helped re-establish the Choctaw Nation west of the Mississippi and establish a national school system. During frequent missions to Washington, D.C., he pushed Choctaw claims with the federal government and advocated settlement on behalf of Choctaws defrauded of their lands during removal. The Civil War forced him to return to his Mountain Fork home and sacrifice his pro-Union sympathies to protect his family and career. A compromise candidate, he was elected chief on Oct. 6, 1864, and signed an armistice on June 19, 1865, at Doaksville. He also assisted with the peace treaty signed with the United States on April 28, 1866.

In 1867, Pitchlynn returned to Washington as the Choctaw delegate. While he pushed the Net Proceed Case for claims, he also espoused other issues that gained him support in the nation, especially among the full-bloods. He vigorously and effectively opposed any threat to common ownership of tribal lands or Choctaw autonomy. He opposed the land allotment efforts of the federal government and the territorial bills advocated by the railroads and other land seekers. Pitchlynn died at his Washington home on Jan. 17, 1881, and was buried in the Congressional Cemetery.

Woods celebrate 50th anniversary

Clyde Wood and Rosemary Robinson were united in marriage on Dec. 24, 1961, at Boswell Church of Christ in Boswell. Their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren hosted a reception in their honor on Dec. 17 at the Boswell Nutrition Center from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. with family and friends.



Congratulations, Allen

Happy 15th birthday to Allen Baker of Caddo from Dad, Mom and Raven. Also, congratulations to Allen and the rest of the Caddo Bruins on winning the Class B Football State Championship.



Bennington Head Start takes first place with float

Congratulations to the Bennington Head Start for winning first place with their float in the Bennington parade. Thank you to parents and volunteers for spending the extra time to put together such a great memory for the Head Start children.

Joseph, Rachel wed

Dennis and Amy Johnson of Coweta would like to announce the marriage of their daughter, Rachel Denise Johnson, to Army Private 1st Class Joseph Tecumseh McHenry of Claremore. Grandparents of the bride include Mary Williams and the late Rev. Harvey Williams of Broken Bow and Alline Johnson of Idabel. Joesph is the son of Rev. Eli and Cordelia McHenry of Claremore. His grandparents include Ron and Martha McHenry of Coweta and JoAnn and the late Pat Thompson. They were married on Nov. 5, 2011, at Claremore Christ UMC by Rev. Eli McHenry. Joseph is serving in the U.S. Army, stationed in Ft. Bliss, Texas.



Happy fifth birthday, Kylie

Happy fifth birthday to Kyleanna Jack on Nov. 6. Wishing her a happy birthday are her parents, Jeremy Jack of Wilburton, Leann Mills of Red Oak; her grandparents, James and Judy Jack of Wilburton and Donnie and Viola Mills of Red Oak; and her great-grandparents, Lenora Jack of McAlester and Pete Mills of Wilburton.



Healds celebrate birthdays

Happy birthday to uncle Bob and cousin Robbie. We miss you, from the Heald family. Also, a happy 13th birthday to Dyllan and happy birthday to uncle Greg and cousin Bryce. Hope they were great!

Happy birthday, Bobby

Sgt. 1st Class Bobby Clark Holder turned 77 years old on Jan. 4. Bobby has been a member of the Texas Civil Defense since 2007. He enjoys going to Choctaw activities and his Gospel Lighthouse Church.



Congratulations, Wilkins boys

Gunner Paul Wilkins will turn 4 on Jan. 21, 2012. He attends Good Morning Sunshine Preschool in Danville, Ark. His proud family includes his parents, Paul and Susan (Camp) Wilkins, and big brother Lawson Wilkins. His grandparents are Joel Camp of Mead and Faye and the late Roy Wilkins of Blue Ball, Ark.

Lawson Paul Wilkins harvested a six-point and seven-point buck this hunting season. He killed the first one with a .50 cal. muzzel loader and the other with a 30/30. He was hunting with his daddy. Lawson played quarterback for two football teams this fall and during baseball season he battled lead-off for the Turf Titans and only struck out three times. He lives in Danville with his family, Paul, Susan and Gunner. His Poppa is Joel Camp of Mead.



Stormi - State Champion

Stormi Kelley was selected as first team catcher for the 2011 Oklahoma Small West All-State Fast Pitch Team. Stormi is a senior at Binger-Oney High School, where her Lady Bobcats were the 2011 Class A Fast Pitch State Champions, the 2011 Class 2A Slow Pitch State Champions and the 2010 Class B Fast Pitch State Champions. She is the daughter of Devery and Trenda Kelley of Eakly and the granddaughter of Gene and Trina Kelley of Alfalfa and Bob and Carolyn Cope of Eakly. The All-State game will be played at the University of Oklahoma in June. Stormi has verbally committed to playing softball for Northeastern Oklahoma A&M in Miami, Okla.



Veronica excels academically

Congratulations to Veronica L. Beck-Ruiz, 7 years old, who attends first grade at Mescalero Apache Schools in New Mexico. She has received A Honor Roll certificates, the NWEA Benchmark Super Star Award and Skill Testing certificates. These were presented to her for the 2010 school year and acknowledges her achievements in exceeding the testing grade levels for each certificate she received. Her family is extremely proud of her accomplishments.

Veronica is the great-great-granddaughter of Walter “Speedy” and Maddie Wilson, the great-granddaughter of Raymond Lee “Chiefy” Wilson, the granddaughter of Clar Wilson Eyelash and the daughter of Kawauney Beck. They are related to the Wilson, Barcus and Fulsom families of the Atoka area, and they live in Mescalero, N.M.

Douglas, proud soldier

Chief Warrant Officer Mark W. Douglas graduated high school from McLoughlin Union High School in 1993. He entered the Army at the MEPS center in Spokane, Wash., on June 29, 1993. From there he attended Basic Combat Skills Training at Fort Leonard, Mo., then went to Advanced Individual Training to become an M1 Abrams Mechanic at Fort Knox, Ky. Upon completion of his training in December 1993, he proceeded to his first duty assignment as a E1/private. He progressed through to the enlisted grade of E6/Staff Sergeant-Promotable then was selected to become a warrant officer. Currently, he serves as a Chief Warrant Officer 3 with the Military Occupational Specialty of 915E, a senior automotive maintenance warrant officer.

His duties/assignments have included 4th Battalion Armor Regiment, Friedberg, Germany; 2nd Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, Fort Carson, Colo.; 2nd Battalion 67th Armor Regiment, Friedberg, Germany; 101st Replacement Detachment 101st Airborne Division, Fort Campbell, Ky.; 514th Transportation Company, Fort Campbell, Ky., and Fort Lewis, Wash.; Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion I Corps, Fort Lewis, Wash.; and currently assigned to the NATO Training Mission, Afghanistan (NTM-A).

Douglas has served multiple combat tours, including Tikrit, Iraq; Al Taji, Iraq; four times to Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan; and is currently on his seventh tour, located in Kabul, Afghanistan.

His schools and training include: basic training, AIT for military occupational specialty 63E M1 Systems Mechanic, M1 advanced engine rebuild and repair course, power generator repair course, primary leadership development course (PLDC), basic noncommissioned officer course (BNCOC), heavy equipment recovery school, warrant officer candidate school, warrant officer basic course, airborne school, environmental protection course, contract officer management course, action officer development course, supervisor development program, manager development course, air assault school, warrant officer advanced course, officer green platoon (combat skills for 160th Special Operations), dunker training and combat swimming, Survival Evade Resist and Escape (SERE) school-high Risk, support operations course, and the warrant officer staff course. He also has an associate’s degree in criminal justice from Central Texas College.

Douglas’ awards include: Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal with four oak leaf clusters, Army Achievement Medal with one oak leaf cluster, Meritorious Unit Citation with one oak leaf cluster, Army Good Conduct Medal with two bronze loops, National Defense Service Medal with one bronze star, Afghanistan Campaign Medal with one bronze star, Iraq Campaign Medal with two bronze stars, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon with numeral two, Overseas Ribbon with numeral four, Air Assault Badge, Airborne Badge, Canadian Army Airborne Badge, Drivers Badge with wheel device, Drivers Badge with track device, Mechanics Badge, and the Ordinance Order of Samuel Sharpe.

While stationed in Germany, he met his wife, Krista, a former U.S. Army medic, and was married in Chesapeake, Va., in November 1994. He has two sons, Matthew and Nathan, and one daughter, Meagen. He was also father to the late Kasey and Johnathan. Douglas is the proud great-grandson of Johnnie Wilson, an original enrollee, and the son of John Douglas.



Happy birthday, Caylee

Happy 10th birthday to Caylee Cunningham on Jan. 10. She and her brother, Joe’al, age 4, are the children of Cody and Stacy Cunningham. They are proud descendants of three original enrollees: Matilda LeFlore Manning, Angie Manning Fox and Ethel Fox Pickren. Proud grandparents are Angelyn and the late Joe Cunningham, Maxine and the late Hank Schreiner.



Photo provided

Winners in the Choctaw Nation Diabetes .5k Run included Jones Academy students, top row, Zander Thomas, Jenaro Lujano, Madison Cheek, Terrell Warrior, Melvin Birthmark; middle row: Alanna Brown, Joslyn Jones, Elygin Solomon; and bottom row, Melina Tushka, Seneca Jones and Melvin Willis.

Elementary runners excel

Jones Academy elementary students promoted health and fitness by participating in the Choctaw Nation Diabetes .5k run on Oct. 29, 2011, in Talihina. Eleven Jones Academy elementary boys and girls, 8 years old and under, ran in the event. The program was sponsored by the Choctaw Nation Wellness Department. Event coordinator Teresa Davis reported that 65 participants ran or walked the ninth annual .5k race. Jones Academy students Jenaro Lujano and Terrell Warrior placed first and second in the boys’ division. Ms. Davis added that the Wellness Department also sponsors six .5k runs per year, as well as a fitness camp during the summer at Tushka Homma and a Dribblers Basketball Program for Pre-K to fourth-graders at a local school.



Photo provided

Creighton WhiteBuffalo, Caitlin Allen, Cheyenne Neal, Nathan Gaddis, Dilon Shirley, Holly Andersen and Justin Jefferson attend ACT workshop.

Choctaw Nation provides ACT workshop for Native American students

For Jones Academy students, getting an education is about more than academics. On Dec. 2, 2011, the Choctaw Nation Educational Talent Search program sponsored an ACT test prep workshop at the Kiamichi Technology Center in McAlester. The seminar’s facilitator, Chad Cargill, met with about 75 Native American youth from area high schools including Jones Academy students.

This is Cargill’s 11th year working with the Talent Search program. In the past, the ACT test trainer has taught thousands of students on how to prepare for the college entrance exam. Through a mixture of humor and insight, Cargill teaches techniques on how to improve test scores. He promotes taking the ACT more than once, but his real message is about preparing for the test each time. There is no substitute for hard work.

As his teaching has evolved, Cargill has added to his instruction the idea of service. He now admonishes students to be active members in their community and to give back to their neighborhoods and home towns. Cargill encourages education, but he reserves time to speak to students about taking the initiative to serve others. Remarkably, Chad Cargill’s message blends well with the principles and values of the Choctaw Nation. Education is important, but servant leadership is the priority.

Students sweep Hartshorne

Six Jones Academy Learn and Serve students participated in the Downtown Hartshorne Cleanup Project on Nov. 5, 2011. The downtown cleanup is an annual project sponsored by the Hartshorne Chamber of Commerce. A total of 25 volunteers participated in the event and approximately 30 bags of trash were collected. The students got up early Saturday morning and spent the day sweeping sidewalks, picking up leaves and debris, and treating weeds. All this was done in an effort to beautify downtown Hartshorne. Students participating in the event were Kaitlin Bell, Selena Avila, John Stoneroad, Mariel Sam, LaBrae Jim, and Logan Weekoty. Jones Academy students lived up to the Learn and Serve motto, “Helping others one by one, greater deeds can be done.”



Mariel Sam.



Logan Weekoty.



Labrae Jim, Mariel Sam, Selena Avila and Kaitlin Bell



Photos provided

Selena Avila, Logan Weekoty, John Stoneroad, and Kaitlin Bell.

Youth to the Nation

Dual libraries benefit JA students

By Joshua Sam, interview with David Sanchez

Jones Academy houses two libraries on campus. The Burton Library is for the older students and the Sitter Library is for the younger ones. There are many resources, including books, magazines, DVDs, audiotapes and journals available to students and staff members. A computer lab with 15 computers is available for research, group projects and term papers.

Elaine Garvin has been Jones Academy’s librarian for about a year and a half. The library now has over 10,000 books. Mrs. Garvin hopes the students will find interest in their tribes and use the library for research of their ancestors and cultural practices. She is very helpful in finding the information for the students.

One of the libraries’ most generous benefactors is Ruth Lynn Hooper. She donates books, money and artwork to help better educate the students on campus. Her belief in the value of education comes from the family, some of whom are members of the Choctaw Nation and the Chickasaw Nation. Dr. Hooper’s great-grandfather, Edward Hayes Wilson, was superintendent of Wheelock Academy from 1894 to 1898. Her great-aunt, Mamie (Wilson) Farrell, earned a master’s degree in mathematics and taught at Goodland Indian Orphanage. Her grandfather, Edward Lewis Wilson, and grandmother, Nina (Selph) Wilson, helped to instill lifelong principles of learning into Ruth Lynn when she was a colonel in the U.S. Army Horse Calvary, then later in the infantry. Because he was a great role model, Hooper followed in her father’s military footsteps. She became the first female officer to make full colonel in the Medical Service Corps. Her mother, Nina Jane (Wilson) Hooper, was strong, resourceful and resilient and a positive influence on her daughter. Hooper visits Jones Academy regularly and enjoys mentoring students on a personal level.



Photo provided

Jones Academy students attending the Ivy League Conference are Nathan Gaddis, Melissa Sam, Justin Jefferson and Joshua Sam.

Making Ivy League friends

Jones Academy students attended the Ivy League and Friends Conference in November and met with college representatives from some of the most elite schools in the country. Recruiters from about 50 universities met with prospective Native American students. Participating institutions included Harvard, Yale, Dartmouth, Johns Hopkins, and as far west as Stanford and UC Berkeley. The Choctaw Nation Scholarship Advisement Program expanded their annual Ivy League seminar in an effort to serve more Indian youth.

The symposium was held on Friday and Saturday, Nov. 4-5, at the Choctaw Resort and Event Center in Durant. About 250 friends, families, and prospective students attended the conference. Jones Academy student Melissa Sam, who hails from the Los Angeles area, expressed a strong interest in attending Stanford University.



Choctaw Nation: LISA REED

Choctaw Nation donates funds for storm siren at Grant

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma recently assisted Choctaw County with its plans to add four new storm sirens to help keep county residents safe. On Dec. 19, Choctaw Nation’s Emergency Management Director Daryl Holaday presented a check for \$18,000 to pay for installation of a siren at Grant.

Pictured from left are Choctaw County District #3 Com-

missioner Roger Vandever; Shane Meshaya, Choctaw Nation Emergency Management; Choctaw County District #2 Commissioner Randy Robertson; Holaday; Choctaw County District #1 Commissioner Ronny Thompson; Pat Collins, Choctaw County Emergency Management director; and Choctaw County Sheriff Lewis Collins.



Councilman Perry Thompson is presented with a certificate from Little Dixie RSVP program recognizing Hugo’s Choctaw Nation Community Center as Choctaw County’s top volunteer station with 3,843 hours of service in 2011.



Enjoying the Christmas party at Hugo are, top photo, brothers Dana and Jack Fulton with Councilman Thompson; bottom left, Barbara Stone, Viola Vanworth, Bobby and Odell Marsh; Michael Davenport, Tommy Jones, Jane and Buck Davenport; and bottom right, Joyce Burton and granddaughter Ka’Mariana Coleman.



Choctaw Nation: LISA REED

State Rep. R.C. Pruitt says hello to Ray and Donna Abott.



Edward and Marjorie Pisachubbee and their neighbor, Carmen Nesbit.

Children and Family Services

Program provides a wide variety of help to members

By **CHRISSY DILL**
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

The Children and Family Services department of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma provides a range of various assistances for Choctaw members throughout the 10-1/2 counties, including foster care, adoption, violence prevention and family preservation.

“Our social workers are advocates for Choctaw children who are experiencing some form of abuse or neglect in their home,” said Lari Ann Brister, director of Indian Child Welfare, Adoption and Foster Care and Project SAFE. These social workers include Amanda Robinson, Randee Porter, Shane Haddock, Vicki Wood and Kim Baca.

“Part of the ICW workers’ job is to bring child abuse awareness to the community,” said Brister. “Our workers will recognize the month of April (Child Abuse Awareness) by teaming up with our community centers, Youth Advisory Board team members, Choctaw Nation Family Preservation, Family Violence team and our local schools.” Brister said the department organizes activities to promote awareness such as balloon releases, child abuse awareness activities in the schools and community meetings that address the signs of child abuse.

Project SAFE

Project SAFE consists of employees Davania Rowell, located in Broken Bow, and Karen Lyons in Talihina and addresses issues such as dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking. “Our main goal is to bring awareness to our communities on these issues,” said Brister.

“Project SAFE has done numerous events for the community,” continued Brister, including presenting teen dating violence awareness curriculum to students in 88 school districts, attending all Choctaw Nation Health Fairs, collaborating with local shelters and conducting various community awareness projects.

“We serve on tribal Sexual Assault Response Teams and county SART teams in 10-1/2 counties,” said Rowell. Project SAFE also hosts evidence-based CLEET training for officers, in which Oklahoma Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (OCADVSA) provides speakers.

SAFE presents at Hope House, Valiant Women House, Chi Hullo Li and Coalition Meetings as well. They participate in projects such as Kick Up Your Heels and Walk a Mile in Her Shoes.

“Project SAFE attends and presents to faith-based organizations, JOM parent committees and FCCLA teachers meetings,” said Rowell. “We got refunded this September and are looking forward to adding 25 new schools and hosting our first Southeastern Teen Conference in the near future,” she added.

According to Lyons, the program presents the SAFE dates curriculum to schools and participates in the many activities planned throughout the 10-1/2 counties of the Choctaw Nation. In addition, a special emphasis is placed on February, teen dating violence awareness month, as well as colleges, with new grant funding. During February, Project SAFE holds activities at basketball games and other events scheduled at



Photo provided

schools at that time.

“Currently, Project SAFE staff is meeting with Eastern Oklahoma State College to determine what activities we can partner with them to best serve the students,” said Lyons.

“During the last grant funding, Project SAFE was instrumental in getting nurses from the hospital training to provide sexual assault exams,” continued Lyons. “The Choctaw Nation hospital now has a special room that was established just to service victims of sexual assault,” said Lyons, explaining that the room allows the person who has been raped or sexually assaulted privacy to face the painful and psychologically devastating experience.

Adoptions/ Foster Care

Larry Behrens serves as the Children and Family Services’ Adoptions/Foster Care specialist. “Our biggest deal is recruitment and retention of tribal foster and adoption homes,” he said.

As Adoption/Foster specialist, Behrens sees that all training for resource parents goes accordingly, including initial training as well as continuous training throughout their time as parents.

The Adoption/Foster Care portion of Children and Family Services holds various

vation Program and the Family Violence Prevention Program about three years ago and has been employed with the Children and Family Services department for 14 years.

“We currently have five employees that deal specifically with both programs,” said Folsom. These caseworkers are located in the areas of Durant, Hugo, Idabel, Talihina and Atoka, also providing services in the surrounding areas.

“Family Preservation is an in-home-based service program that is designed to prevent family disruption and out-of-home placement,” explained Folsom.

Family Prevention offers several helpful services such as parenting classes, budgeting guidance, “anything to do with the parenting aspect,” added Folsom.

The program receives referrals, usually from places such as DHS or Indian Child Welfare.

The program also provides crisis intervention if a family is in emergency need, such as a utility cut-off or an eviction. “The family in crisis must have an at-risk minor child in the home with a CDIB and there is an immediate need,” explained Folsom. The program is two-fold, consisting of immediate emergency crisis and in-home services.

“We are a service that’s placed in their home to help them keep their kids,” stated Folsom. “We really work hard to keep children from being removed. The goal is to em-

power these families with the tools to provide adequate and safe care for their children.”

In-home services may include such tasks as helping with cleaning the family’s house. Caseworkers could be in the home for up to six months, said Folsom, and make one-to-two-hour home visits once a week.

“The majority of the Family Violence program is outreach and prevention,” said Folsom, raising awareness of domestic violence through billboards, campaigns, brochures and various awareness activities throughout the year, especially during Domestic Violence Awareness Month (October).

“Not only do we provide outreach and prevention, but we also provide emergency assistance to help victims of domestic violence get out of a violent domestic situation,” said Folsom.

Caseworkers for Family Vi-

olence conduct various events to help victims of domestic violence. In October, a “victim’s day” was held in Idabel, providing total makeovers for those affected by violence in the home.

The program is involved with local shelters throughout the 10-1/2 counties of the Choctaw Nation and partners with several tribal/non-tribal programs. “Our purpose is to raise awareness about domestic violence and help those effected by domestic violence,” said Folsom.

Choctaw Legal Assistance for Victims

Children and Family Services also includes the Choctaw Legal Assistance for Victims program, making available holistic civil legal representation and advice to victims and survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking.

“The program is meant to help victims overcome legal hurdles that may be preventing them from getting away from their abusers,” explained program director Melissa Middleton. “This program provides victims with representation and legal advocacy in family, immigration, administrative agency or housing matters, protection order proceedings and other similar matters.”

According to Middleton, to qualify to receive assistance the abusive/violent situation must be relatively recent, the victim must be actively fleeing from the relationship and the program cannot offer representation for criminal cases or cases in which Children

Protective Services are involved.

Middleton’s program also has legal staff on hand that can assist with matters brought before the Choctaw Nation District Court. “We are able to provide members with divorce packets that they can use to prepare their own paperwork to be filed in tribal court,” she explained. “Additionally, we can assist with preparation of filings for guardianships, power of attorney papers and durable power of attorney papers.”

The legal staff is also available to help members with legal questions they may have and provide referrals to legal service providers and private attorneys. “At this time, we do not offer any legal representation to members unless there is a recent history of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking,” added Middleton, including the program doesn’t provide attorneys or have funding to pay for private attorneys for any types of criminal cases.

A cultural influence...

According to Brister, ICW maintains a Choctaw cultural influence on community members receiving help. “Larry offers cultural enrichment to the tribal and non-tribal foster parents and foster kids during his foster parent trainings,” she said. At least six hours of cultural training per year is mandatory for all tribal foster homes. “Larry includes non-tribal foster homes who have placement of Choctaw children to participate in this training as well,” said Brister. “Just another way to keep the child connected to their culture.”

This training consists of an employee from the language department, Historic Preservation or Cultural Services within the Choctaw Nation. “Topics vary from the history of the Choctaw people, stickball, pottery, traditional foods, Choctaw language, Choctaw storytelling, etc.,” said Brister. “Larry also encourages our tribal foster homes to participate in our pow wow in November and the Labor Day Festival.”

Brister said that it is very important to the foster care program that children are kept connected to the Choctaw culture, especially when children are removed from their Choctaw families. “We make it a priority to keep our foster kids and their foster families connected,” she said.

Folsom’s program of Family Preservation and Violence Prevention also keeps Choctaw culture in mind when accomplishing plans. “Our workers are trained in Positive Indian Parenting, so we are able to use some of that curriculum in our parenting classes,” said Folsom. “We also encourage our families to be involved with tribal functions, whether that be attending local cultural classes or attending our Labor Day Festival.”

ICW provides many programs, ranging from foster care to violence prevention, supplying the Choctaw Nation with a variety of helpful services while keeping tribal members in touch with their culture and Choctaw tradition. If you are interested in these services, please contact Lari Ann Brister at 580-924-8280 ext. 2635.



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Members of the Choctaw Nation Color Guard post the colors as the audience salutes the flags.

Jim Mitchell, left photo, stops to look at booklets provided by School of Choctaw Language staff Curtis and Theresa Billy. In the photo at right, Chief Pyle greets Neal Davis of Plano.



Assistant Chief Gary Batton welcomes royalty – Miss Choctaw Nation Amber Tehauno, Jr. Miss Choctaw Nation Adrianna Curnutt and Little Miss Summer Moffitt.



Joey Tom displays stickballs and stickball sticks, talking with Expo visitors about the game. Several tribes provided tables with a variety of information.



Jim and Gloria Redwine of McKinney, Texas, visit with Chief Gregory E. Pyle before the Expo’s ceremonies begin.



Among the many Choctaws attending the Expo are sisters Suzanne Heard of Haileyville and Betty Watson of McKinney, pictured with Assistant Chief Batton and Judy Allen.

A mother’s passion leading to helping others In a Good Way

By **LISA REED**
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

She’s a mother with a passion. Tribal member Teddi Irwin of Spring, Texas, has a passion to help a son who made a life-changing decision and to help other mothers’ sons who made similar bad decisions.

After Irwin’s son was incarcerated because of drug abuse, she questioned everything in her life and decided to do what a mother does best – focus on love and hope. In a spirit of faith, she reached out to family, friends, community and even strangers to ask for help in putting the puzzle that was her life, and her son’s, together.

Irwin is developing a unique training farm utilizing therapeutic farm practices to help Native American men establish a self-reliant, responsible and self-respecting life. The concept is for the men to benefit from cultural support, farm training and agricultural experience to become a crop of respectable, self-reliant and responsible American Indian farmers.

Irwin applied for and received 501 c03 non-profit classification for In A Good Way, the organization she developed along with five other board members. She is searching for land in southeastern Oklahoma, preferably in the Pushmataha County area, to start a farm and help the men through agricultural traineeships. The program she envisions will offer a chance for productive work and skill development in a community setting based on Indian values.

“I think partnering with people in a community is very important,” Irwin said. “The way they recover is by feeling good about themselves. Growing vegetables, helping paint homes, assisting elders and working as an outreach resource in the community develops relationships.”

The founding group has researched for four years to develop a business plan. Irwin says the land is the most important thing at this point to ensuring the fruition of their dream. “Eventually we would



Choctaw Nation: Lisa Reed

Teddi Irwin, pictured during the 2011 Labor Day Festival with Assistant Chief Gary Batton and Chief Gregory E. Pyle, donates son Greg Duda’s art show entries to the Choctaw Nation. Duda won second place in the graphics division.

like to have enough land to have 100 usable acres for farming and raising our animals,” she said.

They have done intensive research on designing the facility to be self-sustaining, incorporating things like wind energy to pump water, building solar panels, recycling and reutilizing waste materials.

Irwin and her son, Greg Duda, will be the first to live with the group on the farm. Startup will be with four men in a 20-by-30-foot house. “We would like to include the community in an old-fashioned barn raising,” Irwin said. “We already have people from Texas and Oregon who want to help.”

Duda’s background as a

structural draftsman has been utilized to make drawings of the housing, barn, sheds and chicken coops needed on the farm. His innovative thinking as an artist, Irwin says, has contributed the outline of many of the “need-to-do” projects and facilities required for success at IAGW. Annual vegetable production is an integral part of the planned training program with crops chosen for profitability, the appropriate season and the area in which the farm is located. A crop list of primary and trial crops includes over 70 varieties of vegetables.

Trainees on the farm will participate in a 40-hour work/study week and will be paid for work time. A trainee will in turn pay for his portion of room and board. Each trainee will establish his budget as part of his Individualized Trainee Plan.

Unless work schedules interfere, trainees will eat dinner together as a family. The dinner table will be a place where the trainees can learn to tell stories, exchange accounts

of day-to-day activities, share cultural information and engage in an interaction with their fellow trainees. This will enable them to hone social and conversational skills.

Family is an intricate and vital part of a successful re-entry to community living, says Irwin. Family interaction is a high priority at In a Good Way and the trainees will be encouraged to interact with friends and family in a positive and productive manner. Exercise rooms and hobby, craft and game rooms will be a part of the men’s houses.

In a Good Way’s goal of fostering independence, success, responsibility and American Indian wisdom will boost the competence and confidence necessary to integrate successfully back into families and society. Irwin’s dedication is so that trainees will learn skills they can take into the future as a way to support themselves and their families.

It is Irwin’s belief that the men will grow and prosper with a hand up and not a hand out.

Choctaw Nation can aid with loans

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

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

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



Photo provided

Spalding is honored at Idabel dinner

Councilman Thomas Williston and Chief Gregory E. Pyle present Florence McClure Spalding with a plaque for being chosen as District 1’s Outstanding Female Elder nominee. Spalding was unable to attend the Outstanding Elder Banquet in October but enjoyed being able to visit with everyone at Idabel’s Christmas party.

Help Wanted Seeking Choctaw CDIB Members!

Choctaw Casino Resort in Durant OK is looking for Choctaw applicants for the following Full-Time position

Hotel Front Services Manager

- The Front Service Manager will report to the Hotel Manager and work to oversee all facets of the Call Center and Bell/Valet operations. The Front Service Manager is responsible for short and long term planning, day-to-day operations, revenue maximization and guest satisfaction.
- Knowledge of principles and processes for providing guest and personal services. This includes guest needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluation of guest satisfaction.
- Knowledge of defensive driving techniques.
- Must have a valid driver’s license and clean driving record.
- Must be at least 21 years of age.
- Salary will be DOE.
- Schedule will include all holidays and weekends.

Choctaw Casinos is owned and operated by the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Position will give preference to Indians in accordance with Section 7(b) of the Indian Self-Determination Act. Please attach copy of CDIB Card if applicable.

Apply in person at Choctaw Casino Human Resource Office. 4216 Hwy 69/75, Durant, OK.

The lessons of Choctaw teacher, Dorothy Jean Ward Henson

Dorothy Jean Ward Henson, who is a resident of Idabel, is a half blood Choctaw who was born on June 3, 1933, to Ruby Lee Roberts Ward and Isom W. Ward.

Dorothy’s family tree contains rich Choctaw History. Her paternal great- grandfather came from Mississippi on the Trail of Tears and became the first unofficial sheriff of McCurtain County. This was before registered voting took place.

Her father, who was a full blood Choctaw, was registered on the rolls as 815NB (newborn) because he was just an infant when he was registered. He was able to speak Choctaw fluently and was a carpenter who built houses in the Idabel area.

Dorothy was her parent’s first-born child and was delivered in the home with the aid of a doctor who made rounds to all the homes in the area in an old buggy.

When she was a little girl, Dorothy would visit her aunt Selina Ward McClure, who was her father’s sister and help her husk corn and cook peanuts. She would also help her father cook squires often.

During the Great Depression her father provided for his family and helped his neighbors by planting acres of turnip greens and inviting them to harvest what then needed. He also hunted all



DOROTHY HENSON

sorts of wild game. Dorothy still exceptionally enjoys wild meat.

Her aunt Selina donated two acres of land for the Living Land Church to be built. Dorothy’s mother was led to salvation as a result of the ministry of the church, in which Wesley Bobb was the pastor.

Dorothy has fond memories of this church. Memories of camp meetings and even three day long cookout. There was a sign that said, “You’re on time,” and when it was time for church to start, they flipped the sign over so it was embarrassing to be late, said Dorothy as she recalled her childhood church.

When Dorothy became old enough, she began her college education at what is now Southeastern Oklahoma State University. She spent only a year there before transferring to East Central University in Ada.

Upon finishing her education, she was involved in a short marriage that granted her a son, Michael Wayne Henson. Dorothy and Michael moved from Ada where she worked for a telephone company to Idabel where she took up a teaching job located in Glover.

This was a one-teacher school and Dorothy taught all grades, first through eighth. She spent only a year there before moving to Dallas with her sister Betty Ward Sullivan.

While in Dallas she taught the first grade at Annie Webb Blanton School and worked on her master’s degree. When Michael was in the first grade, he would say “mama, let me off two blocks from the school,” said Dorothy as she explained her son’s embarrassment to have his mother double as his teacher.

Dorothy also worked as a hostess at a steakhouse in the evenings to support her small family. She spent long days, from the morning until late in the evening to keep things running smoothly.

When Michael was 8-years-old, Dorothy married Bryan Keith Henson, Sr., who worked for Texas Instruments. He invented the device on ATMs that keep kids from putting bubble gum and other bothersome substances in the machines.

Dorothy met Keith through an organization brought single parents together. Once a month, there were days for the kids to play and another day each month was for the parents to socialize. They did things such as ice-skating.

The couple had a son in 1954 and named him Bryan Keith Henson, Jr. who loved to collect Native American artifacts.

Dorothy eventually began teaching at George W. Truett School in the Casa Linda, Texas area. On Saturdays she tutored children from west Dallas, which Dorothy described as being a very poor area.

The area she tutored consisted of 52 different tribes of Indians ranging from Navajo to Eskimo’s. After the children were tutored, they would share a meal and play games and sports.

Dorothy went on to help with the beginnings of an Indian Center in Dallas. She recalls that the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) brought many Navajo’s in from Arizona. There were more children than was staff members to support them.

Dorothy told of her work by saying, some of us would volunteer and work sometimes until 10 p.m. sometimes helping them. We even got volunteer dentists and doctors to help.

The name of the organization that Dorothy help start is called Trinity Indian Mission. Through this she was nominated to be on a Presidential Task Force. She worked for Trinity Indian Mission for 12 years.

Because of her contribution to the Dallas community, The Dorothy Henson Addition at the Silverstein School was named in her honor. This building has a library, science lab and 17 classrooms.

While in the Dallas area, Dorothy was also considerably involved in the Church. She attended Tribal Chaplain Bertram Bobb’s church before it was even in a building.

She helped set up an Indian Center in Oak Cliff, Texas. Most people seemed to like that area better, so we set up a new center there, said Dorothy. When it began, volunteer workers ran it, but it eventually got funding.

In the late 1990s, Dorothy moved back to Oklahoma because her family needed her. Keith had also passed away a short time before the move. In recent times, Dorothy has been active in her Oklahoma community.

She attends church at St. Francis DeSales Catholic Church in Idabel.

She also partakes in the Wednesday dinners at the Choctaw Center in Idabel, where she enjoys the camaraderie and friendship of her fellow seniors. She was nominated from that site as the Outstanding Choctaw Indian Elder.

She was even in the play, Tall Cotton, which was produced by the Idabel Centennial Arts Council. The play is about the history of Idabel and Dorothy played the roll of Ida, one of the sisters for which the town is named.

“McCurtain County has my heart,” said Dorothy. She enjoys living in the area and cherishes the time she spends with her grandchildren, Cody and Anthony Henson.



Photo provided

Left, Jones Academy students display the art they created along with the artwork from students at Gaelscoil na gCeithre Maistri in Donegal, Ireland. The joint art exhibit was put on display at Jones Academy in Harshorne and the Choctaw tribal complex in Durant.



Right, Chief Pyle and Assistant Chief Batton visit the art exhibit at the Choctaw tribal complex in Durant.

Choctaw Nation: LARISSA COPELAND

Children’s joint art exhibit celebrates generosity

By DAVID SANCHEZ

Jones Academy

In December, a children’s art exhibit called “Celebrating Generosity” was held at the Jones Academy Elementary School in Harshorne and at the Choctaw Nation headquarters in Durant. The event was an effort to commemorate an act of kindness performed by the Choctaw tribe for the people of Ireland in 1847. It was a friendship forged in the darkest of hours. The Irish people were enduring the potato famine of the

1840s. Over a million people would perish during this plight called “an drochsaol.” Out of their meager means, the Choctaw people sent a monetary gift to provide sustenance and encouragement to the people of Ireland. This act of compassion saved many lives, and the people of Donegal, Ireland, have not forgotten. The townspeople have observed this generous deed in ceremony and dedications.

The exhibition involved the artwork of students from the community school of Gaelscoil na gCeithre Maistri in Donegal and those from Jones Academy Elementary. Students from

both schools designed beautiful works of art in recognition of the event of 1847. They also celebrate the people’s friendship and their distinct cultures. The art pieces were first displayed in Ireland in October of 2011. The Irish community saw the art projects at O’Donnell’s Castle. The children’s works were then transported to America and exhibited at the elementary school, and then again in Durant. The simple art reminds the observer of a time of great sacrifice and goodwill, a time when language and cultural differences offered no barriers to the grace of God and men.

Healthy Male Research Subjects Needed

We are looking for the following:

- Ages 18-50
- American Indian volunteers w/ CDIB Card
- High school graduate or GED
- Read and speak English fluently
- No history of brain injury, substance abuse, or mental illness

Time Commitment: One 90 minute session

If you are interested in participating in a research study of computerized tests examining attention, memory, and reasoning that will aid men and women in the Armed Forces please call 918-448-6796.

Choctaw Nation Memory Clinic

Sponsor Institution: University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center

Study PIs: C. Munro Cullum, Ph.D. and Myron F. Weiner, M.D.

Contact PIs@ 214.648.4427

Participants will be compensated for their time upon completion of the study visit with a \$50 gift card to Wal-Mart.



Choctaw Nation: LISA REED

After the reception on Dec. 20, the family of Charlotte Jackson tour the Stephenson Cancer Center, including a seminar room named in her honor.

DONATION

Continued from Page 1

scientists are conducting more than 100 cancer re-

search projects supported by more than \$20 million in peer-reviewed annual funding from sponsors, including the National Cancer Institute

and the American Cancer Society. In July, 2011, the Stephenson Cancer Center moved into a state-of-the-art, 210,000-square-foot facility on the campus of the Uni-

versity of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center in Oklahoma City.

For additional information, visit www.OklahomaCancer-Center.org.

OBITUARIES

Wilma Garland

Wilma J. Garland passed away on Oct. 8, 2011, in Oklahoma City. She was born on Sept. 25, 1921, in Garland. During World War II she worked for the federal government as a clerk in the gasoline, price and rationing office in Stigler. She married Jerry W. Garland in 1948 and they made their home in Stigler. After 30 years as a caseworker with the Department of Human Services, she retired and she and her husband became “winter Texans,” spending winters at their vacation home in the Rio Grande Valley where they golfed and fished. She and her husband also enjoyed traveling to New Mexico for part of their summer visiting Santa Fe and Pecos. In retirement, she kept busy with many hobbies, especially gold, oil painting, fishing and studying Spanish. Even at age 88, she enrolled in a Spanish class. She loved her family very much and enjoyed many happy days with them after movie to Oklahoma City in Sept. of 2006. Her friends were also very important to her and she kept in contact with many of her school friends from Stigler, including her dear friend and roommate from Connors College. She was a member of Main Street Baptist Church in Stigler. She loved her church and all of her church friends. Her family is very grateful to Mercy Hospice of Oklahoma City for the support, care and love extended during her illness.

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

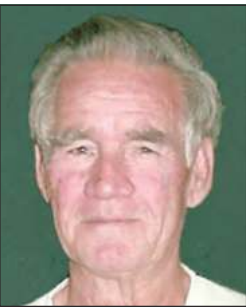


Adrain Parker

Adrain Fred Parker, 82, of Hugo, passed away on Nov. 8, 2011, in Hugo. He was born Oct. 16, 1929, in Hugo, the son of Fred Parker and Mary Jane (Locke) Parker. He was raised in Hugo and later moved to Lubbock, Texas, then to Ashdown, Ark., for several years and returned to Hugo for the last several years of his life. He was a carpenter by trade working in the housing industry. Adrain loved his family, enjoyed having cookouts, watching western movies, going fishing and was proud of his Choctaw heritage. He was also proud to instill a strong work ethic in his family. Adrain was a member of the Church of Christ.

Adrain was preceded in death by his parents; brother Dwight Parker; two sisters, Maleace Hill and Shelva Moore; grandson Danny Wayne Parker; and two nephews, Randy Parker and Richard Parker.

Survivors include two sons, Adrain Wayne Parker with wife Scarlett of Lewisville, Texas, and David Eugene Parker of Ashdown, Ark.; two daughters, Mary Kay Harrington with husband Danny of Ashdown, Ark., and Cynthia Ann “Cindy” Myers with husband Harold of Vilonia, Ark.; two brothers, Caral Parker of Sawyer, and Jim Parker of Slaton, Texas; one sister, Ann Shannon of Hugo; 11 grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren; along with many other relatives and friends.



Joyce Williams

Joyce Ann Williams, 67, of Ardmore passed away on Nov. 15, 2011, in Ardmore. Joyce was born Jan. 16, 1944, in Ardmore to Anison Thomas and Lorene (Jackson) Thomas. She married Carter Williams on June 10, 1964, at Durwood. He attended Dickson High School and then went to work for Stromberg Carlson on the assembly line. She later took a position with the Holiday Inn in housekeeping until she retired after over 20 years of service. She enjoyed cleaning, cooking, baking and sewing. She was a member of the Durwood Missionary Baptist Church and was always willing and ready to cook for the different church meetings. Most of all she enjoyed being with her family.

Joyce was preceded in death by her parents; husband; brothers, William Thomas and Joe Lee Thomas; and sisters, Irene Mose and Emaline Tubbee.

She is survived by sons, Richard Williams of Ardmore, and Anson Paul Williams of Dickson; brother Bobby Thomas with wife Paula of Dickson; along with numerous nieces and nephews.

Kathleen Jackson

Kathleen Caroline Durant Jackson, 64, passed away on Nov. 25, 2011, in Oklahoma City. She was born Jan. 15, 1947, in Hugo, to the Rev. and Mrs. Forbis and Teola (Woolridge) Durant. Kathleen graduated from Atoka High School in May of 1965, Eastern State College in 1967, with her associate’s degree, and then from O.C.L.A. in 1969, with her bachelor’s in Psychology.

In August 1969, Kathleen married Louie Jackson and they were married for 42 years. Kathleen had infinite patience and love for children and that was evident her entire working career. She began her career as a nurse’s aide at the Atoka Hospital in the newborn nursery. She has worked for Muskogee Public Schools and most recently at Sequoyah High School as a Special Education paraprofessional. She supported the high school sports teams and was always excited for the boys and girls when they made state. More than sports, Kathleen absolutely adored and loved her grandchildren, Tony and Piper. They were the light of her life and she was constantly talking about her babies.

Kathleen was very involved with the United Methodist Church growing up, as her father was a Methodist minister and district superintendent for the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference. Kathleen was involved in the youth group and served as district and conference treasurer for several years for the M.Y.F. She was very involved at her home church of Fife Indian United Methodist Church and had attended there since 1979. She was full-blood Choctaw and was very proud of her tribal heritage.

She is preceded in death by her parents; brother Forbis Durant, Jr., and brother Nick Durant.

Survivors include her husband, Louie Jackson; daughter Kim Jackson of the home; son Kelley with wife Melissa; grandchildren, Tony and Piper Jackson of Muskogee; twin sister Katherine Prince of Stigler; brother Bill Durant of Talihina; and a host of cousins, nieces and nephews.



Mary Neeley

Mary Neeley, 85, Cordell resident, passed away on Sept. 14, 2011, in Cordell. She was born on Nov. 21, 1925, in Rufe to Jackson and Clarissa (Caldwell) Wesley.

Mary was raised in Soble and married Donnie Lonnie Neeley Sr. on Nov. 17, 1946, in Sayre. Mary and Donnie raised their family in Dill City. Mary moved to Cordell in 1987. She was a member of the Assembly of God Church in Cordell and enjoyed attending church outings. Mary enjoyed fishing, quilting and going to ball games and other social activities. She was a homemaker and loved her family with all of her heart.

Mary was preceded in death by her parents; husband Donnie on Dec. 25, 1986; daughter Mary Jane Neeley; five infant children; three granddaughters, Mary Katherine Neeley, Katherine Faye Davis and Stephanie Irene Neeley; a sister; and son-in-law Bobby Davis.

Survivors include four daughters, Helen Sanchez with husband Marcos Sr. of Cordell, JoAnn Weese with husband Melvin of Cordell, Colleen Brummett with husband Harold of We-woka, and Joyce Davis of Cordell; four sons, Donnie Neeley Jr. with wife Linda of Lawton, Thomas Neeley with wife Erma of Weatherford, Clint Neeley with wife Anita of Cordell, and Clarence Neeley with wife Lisa of Cordell; sister Margaret Billy of Sobol; four brothers, Lenis Wesley and Amos Wesley, both of Sobol, Willis Wesley of Wright City, and Eugene Wesley of Dallas; 22 grandchildren; 55 great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren.

Vernon Belvin

Vernon Lee Belvin, 71, passed away on Nov. 2, 2011, at his home in Midwest City. He was born on June 14, 1940, in Boswell, the son of Henry and Sarah Belvin. Vernon was raised in Boswell and had lived for the past 43 years in Midwest City. He married Nancy Ennis on June 18, 1961, in Oklahoma City. Vernon was a hard worker making his career as a roofer. He was a member of the AQHA, AKC, and the Coon Hunter Assoc. He enjoyed cleaning incinerators, coon hunting, deer hunting, and was an avid fisherman. He also liked gardening but was not successful at it. Being a family man, he took great care of his mother. In his later years, he grew to love God, the church, and was an Elder at Goodspring Presbyterian Church.

His parents preceded him in death. He was also preceded in death by one sister, Jimmie Lou Hunt and two brothers, Baby Belvin and Henry “Poochum” Belvin.

He is survived by his wife of 50 years, Nancy Belvin; two sons, Arthur Belvin of McCloud, and Donnie Belvin of Boswell; one daughter, Renita Hookom of Oklahoma City; six brothers, Virgil “Buddy” Belvin of Valliant, Dante Belvin, John Belvin, Richard Belvin and Jerry Paul Belvin, all of Boswell, and Solly Belvin of Shawnee; three sisters, Lavada Duke of Atoka, Virginia Rutledge of Millerton, and Debbie Bacon of Boswell; seven grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; along with numerous nieces, nephews, and friends.



Bruce Ott

Bruce Waylin Ott, 62, of Bristow Point passed away on Sept. 10, 2011, at his home in Bristow Point. Bruce was born Oct. 19, 1948, in Talihina. He was the son of Leonard and Annabelle (Logan) Ott. He was raised and educated in Wilburton, graduating from Wilburton High in 1966. Following high school he joined the Navy and served during the Vietnam Conflict. Subsequent to active duty he enlisted in the Naval Reserves and was honorably discharged in 1972. Upon completion of his service to the nation he returned to Wilburton and continued his education at Eastern Oklahoma State College for two years. He was first married to Melba Ott in 1967. Then in 1990, he married Janice Deck. Mr. Ott’s working career was in the petroleum industry and at the time of passing he was employed with Key Energy. He was a member of Grace Temple in Crowder and had been ministering at Oklahoma State Penitentiary for the past 13 years. He was an avid football fan and had coached little league football in Wilburton. He was an accomplished musician both professionally and volunteering. He had earlier played back up for Reba McIntire and Johnny Paycheck while more recently, at Grace Temple. Mr. Ott had been a resident of Bristow Point since 1991.

He was preceded in death by his parents and a sister, Connie Ott.

He is survived by his wife, Janice of the home; sons, Waylin Ott of Longview, Texas, Robert Ott of McAlester, Michael Ott of Portland, Ore., and Garrett Ott of Crowder; daughters, Sabrina Ott of Wilburton, Jamie Cole of Porter, and Jessica Nooner of Crowder; and 11 grandchildren.

Raymond Palmer Sr.

Raymond Palmer Sr., 84, passed away on Oct. 29, 2011, in Ardmore. Raymond was born on Jan. 28, 1927, at Coalgate to Watson Palmer and Emma (Courtney) Palmer.

After his marriage to Millie Phillips, the couple moved to Ardmore in 1948. In 1971, he worked on the construction of the Michelin Plant in Ardmore and stayed with that position until the plant was completed in 1973. He took a position with the City of Ardmore at the water treatment plant and then moved to the road department where he retired in 1990. Raymond, who affectionately became known as “Big Daddy,” read his Bible every day and had received a certificate stating that he was an ordained minister. He liked to repair small engines in his spare time. He enjoyed fishing, playing dominos, and any activities that took him out in nature. Raymond loved being with his family and many grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents; wife Millie (Phillips) Palmer; daughter Glenda “JoAnn” Linderman; sons, Raymond Palmer Jr., Jimmy “Buffalo” Palmer, John Adam Palmer and David Glenn Palmer; an infant daughter; great-granddaughter Alison Ely; great-grandson Raymond John Randall Palmer; brothers, Edward Palmer and Lubbin Palmer; and sisters, Elizabeth Palmer, Listey Johnson and Anita Mose.

Raymond is survived by daughters, Rebecca Collins, Lahoma Jean Palmer-Lowe, Norma Higginbotham; sons, Winston Isaac Palmer and James Lynn Palmer; 23 grandchildren; 46 great-grandchildren; numerous great-great-grandchildren; and sister Lina Pickens.



Robert Smith

Robert Smith, 35, passed away on Oct. 23, 2011, at Spring Valley Hospital. He was born on May 19, 1976, at Southern Nevada Memorial Hospital (now UMC) in Las Vegas.

He graduated from Cimmaron Memorial High School in 1994. He worked most of his adult life in copier sales and as a technician. Robert loved baseball, UNLV football and basketball. He was a very kind and compassionate person who will be greatly missed.

Robert moved to Ada in November of 2008. Ada was the home of his great-grandparents, Joe Monroe Smith and Stella Mae Stewart-Smith. His grandfather, Joe Byron Smith, was also born in Ada. Robert’s great-grandparents later moved the family to Holdenville. Robert left Ada and returned to Las Vegas in June of 2010.

Robert was preceded in death by his grandparents, Joe and Hazel Smith, and his mother Shirley Smith-Lee.

He is survived by his wife, Lindsay; daughter Samantha; dad Jim; mom Twyla; and sister Rachelle Smith, all of Las Vegas; aunt Elaine Gray of Pahrump, Nev., and aunt Carolyn Sue Gilreath of Clinton, Tenn.

Willie Jim

Willie Jim, 86, a McAlester resident, passed away on Nov. 9, 2011, at McAlester. He was born on June 18, 1925, to Egbert and Ethel (Jack) Jim. He attended Bentley School and Goodland Indian School, and then became a warehouseman for Mayflower Movers. He then married Rena (Sexton). Willie a member of the Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church in Bentley, loved to cook, to bead work, and sew.

He is survived by his son, Davis Jim with wife Dorothy of McAlester; grandchildren, Lori Daney with husband Gary of Calera, Sandra Bear, Virginia Jim, Melissa Jim, all of Stigler, Lealer Jim of San Antonio, and Tasha Jim of McAlester; sister-in-law Susan Jim of Atoka; 30 great-grandchildren; and two great-great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents; wife, Rena Jim; children, Joe Jim, Willie Jim Jr., Eliza Jim, Nancy Dodson, Rita Jim, Mary Jim and Martha Jim; and siblings, Emmett Jim, Abbott Jim and Mary Fulson.

Jared Langston

Jared Eli Langston, 28, passed away on Dec. 4, 2011, in Hugo. Jared was born Sept. 2, 1983, in Durant, the son of Kenneth and Julie (Todd) Langston. He loved his family especially Lacie and Dallas. He loved to tinker with his pickup and any old vehicle, loved to hunt and fish and loved music. Jared never met a stranger, but most of all, he loved life.

He was preceded in death by his grandfather; one uncle; and one aunt.

Jared is survived by his parents, Julie and Rocky Roxberry of Hugo; his father, Kenneth Langston of Boswell; three sisters, Lacie Roxberry and Dallas Roxberry, both of Hugo, and Ashley Satterfield of Bokchito; brother Conor McIntyre of Oil City, Pa.; grandmothers, Lorene Todd of Hugo and Betty Robinson of Boswell; three uncles, Ronnie Todd of Hugo, Dickie Langston of Boswell and Ricky Langston of Bokchito; four aunts, Regina Lockwood with husband Roger of Hugo, Marlene Robertson with husband Royce of Oklahoma City, Sherrie Todd of Cabot, Ark., and Deanna Walter of Franklin, Pa.; along with numerous family and friends.



Shirley Thompson

Shirley Ann (Sampson) Thompson, 66, passed away on Dec. 9, 2011, in Ada. Shirley was born on April 13, 1945, at Simpson to Onis Sampson and Cora (Henry) Sampson. She attended Dickson Schools and married Nathan Thompson Jr. in September of 1966 in Ardmore. Shirley worked for Stromberg-Carlson, Cook’s Laundry and retired from Dollar General in 2007. Shirley was baptized into the Overbrook Baptist Church. She enjoyed watching her family play softball, going to garage sales and cooking for family gatherings. She loved spending time with her grandchildren and her special grandson Bryne.

She was preceded in death by her parents; sister Sarah Sampson; and aunt Janie Chubbey.

Shirley is survived by her husband, Nathan of the home; sons, Darrell Sampson, Terry Thompson, Kendall Thompson with wife Darla Christie; daughter Vicki Harris with husband Joe; special boys, Jade and Adam; special girl, Amber Sampson; special nephew, Warren Sampson; brother Ronnie Sampson with wife Fernie; sisters, Shirley D. Sampson and JoAnn McMillan; brother-in-law Edwin Thompson with wife Shirley; 10 grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.



Patricia Conway

Patricia Jackson Conway, 79, passed away on Nov. 21, 2011, in Ardmore. Patricia was born on Dec. 9, 1931, in Atoka, to Lamar and Lucille (Crosby) Jackson.

She married Gene Conway on March 14, 1953, at Northeast Baptist Church in Ardmore.

She graduated from Ardmore High School in 1950, and attended Ardmore Business College. She went to work for Oklahoma Motor Company as a bookkeeper. Later, she went to work for the National Supply Company as their secretary. She worked for Exchange National Bank as a teller, as the secretary for Trinity Baptist Church for 14 years, and for the Bureau of Indian Affairs for 12 years. She was a long-time member of Trinity Baptist Church.

Patricia was preceded in death by her parents and sister, Stella Virginia Jackson.

She is survived by her husband, Gene of the home; son Ronnie Conway and her grandson, Kelvin Conway, of Ardmore; son Gary Conway with wife Iris and her granddaughters, Marisa Conway and Deirdre Conway, and her great-granddaughter, Mika Sage Conway, all of Houston; brother Lamar “Buddy” Jackson with wife Beverly of Sherman, Texas; and a host of family and friends.



EDITOR’S NOTE - The birth announcement for Grace Shallenberger was accidentally placed in the obituary section of last month’s paper. The Biskinik apologizes for any confusion this may have caused the family.

OBITUARIES

Bobby Green

Bobby Royce “Bob” Green, 76, a longtime Lane area resident, passed away on Oct. 23, 2011, in Dallas. He was born on Dec. 12, 1934, to Alvin W. and Lorene (Crowley) Green, in Durant. He graduated from Durant High School then later attended SOSU. Bob was a skilled brick mason. He married Roburta “Robbie” (Hammond) on April 24, 1959, in Lane. He was a member of the Lane Baptist Church and enjoyed woodworking. He was a true OU fan.



He was preceded in death by his parents; brother, Lonnie Delbert Green; and son, Gary Lee Green.

He is survived by his wife, Roburta “Robbie” Green of the home; daughters, Sandi Green of Sunnyvale, Texas, and Karren Burns with husband Darryl of Keller, Texas; grandchildren, Jason Todd Burns of Hurst, Texas, Bryan Seth Burns of Denton, Texas, Dylan Lane Burns of Keller, and Calli Shayne Green of Sunnyvale, Texas; great-grandchild, Declan Elliott Burns of Hurst; nephew Roger Green of Sand Springs; and niece Sherry Howell of Austin, Texas.

Jesse Howard

Jesse L. Howard passed away on June 21, 2011, due to pancreatic cancer. Jesse married Flo Shirley in Holdenville on Aug. 1, 1953. He was a Korean veteran and a 30-year career retiree from the Federal Administration in Oklahoma City. Jesse and Flo had two children, Gary and Gina, who in turn had six grandchildren who went on to parent four great-grandchildren.



Grandfather Emery Goodwin Howard was an original enrollee of the Choctaw Nation. He was born Nov. 24, 1888, and passed away in 1975 at the age of 87. Jesse was the son of Cecil and Etta Howard and had two brothers and two sisters. He also had an infant sister who is deceased.

Kiana Rechberg

Kiana Karinne Rechberg, 19, passed away on Nov. 23, 2011, as a result of an auto accident on Hwy. 199 in California. She was born on July 19, 1992, in Orange, Calif., to proud parents Mark and Jacquie Rechberg and was recently residing with her family in Jacksonville, Ore. She attended school in Gold Beach and Bandon, and graduated from Cascade Christian High School as an Honor Roll student.



Kiana was attending Southern Oregon University to become a kindergarten teacher. She loved and played sports, especially volleyball. Kiana had a love for both animals and children. God’s love and her warm and caring heart were evident in her life. She blessed everyone with her beautiful smile. Kiana was loved and admired by her family, fellow students and peers, and will be grievously missed. Kiana would truly want others to rejoice because she is in heaven with her heavenly Father.

“A beautiful person inside and out, no matter what came her way or what obstacle she was faced with, she overcame it. She believed in her dreams and overcame this world. She gave so much love and loved everyone so deeply and passionately. I could not ask for a more understanding, loving and no-judgmental friend.” – Quote from a close friend. She was very proud of her Choctaw heritage.

“For beautiful eyes, look for the good in others; for beautiful lips, speak only words of kindness; and for poise, walk with the knowledge you are never alone.” This was Kiana’s favorite quote from Audrey Hepburn.

She is survived by her parents; brother Kallen, 14; sister Koral, 12; grandparents, Ann Rechberg of Murrieta, Calif., Joel Harkins of Orange, and Mary Harkins of Portland, Ore.

Lahoma Nelson

Lahoma Kerr Nelson, 89, a law enforcement pioneer from Norman passed away on Oct. 19, 2011. Lahoma was born Nov. 18, 1921, to George Dewey and Nona Mae Kerr in Oklahoma City.



After graduating from the University of Oklahoma, Lahoma taught English at the Tohatchi Navajo Reservation School in New Mexico. In 1972, she graduated from the Norman Police Department Academy as one of the first female police officers. She attended training at the FBI national headquarters in Quantico, Va., and specialized in the areas of crisis intervention and police community relations. She had more than 1,400 hours of specialized and in-service training in the field of law enforcement. She probably is most known for her enjoyment of the children of the Norman and Cleveland County areas who she referred to as “her little darlings.”

Officer Nelson taught generations of area children and cherished having them (and their parents) greet her with hugs around town. In addition to Safety Town, she taught safety classes in the Norman and Little Axe public schools and area day-care and head-start programs for many years. Lahoma was a pioneer in the establishment of the Safety Town Project in 1977 for kindergarten and first-grade students. She was very proud that there is a street in Safety Town named for her. She retired from the Norman Police Department in 1988 with the rank of Master Police Officer, serving as head of the Police Community Relations Unit. She then joined the Cleveland County Sheriff ‘s Department, where she served as the Community Relations Deputy for 19 years, retiring in 2007.

She served on the Oklahoma Department of Education committee to write safety curriculums for fourth to sixth grades and for seventh and ninth grades. She taught in the Highway Patrol’s cadet lawmen class in 1976-1977 and was an instructor for the Norman Police Academy. She also was a member of Kiwanis. Lahoma also served First Christian Church of Norman as an officer, elder and deacon. She was a member of Phi Mu Sorority. She was also a proud member of the Choctaw Nation.

She was preceded in death by her parents and her two sisters. Survivors include her sons, Steve with wife Betsy Nelson, and Donald Nelson; and her grandchildren, Justin, Serana, Christina, Stephen and David Nelson.

Carolyn Carter

Carolyn Jeaniece Carter, 56, passed away on Nov. 7, 2011, in Oklahoma City. She was born March 31, 1955, in Idabel, the daughter of Carl David and Betty Jean (John) Kupiec. She married Donald Carter, the love of her life, on Aug. 25, 1976, in Idabel. Carolyn was a devoted wife, mother and grandmother. Her love for God and passion for teaching His word to other women was unsurpassed. Sowing the seeds of God’s love was a lifelong commitment that continues to bear fruit to this day.



Survivors include her husband; two sons, Zac with wife Andrea, and Jordan, all of Norman; her father, Carl Kupiec of Paris; mother, Betty Farley of Idabel; brother, Randy Kupiec of Garland; and twin grandsons, Peyton and Everett.

Calvin Wolfe Jr.

Calvin “Leon” Wolfe Jr., 61, passed away on Oct. 15, 2011, in Ardmore. Leon married Linda Elaine Lee on April 19, 1974, in Gainesville, Texas. He enjoyed playing bingo and dominoes, as well as building model cars. Leon was an avid OU fan. He will be remembered as a caring father and grandfather.



He was preceded in death by his wife, parents, sister Kimmie Wolfe, and grandson Jerry Coakly.

Leon is survived by his children, Tina Housewright with husband Shawn of Woodward, Betty Collins with husband Trey of Woodward, Kevin Wolfe of Leon, Sherry Wolfe with husband Thomas Houser and Ginger Thompson with husband Brendan, both of Ardmore; grandchildren Richard Housewright, Marcus Housewright, Seth Collins, Cassey Collins, Alison Collins, Zacharia Donaldson, Leona Wolfe and Jon Thompson; siblings, Larry James Wolfe with wife Vera of Leon, Marilyn Neal of Mississippi, David Wolfe with wife Rhonda of Marietta, Becky Gomez with husband Lucio of Ardmore, and Michael Wolfe with wife Kim of Grapevine, Texas; along with numerous nieces, nephews and a host of friends.

Sallie Marris

Sallie Rasha “Granny” Marris, 90, passed away on Nov. 7, 2011, in Ardmore. She was born on Dec. 29, 1920, in Ardmore, to John Rasha and Minnie (John) Rasha. Sallie was a devoted homemaker her entire life and enjoyed fishing, camping, bingo and most of all, being surrounded by her many, many grandchildren. She took pride in taking and teaching her grandchildren to fish, camp and how to respect the outdoors. She had a lifelong love of all her animals and the company of her many friends. She also loved to cook for her family on Sunday afternoons or any given occasion. Her main requests were red top stew, chicken and dumplings, wild onions, salt pork and homemade biscuits.



She was preceded in death by her parents; husband Winner Marris; her siblings; one daughter, Helen Rasha; son, Ralph Hardy Marris; two granddaughters, Freida Parker and Brenda Avilia; and long-time companion, Melford Thomas.

She is survived by one daughter, Tena Jo Layton with husband James of Lone Grove; three sons, Jim Marris with Earlene Wilkenson of Dickson, Darrell Gene Rodgers of Fort Worth, and Albert Lewis with wife Francis of Ardmore; one daughter-in-law, Pearl Marris of Ardmore; niece Helen Meadows of Ardmore; 16 grandchildren; 42 great-grandchildren; and 20 great-great-grandchildren.

Mercline Lawson

Marcline “Merch” Phillips Lawson, 78, passed away at her home on Oct. 5, 2011, with hospice care. She was born May 30, 1933, in Pittsburg. She was a devoted member of Immanuel Baptist Church in Jefferson, Texas. She enjoyed life, family and friends. She was very proud of her Choctaw Indian heritage. She wore a red Choctaw dress with black diamond trim, white apron and red moccasins when laid to rest.



She was preceded in death by her husband, James Elbert Lawson; parents, Custer and Alma Phillips; brothers, Anthony Phillips and Roger Phillips.

She is survived by daughters, DeeBorah Hale of Mims, Texas, Mary Hicks and Sherry Maxwell of Mt. Pleasant, Texas; sisters Leona Vaughn of Hugo, Christine James of Boswell, and Janet Phillips of Grant; brother Eugene Phillips of Hunger; nine grandchildren, Christy Nichols of Mims, Texas, Jennifer Britt and John Hale of Marshall, Texas, Amanda Hicks, Misty Hicks, and Christopher Lawson of Mt. Pleasant, Texas, Nathaniel Turberville and Shannon Geans of Alabama, Michael Maxwell of Hughes Springs, Texas; and 10 great-grandchildren.

Mary Siems

Mary B. Siems, 85, passed away Oct. 20, 2011. She was born in 1926 in Bennington to Levi and Dollye Beams. Mary was a member of the SPJST Lodge #88 and Oaks Presbyterian Church. She had many hobbies including sewing, quilting, traveling, cooking and playing with her faithful companion, Raven. She was an avid reunion attendee, whether it was a family, high school or SP Railroad reunion. Mary was also a proud breast cancer survivor.



Mary was preceded in death by her parents; husband of 55 years, Forrest J. Siems, and sister, Janice Crouch.

She is survived by daughters, Shelly Narciso with husband John, and Sydney Motal; grandchildren, Cassidy Motal, Nicole Reynolds, Kendall Collette with husband Andy, Sarah and John Narciso; great-grandchildren, Mason and McKenna Collette; brothers, Joe, Jesse and Lynn with their families; and numerous nieces, nephews, great-nieces and nephews.

Emily Graham

Emily Elizabeth “Beth” Adams Graham passed away on Nov. 1, 2011, in Marlow. She was born on Aug. 4, 1919, in Cruce to Jon and Eslie (Jones) Adams. She lived in the Stephens County area all of her life. She attended school in Owens Prairie and graduated from Marlow High School. Beth married Tip Graham on Dec. 14, 1835, in Duncan. He preceded her in death on Jan. 21, 2000. She enjoyed sewing and was very active in area civic organizations. She was a member of the DAR, a former member of the Marlow Chamber of Commerce and served on the Senior Citizen’s board. Beth was a former Stephens County Democratic Woman of the Year and served two terms as a delegate on the Silver Haired Legislature. She was also a long-time member of the First Baptist Church in Marlow.



She was preceded in death by her parents; brothers, Rex, Brit, Woodrow and Wendell Adams; and sisters, Dot Newman, Helen Callahan, Jean Ware, Fran Bayless and Mary Hansgen.

Survivors include three daughters, Carol Stewart with husband Lester of Healdton, Nancy Burton with husband Randall of Marlow, Fran Carney of Florissant, Mo.; son Sid Graham with wife Mary of Mount Pleasant, Mich.; six grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Johnnie Randolph

Johnnie Wardina Randolph passed away on Sept. 2, 2011, in Lafayette, Ind. She was born on March 10, 1923, in Bennington, to Lucille N. Faulkner and Bartice “Bill” Greenwood Riddle, a half Choctaw. Lucille married George Roth after the death of Bill. She married Woodrow (Woody) R. Randolph on Aug. 17, 1941, and he passed away on Jan. 29, 1964.

She graduated from Jefferson High School Lafayette in 1941. She worked as a secretary for Alcoa during World War II and then was a secretary for Best-Built Lumber. She then became a realtor for Harvey Realty and later owed Star Realty, which eventually merged with Bouwkamp Realty. She went on to retire from there.

She was a member and former chairman of several committees for the Lafayette Regional Association of Realtors, a member of the First Christian Church of Lafayette where she was in the Serendipity Club, former member and past president of the National Secretaries Association (now International Association of Administrative Professionals), an active member of Newton Health and Fitness (Club Newton) since 1994, and the past president of the Ladies Auxiliary Merou Grotto.

Her family includes sister Mary Roth; children, Cindy Golden with husband Dick, Bruce Randolph with wife Paula, and Deborah Clampitt with husband Bob; grandchildren, Denise Marsh, Kimberly Childers with husband Greg, Belinda Dewey with husband Troy, Brent Randolph, Troy Wallen, Jay Clampitt with wife Tracy, Will Clampitt with wife Ashley, and Sarah Clawson with husband Brian; and 12 great-grandchildren.

Roy Givens

Roy Givens, 99, of Purcell passed away on Nov. 1, 2011, at Purcell Municipal Hospital. He was born on Dec. 31, 1911, in Purcell. He was the third child of eight children, born to John Hemstead Givens and Sophia Virginia (Kemp) Givens. Roy grew up a farm boy living in McClain County. He later started working as a carpenter and helped build the old Navy barracks in Norman. He married Mary Mavis Sarrett on Aug. 31, 1935, in Purcell and together they raised four children. On March 13, 1944, during World War II, Roy was drafted into the U.S. Navy and left a wife at home with three children. While on board of the USS Concise, Roy was injured and later honorably discharged in May of 1945. After returning home to Oklahoma, Roy began working as a carpenter again and lived in the Oklahoma City area. In 1951 he started working at Tinker Air Force Base in Midwest City and worked there until he retired. Roy and Mary moved back to Purcell in 1972, where they enjoyed their retirement years. One of his favorite things to do was going to the Purcell Livestock Barn where he liked to wheel and deal with the buying and selling of farm animals, mainly horses. Another thing he looked forward to every year was going camping in southeast Oklahoma with his family during the deer-hunting season. Roy liked being the camp cook and the trophy judge for his sons and grandsons. After Mary passed away in 2006, Roy has lived with his daughter, Penny in Purcell. Roy loved seeing his children and grandchildren and they were all very special to him.



He was preceded in death by his parents; his wife on June 23, 2006; son and daughter-in-law, Jerry and Barbara Givens of Wayne; grandson, Ricky Givens; granddaughter, Kyla Givens; great-great-granddaughter, Jerran Dorrell; three brothers; and two sisters.

He is survived by son Roy Don Givens with wife Jackie of McLoud; daughters, Dana Spencer with husband Jim of Yukon; Penny Bruehl of Purcell; brother Emmitt Givens of Modesto, Calif.; sister Onie White of Pauls Valley; 10 grandchildren, 26 great-grandchildren, 36 great-great-grandchildren; and a host of nieces, nephews and other relatives and friends

Norma Pitts

Norma Rhea Pitts, 76, of Stigler, passed away on Oct. 12, 2011, in Fort Smith, Ark. She was born Aug. 5, 1935, in Garland. Although Norma was quiet, she was friendly to everyone, loved to laugh and never met a stranger. Norma never complained about the many hardships that she had to endure throughout her life.



Norma was preceded in death by her mother, Hester Marie Cronin, and stepfather, Leonard Chronic; husband Eddie J. Pitts; two sons, Scott James Pitts and Michael Jay Pitts; and one sister, Ramona Jo Hulsey.

She is survived by two daughters, Julie Marie with husband Cole Kline of Sallisaw, and Ramona Rhea Pitts with companion Andrea Queen of Roland; son Randy Wayne Pitts of Bakersfield, Calif.; three granddaughters, Tanya Pitts Higbee of Fresno, Calif., Jessica Pitts of Colinga, Calif., and Rebekah Kline of Sallisaw; and grandson Zachary Kline of Sallisaw.

Choctaw and buffalo

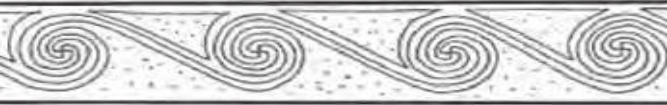


Photo provided

Two are possibly connected more strongly than ever today

Over the last couple of years, the writers of Iti Fabvssa have received a number of questions about the relationship between the Choctaw people and the American bison, or “buffalo.” While the Choctaw never relied upon bison to the same extent as the Plains Indian Tribes, such as the Comanche and Pawnee, Choctaw communities did hunt bison and use bison products during certain times in history. Today, through a pan-Indian identity that emphasizes this animal, the bison is connected with the Choctaw people perhaps more strongly than ever before.

The American bison, known as “yvnash” in the Choctaw language, is an amazing native creature. A mature bison bull can easily reach 2,000 pounds at maturity. Although these wool-covered, grass-eating ruminants might look sluggish and clumsy, they are not. A bison can run 40 miles per hour (as fast as a race horse), and do a standing jump over a six-foot-high fence (National Bison Association 1990)! Bison are also very tough. In 1906, promoters took two bison down to El Paso, Texas, to pit them against some of the best fighting bulls from Mexico (Johnson 2009). The first match saw a hobbled bison, whose leg had been injured during the long train ride, pitted against one of the fighting bulls. The fierce bull charged the calm bison at an angle, and glanced off. The bull then



Iti Fabussa

charged again, this time at a more direct angle. On impact, the bison stood unmoved; the fighting bull fell to its haunches. The bull recovered and charged again, but this time the bison met him head-on. The fighting bull crumpled to the ground, then began running around the ring looking for a place to escape! A second bull was brought out and the bison sent him running, too. The bored bison eventually fell asleep in the spot it had been standing since the match began. Later, a third fighting bull was brought out, and soon the limping bison was chasing it plus the other two bulls around the ring!

The American bison has its early origins in ancient forms of animals that lived in Asia. By 2.5 million years ago, some of the herds had come to North America and began to diverge from their Asian relatives. Through the millinea, other groups of bison immigrated from Asia and mixed with the bison already in North America. Eventually, several different North American species of bison evolved. One of these, Bison latifrons, had horns that spanned 7 feet from tip-to-tip. Bison antiquus, another giant species of

bison, lived in the Choctaw homeland at the time of the earliest people in the area, during the end of the last “Ice Age.” In north Florida, a skeleton of one of these animals dating back 12,000 years was found with a stone spearhead stuck in the skull (Webb et. al 1984). The hunters could well have been ancestors of today’s Choctaw.

Around 10,000 years ago, a major climate shift took place across the globe, with environmental conditions eventually becoming like those of today. Bison antiquus evolved into a smaller form of animal, today’s bison. The habitat of these modern bison consists primarily of the Great Plains, an area spanning from central Texas to Canada and from the foothills of Colorado to the Cross Timbers of eastern Oklahoma. An estimated 30-60 million bison roamed this area, making them the most numerous hoofed animal on the planet. Bison are a keystone species of the prairie and help other plants and animals from this ecozone to survive. For example, in the spring, as bison shed their coats, they get itchy and will rub on trees, which knocks off the bark and kills the trees,

creating available sunlight for prairie grass to grow. Also, the sharp hooves of the bison tear up the ground and make excellent places for the seeds from prairie plants to get established.

Little direct evidence exists of bison living in the Choctaw homeland between the end of the “Ice Age,” about 10,000 years ago, and the arrival of the French in the 1600s. In the 1540s, Hernando de Soto and his men traveled across the Southeast from as far as the east coast to some distance west of the Mississippi river. During this four-year journey, they never encountered a single live bison. Clearly the animal was rare to non-existent across the region. However, the de Soto expedition did observe native communities using bison products with increasing frequency from Georgia westward. Apparently, these communities had been using bison products for some time. Archaeologists have uncovered bison horn core fragments at Moundville, an ancestral Choctaw settlement in western Alabama that dates to several hundred years before European contact (Knight and Steponaitis 1998). One may wonder how these communities came to have bison products if the animals themselves did not live in the area. The bison products were supplied through an extensive trade network that linked the Tribes in the Southeast with Tribes living on the southern Plains. The Southeastern Tribes exchanged things like agricultural produce and good bow wood for bison hides and meat (c.f. Canete 1993:307 [ca. 1565]). The Spiro site, located in Leflore County Oklahoma, may have been one center for this plains/woodlands trade (Schambach 1999). Later the Wichita villages served the same role.

From the late 1500s to late 1600s, few or no Europeans came through Choctaw country. When Europeans did again enter the area, they unlike De Soto, found many bison living in the Southeast. Herds ranged all the way to the east coast and down into peninsular Florida. Choctaw oral history describes bison living in Lowndes and Neshoba Counties in Mississippi, right in the heart of the Choctaw homeland during the early 1700s (Bowman 1904:428). According to another account from the mid-1700s, nomadic tribes who lived off of bison occasionally came through the Choctaw homeland following these herds (Anonymous 1918:72 [1755?]).

Why did the bison suddenly move into the Choctaw homeland, after it had been absent for 10,000 years? Erhard Rostlund (1960) has made a convincing case that the bison population boom in the Southeast during the 1600s, is directly linked to the catastrophic decreases in the human population of the region after first European contact. When Europeans arrived in the Southeast in the early 1500s, they brought a variety of deadly diseases with them (Cabeza de Vaca 1905:34-35, 64 [1542]). It is estimated that these diseases may have killed as much as 95 percent of the Native American people. With few people left to hunt the bison, its numbers grew rapidly, and herds pushed eastward into areas where live bison had not been in thousands of years. The peak in bison population probably came around the year 1700 (Rostlund 1960:403).

Choctaws and other Southeastern groups are known to have used bison products in a number of ways. Fur on robes were made from the winter hides of females and small males (Cabeza de Vaca 1905:93 [1542]). According to an early observer: “These [hides] serve as beds



Photo provided

and quilts and are very warm ... I can certify that they are fully as good as a good mattress” (Dumont 1758, Swanton 1946:443). During the 1700s, Choctaw women made elaborate cloth clothing from a mixture of spun bison wool and fibers from the dogbane plant (Anonymous 1918[1755]:67-68). A Choctaw spoon made from a bison horn before the Trail of Tears can be seen today at the Oklahoma History Center. Choctaws also made use of bison meat for food and the interior part hooves for glue, and probably also the tendons for making bow strings, bones for tools, and hoof covers for rattles or containers. In the mid-1700s, Choctaw communities are known to have had a dance known as the “bison dance” (ibid. 68). The details of this dance appear to have been lost, but it was probably done to honor the animal for its unique traits and significance to the Choctaw people.

The bison herds did not live in the Choctaw homeland for very long. According to Choctaw oral history, the animals left what is now east-central Mississippi in the early 1700s. One herd concentrated on the Yazoo River in western Mississippi for some time, but eventually left as well (Clairborne 1880:484). These traditions say that the animals left during an extended drought. While drought may have delivered the final blow to bison herds in Choctaw country, hunting by native people and Euro-Americans is the main reason for the disappearance. By 1800s, no bison were left east of the Mississippi River (Haines 1995:156). Due to over-hunting, game such as deer, bear and turkey also became scarce in Choctaw country. Choctaw hunters began extending their ancient winter hunts into what is now Louisiana, and eventually into what is now southeastern Oklahoma. Their primary focus was deer, but they hunted bison as well (e.g. Conlan 1928:220). If they kept the bison hides, the numbers must have been small, or they must have held onto them tightly. Records from the hide factory at Fort Confederation show that Choctaw people brought hundreds of thousands of deer hides along with a number of hides from other animals, during the first decades of the 1800s, but not a single record for a bison hide exists (Halbert n.d.)

During the Trail of Tears, Choctaw people emigrated much closer to the Great Plains and the prime area of bison habitat. The presence of bison in Oklahoma Choctaw country is memorialized in the names of the town of Yanush and also Buffalo Valley and Buffalo Mountain in Latimer County, as well as Buffalo Head Hill, in Atoka County. Bison apparently disappeared from what is now southeastern Oklahoma not long after the Trail of Tears, but a vast herd, numbering in the millions of animals, still continued to live in central Oklahoma for quite some time. From 1872-1875, this herd was systematically and

intentionally annihilated by Euro-American hunters, eager to make a profit on hides, and to starve out the Plains Indians by destroying their main source of food and supplies (Hornaday 1889:492-502). The destruction of this southern bison herd was just part of a continent-wide effort that extended into the northern Plains and Canada. Estimates in 1889 put the total number of remaining wild American bison on the whole continent at 85, and the total number of living animals at 1,091 (ibid. 525). Through human greed and wastefulness, what had been the most numerous hoofed animal on the planet less than a century before was now on the very brink of extinction.

The utter annihilation of this amazing animal was prevented by just a small handful of individuals who saw what was happening and did something about it. As the animals began to disappear, they captured small herds of wild bison and brought them onto fenced ranches where they could be protected (Haines 1995; McHugh1972). The first of these herds was put together in 1872, by Walking Coyote, a member of the Pend d’Oreille Tribe in Montana. Three other small breeding herds were established by other individuals on the Plains during the 1870s and 1880s. Today’s bison are descended mostly from these four small herds, as well as a few animals that continued to live wild in Yellowstone Park and in Canada (Haines 1995). With the hunting pressure off, the herds grew rapidly during the early 1900s, and offspring were sent all over the country to zoos, private ranches and national parks. One of the first public herds was started in the Wichita Mountains of Oklahoma in 1906. Visitors can still see the descendants of these animals in the park today. The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma established its own bison herd in the early 1990s, near the Tushka Homma Council House grounds. Today, the heard numbers approximately 60 animals.

In 2012, approximately 500,000 bison are living across North America; with about 20,000 in more or less “wild” conditions (Wildlife Conservation Society). The herds continue to grow. Organizations such as the National Bison Association, and Oklahoma Bison Association work to promote bison, ensure genetic diversity, and establish sustainable markets for the meat and other products. The continued survival of the species is no-longer in question. Bison, the premier symbol of the American West has come back from the brink of extinction thanks to the efforts just a few individuals and to the hardiness of the amazing animal itself.

If you have any questions concerning Choctaw history or culture, please mail to Iti Fabussa c/o BISKINIK, P.O. Box 1210, Durant, OK 74702, or e-mail to biskinik@choctawnation.com with “Iti Fabussa” in the subject line.



Photo provided

Match funds have been promised by First United President Greg Massey and Choctaw Nation leaders Chief Greg Pyle and Assistant Chief Gary Batton to Boys and Girls Club of America. They are pictured here with Boys and Girls Club representative Kari Walker.

Choctaw Nation and First United Bank Issue Challenge to Benefit Boys and Girls Club of Durant

Chief Gregory E. Pyle and First United Bank CEO Greg Massey, recently held a press conference announcing a challenge for Durant and the surrounding communities. The two have teamed up for this very important cause and issued a challenge to the community. They are urging the community to raise as much money as possible for the Boys and Girls Club of Durant and they have each agreed to match, dollar for dollar, every dollar raised, up to \$250,000. So essentially, every dollar raised is equal to \$3.

“The funding of a Boys and Girls Club is a community effort and this is a way to get the fundraising efforts off the ground,” said Pyle. “We need the commitment of the community in order for this to be successful,” Pyle added. “An investment in our youth is a

very worthwhile investment!”

“We just feel so strongly about the impact a Boys and Girls club can make on this community that we want to do what we can to see it become a reality,” Massey said.

Boys and Girls Clubs promote academic success, good character and citizenship and healthy lifestyles. Communities with Boys and Girls Clubs see a decrease in crime rates and an increase in students graduating from high school.

If you or your organization are interested in making a donation to the Boys and Girls Club of Durant, you can mail it to P.O. Box 1516, Durant, OK 74702, or drop it by First United, Attention Kari Walker. For more information visit the website www.begreatdurant.com.