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CHOCTAW NATION

The Official Publication of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

January 2016 Issue

Tribal Council holds regular session

The Choctaw Nation Tribal Council met in regular session Dec. 12 at Tvshka Homma. Committees from the following departments reported: Stringtown Travel Plaza, Construction, Social Services, Reintegration program, Idabel Health Clinic, and McAlester Gaming Center, Hospital, and KEDDO.

The following council bills were unanimously approved:

- Determination under the Indian Health Care Improvement act, 25 U.S.C. §1680C(c) (2) to extend health service to all non-Indian Health Service eligible employees of the Choctaw Nation and their covered dependents, and to non-Indian Talihina area residents.
- Application for the Tribal HUD-VA Supportive Housing Program.
- Funds and budget for the Native Asset Building Initiative (\$46,187).
- Funds and budget for the Native Asset Building Initiative (\$320,000).
- Approve funds and budget for the Assets for Independence Demonstration program.
- Funds and budget for the Housing Preservation Grants.
- Approve funds and budget for the Chahta Villa Apela program.
- Oil and Gas Lease in favor of Todco Properties, Inc. on Land USA in Trust for the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations, in Grady County, Oklahoma.
- Electric Transmission Line Easement with OG&E on Land USA in Trust for the Choctaw Nation, in Bryan County, Oklahoma.
- Approve to dispose of surplus equipment (Law Enforcement).
- Approve to dispose of surplus equipment (Fleet Management).
- Approve to dispose of surplus equipment (Fixed Assets).

For detailed meeting information on these resolutions and council bills, go to <http://www.choctawnation.com/government/tribal-council-bills/2016-council-bills>.

Tribal Council meets at 10 a.m. on the second Saturday of each month in the Council Chambers at Tvshka Homma.

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.

Revered Leader Bertram Bobb Honored for Life’s Work

By LISA REED & RONNI PIERCE
Choctaw Nation

During the 91 years the Rev. Bertram Bobb spent on this earth he described himself as rich—rich in spirit, rich in his faith, and rich in his love for his family.

Before passing away on Dec. 11, 2015, at the Choctaw Nation Health Care Center in Talihina, the Reverend served the Choctaw Nation for 18 years as the tribe’s Councilperson for District 7, as the Nation’s Chaplain from 1997 to the present, and the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes Chaplain for 27 years. He is the only person to be appointed the Nation’s Tribal Chaplain for his lifetime.

“The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma mourns the loss of a great man and leader, Brother Bertram



Rev. Bobb served in the U.S. Naval Reserve from Nov. 11, 1942, to Nov. 18, 1945. Most of his time was spent at Pearl Harbor where one of his most memorable events was watching the Oklahoma being raised up from where it had rested on the ocean’s floor since Japan’s attack.

Bobb,” said Chief Gary Batton. “When you saw Brother Bobb in his iconic flat-rimmed hat, you knew by his actions he was deeply rooted in his faith and his commitment to helping others.”

Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. added, “What an example of a great Choctaw. He truly exhibited Choctaw values. He will be missed but I am thankful for my memories of him and what he has passed along to all Choctaws.”

Funeral services for Rev. Bobb were held on Dec. 18, 2015, at the Hugo Agriplex in Hugo. Rev. Olin Williams officiated. Choctaw Nation Senior Executive Officer Judy Allen gave the eulogy saying, “Brother Bobb was a great man and leader. You could count on him. He never disappointed those of us who knew him.” Chief Batton, Assistant Chief Austin, Chickasaw Nation Governor Bill Anoatubby, and various government and tribal officials attended the service. He was buried in the Antlers City Cemetery with military honors.

Bertram Edward Bobb was born March 30, 1924, in Smithville, the son of Johnson and Mae Estelle (Edwards) Bobb. Bertram served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He married his beloved Mary Ann (Greenwood) Bobb in Antlers in 1950, and had lived in the Antlers community since 1971. His was preceded in death by his parents and wife, Mary.

Bertram had three sons, Johnson Wilson Bobb of Antlers, Wesley Edwin Bobb of Tulsa, and Frederick Bertram Bobb of Antlers. His grandchildren include Deborah Estelle Tepe and husband Jeremiah of Antlers and Bertram Edward Bobb II of Chickasha. He also had one great-grandchild, Talia Tepe. His sister Evangeline Wilson lives in Chickasha. He also leaves behind numerous



Reverend Bertram Bobb
March 30, 1924 ~ December 11, 2015

nieces and nephews, cousins, and a host of other relatives and friends.

He attended Goodland Indian School in Hugo, Jones Male Academy in Hartshorne, and Murray State College in Tishomingo. Bertram received a BS in Accounting/Business Administration at Northeastern Oklahoma State University in Tahlequah. He attended the Dallas Theological Seminary, Dallas, Texas, and was ordained in ministry at Scofield Memorial Church, Dallas. He was the founder and director of the Christian Indian Ministries in Antlers from 1963 to present; Bertram Bobb Bible Camp in Ringold, from 1971 to the present, the Native American Bible Academy in Ringold, from 1990 to the present. Bertram was a member of the Choctaw Code Talkers Association for 20 years. He would repeat to the youth of today the wise words told him by his wrestling coach, “People may take everything you have, but they can’t take away your education. Get your education.”

Tribes Gain Tool to Save Lives in Drug War

Choctaw security exec John Hobbs joins national figures on panel in Tulsa

By CHARLES CLARK
Choctaw Nation

Opioid overdoses are a problem in Indian Country—so much so, that it has been picked up on the radars of federal and local law enforcement and medical agencies.

A press conference and Town Hall Forum were held Dec. 16 at the Indian Health Care Resource Center of Tulsa to announce a new plan of action to combat this emerging problem.

On hand to speak of their group’s findings and show support of the steps to be taken were Michael Botticelli, Director of National Drug Control Policy at the White House; Dr. Susan V. Karol, Chief Medical Officer, Indian Health Service; Michael S. Black, Director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs; and Charles Addington, Deputy Associate Director of Field Operations, Bureau of Indian Affairs.

“The President has made it clear that addressing the opioid epidemic is a priority for this Administration,” said Botticelli. “In tackling this epidemic, we know that naloxone is one of those tools that can help save the lives of overdose victims so they can get the treatment they need for their opioid use disorder. Today’s commitment by IHS and BIA is an important example of public health and public safety partnerships to address this epidemic.”

Botticelli said, naloxone (pronounced nah-lock’-zone) will begin being carried by BIA officers after the first of the year, when training on how to administer the drug in the field has been completed.

Oklahoma, he said, is to be the “pilot program” before it is picked up by hundreds of other BIA officers across the country.

Botticelli noted a study by the Center for Disease Control shows overdoses from opioids (prescription painkillers) increased fourfold from 1999 to 2013 among Native Americans, and the related death rate was double that of non-Indians.

When queried about the reason for the dramatic increase, Botticelli



Photo by Charles Clark
Michael Botticelli, left, Director of National Drug Control Policy at the White House, leads a discussion with panelists, from left, John Hobbs, of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma; Dr. Micah Nix, Claremore Indian Hospital; and Kelly Mounce, Tulsa Indian Health Resource Center.

HIS, he said.

Before stepping onto the national stage, Botticelli held a similar position with his home state of Massachusetts. He cited the example of law enforcement personnel in the city of Quincy being equipped five years ago with naloxone and seeing 2,000 OD reversals.

The naloxone program is now used in 30 states, he said.

“An added benefit,” Botticelli said, “is that the program has strengthened ties with the community. They see that the officers are there to help. The life-saving medication will help reduce the rate of opioid overdoses in American Indian and Alaska Native communities.”

After a break, press conference participants re-assembled in another conference room on site, where an audience of more than 100 was already seated for the Town Hall Forum.

Joining Botticelli on stage were panelists John Hobbs, Executive Director of Public Safety with the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma; Dr. Micah Nix, Chief of Emergency Dept. at the Claremore Indian Hospital; and Kelly Mounce, therapist and children’s project director at the Tulsa facility.

Each spoke and written questions were taken from the audience. Hobbs said, “We find that prescription drugs are not looked upon in the same manner as street drugs,” noting that this difference in perception may have contributed to the growth of the problem.

He further cautioned about the easy access that youth have to prescription painkillers at home: “Parents, don’t leave your medications laying around; and kids, be warned of the dangers.”

After personal testimonials and medical summations were presented, Hobbs concluded with the moving summation, “If we can help one child, it will make a huge difference.”

The Native American Times live streamed the event and it can be viewed on its web site over the next three months, <http://www.nativetimes.com>.

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Faith ♦ Family ♦ Culture



An Elder’s Legacy of Goodwill Remembered

It’s a new year and we are very blessed to have our family and the simple things such as food in our stomach and a roof over our heads. Angie and I spent a lot of time with our family through Christmas and it amazes me how fast David and our grandchildren are growing. It always makes me smile to know that they are all healthy and doing well!

It’s always great fun to attend the Jones Academy Christmas party and dinner. This year, the kids represent about 25 different tribes from 15 states and they become family once they are together at Jones. We talk about the joy of Christmas, their plans for the future, and enjoy watching their excitement. There is an alumni event held every year in October at Jones during which all are invited to return. Some who attend were even students from the time in the ‘50s when it was an all-male academy.



Rev. Bertram Bobb and Chief Gary Batton share a moment on stage at the 2015 Outstanding Elders Banquet in Durant on Oct. 15.

Photo by Vonna Shults

Thinking of Jones Academy also reminds me of Brother Bertram Bobb. He had a profound effect on many people and touched our lives in many ways. He always said prayer is a privilege, the words of a very wise man.

We lost Brother Bobb in December. A great man and great leader, Brother Bobb served as an inspiration for myself and many others because he was such a faithful, humble servant to the Lord and our tribal people.

Brother Bobb never spoke much but everybody knew by his actions he was deep-rooted in his faith and his commitment to helping others. I am thankful I was able to know him most of my life. I will miss him greatly and will miss his smile and his loving spirit that he always had.

Brother Bobb was largely involved in gaining recognition for the Code Talkers and advancing legislation awarding them Congressional gold medals. He was related to two of the World War I Choctaw Code Talkers, James Edwards and Mitchell Bobb, and he was always ready to go to Washington, D.C., and walk the halls of Congress to share their story.



The Choctaw Tradition

Faith, family and culture equal HOME to me. I spend a lot of my time on the road, driving to the office as the sun rises over the Potato Hills. It’s a great opportunity for reflection on what is important. My faith, my family, and my Choctaw culture are my foundation. These values are a reason we are a close family.

The month of December was fun in Choctaw Country with parties for the elders and for the kids. The bond between our employees and the Choctaw people reflects a sense of family as well—it’s our second family.

The Tvshka Homma Christmas in the Park light display is growing. It is the only park display in the area and we look forward to it every year. It is a beautiful display of cultural, traditional, and modern creations.



Photo by Jack Austin Jr.

The sun rises over the Rev. Bertram Bobb Chapel at Tvshka Homma on an autumn’s day.

Every Friday and Saturday was hot chocolate night with Choctaw Nation employees handing out cups to visitors. It’s good to see the departments volunteering to serve others. That is another important value we frequently see throughout the Nation. Some groups make it an annual get-together for their department, roasting hot dogs and marshmallows at the fire pit while handing out the hot chocolate. It’s fellowship that can’t be replaced.

The people who live in the area are thankful for the display and often bring lawn chairs to place around the fire pit, talking and laughing for hours with their friends and neighbors, especially in the warmer weather we have been having.

We had the opportunity to go out with some of our Outreach employees to assist the department with angel deliveries to some of the Choctaw elders. It’s another example of the Nation’s stewardship. We look forward to the home visits and spending time with our tribal members. I believe the biggest present for us all is the heartfelt visits and the stories we get to hear.

The new year has begun. With it will be many more opportunities to spend time with our families, reach out to others, and reflect on how we can work together for everyone.



Rendering by Childers Architects

The Choctaw Nation medical campus is shown in a rendering by the architectural firm. Ground was broken July 6, 2015. The facility in Durant will be located adjacent to the new tribal headquarters, north of the Choctaw Casino & Resort and is scheduled to open in January 2017.

2015: Year of Giving

By CHARLES CLARK
Choctaw Nation

Faith, family, and culture. It’s a phrase often read and heard these days in Choctaw Country. More than words, they have meaning for the 8,000 employees of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. It is considered in the day-to-day work that is done in our 10 1/2 county service area in southeast Oklahoma, and it is reflected in those efforts and in contributions to the community.

Under the leadership of Chief Gary Batton, Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. and the Councilmen of the 12 Districts, 2015 has been an unprecedented year of growth and accomplishment.

The Choctaw Nation has brought its unique heritage throughout the area. The ancient sport of stickball is thriving again with a half-dozen teams in the area; traditional dances and songs are shared, and tribal artists and craftsmen have been provided multiple venues. Community Cultural meetings and demonstrations have shown Choctaw ways not only to tribal members, but public crowds from coast to coast.

“Halito!” is a greeting heard when phoning any Choctaw Nation office, when employees pass each other and guests in the hallways, and when award winning quarterbacks give TV interviews.

As Chief Batton has stated in more than one of his appearances, “Everyone has heard of ‘aloha.’ We need to make ‘halito’ just as well known in Oklahoma and across the country.”

Preserving Choctaw culture has become a priority. The approach is methodical and organized, but fun. There is the realization that if we don’t save it, who will?

The Language Department provides weekly lessons in Choctaw to staff offices, and provides courses for tribal members and the public.

Heritage Days on the first Monday of each month at the complex has become a huge success. Members of the Choctaw Artists Registry, now 400 strong, share their paintings, jewelry, pottery, beading, baskets and corn husk dolls at booths; the Employee Dance Troupe offers traditional dance lessons on the lawn; and even the complex cafeteria

participates by serving up hominy, grape dumplings and other dishes from our heritage.

The Annual Choctaw Labor Day Festival has become a huge success and caps off the summer season with traditions and reunions for Choctaw families and for anyone wishing to learn about the heritage and join in the sense of community. In 2015, an estimated 30,000 people visited for a day, or in some cases, camped or filled up area motels, so they could attend every day of the long weekend.

While the Labor Day event is an ever-increasing boost to the regional budget, 2015 was a year that opened doors to present and future financial security for the Choctaw Nation and southeast Oklahoma.

The State of the Nation numbers showed the proof is in the banana.

The Choctaw Nation is involved in 21 industries in 63 locations. Included are 20 gaming centers, 14 Travel Plazas, six ranches, five hotels, four entertainment venues, a KOA RV park, a grocery store, print shop, steel fabrication plant, and more.

Two Chili’s family-style restaurant franchises were opened, in Atoka and Poteau. The Chili’s combined with the new Travel Plaza/Casino Too provided a total of 120 new jobs.

Construction has begun on the new 143,000-square-foot Choctaw Nation Clinic in Durant. In addition to providing convenient and quality health care, the facility will open 275 new jobs. It also means the Choctaw Nation will be the first tribe in the country to offer an outpatient ambulatory surgery center.

Five new Wellness Centers either opened or have construction started. The health facilities opened in McAlester, Wilburton and Poteau, with two more on the way in Stigler and Antlers.

The McAlester site also opened a new community center, Head Start building and Food Distribution facility.

Construction on a new Early Head Start Center in Durant is expected to be complete this month.

Then there is the mother ship—the Choctaw Casino Resort in Durant. Expansion in 2015 included a new hotel tower, convention center, spa facility, and the Grand Theater (an event venue which opened with Aerosmith in concert, and has followed up with several

sold out shows).

The District, a family-friendly offering attached to the Casino Resort in Durant, was an instant hit with all ages. Under one roof are a multi-screen movie complex, arcade games, laser tag labyrinth, party room, and multi-lane bowling alley.

And that income goes to the right causes.

Without a doubt, one of the most requested services—tribal car tags—proved as popular as it was expected to be. By July, 17,257 tags had been issued to tribal members, saving them more than \$732,500.

Higher Education assisted 5,432 students, to the tune of \$6,711,621.

Choctaw Nation Career Development is working with almost 3,000 tribal members who are either receiving career guidance or are enrolled in approved vocational training programs. After which, they can expect in their respective fields, an average annual pay increase of \$13,898.

Smithville has a new Wellness Center.

Choctaw Nation Transportation completed more than \$4.5 million in projects by the end of summer. Upgrades were made to roads, school and facility parking lots. In various stages of planning and construction, are some \$56 million projects on the way.

Choctaw Nation Homeowners Emergency program increased funding by \$750,000 and was able to assist 1,265 families that had high priority repairs last year.

Summer camps drew approximately 1,800 boys and girls.

More than 2,300 weekly lunches were served to senior citizens at the Choctaw Nation Community Centers. CHRs served 23,164 clients at the centers and made 12,000 home visits.

Ten houses and an office building opened as part of a new Independent Living Community in Stigler.

Expected to open this year are community centers in Bethel and Hugo; Head Starts in Atoka, Bethel and Talihina; a greenhouse and community building in Lehigh; and another Independent Living Community in Smithville.

By now, tribal members have received Chief Batton’s annual Christmas letter.

With an eye on the future he states, “As we move ahead to the New Year we are focused on five initiatives which are the following:

• **Sustainability**—Growth of our people and finances.

• **Leadership Development**—Empowering people.

• **Compliance**—Fairness, transparency and accountability.

• **Messaging**—Keeping everyone informed.

• **Succession**—Development of future leaders.”

In his conclusion, Chief Batton captures an example of the spirit from *a year of giving*, when he writes, “...I am proud of our staff who helped nearly 3,300 families in need of food for a holiday meal.”



APPLY NOW!!!

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Early Head Start

Is Now Accepting Applications
for the Durant Area

Early Head Start is a federally funded low-income, community-based program for eligible families with infants and toddlers up to age 3. The program also follows a Selection Criteria that families will need to meet. It is a program that came out of the Head Start Program providing school readiness for children. In addition to providing or linking families with needed services—medical, mental health, nutrition, and education—Early Head Start can provide a place for children to experience consistent, nurturing relationships and stable, ongoing routines.

Applications are now being accepted
Please contact Choctaw Nation Early Head Start Administration
580-924-8280 ext. 2644
3815 Enterprise Drive, Durant, OK 74701



Mark Your Calendars!

Youth Work Program

Applications will be Available
Friday, January 1, 2016

www.choctawnation.com





Figure 1: Artist's conception of the Lubbub Creek site and its people.

Iti Fabussa Lubbub Creek: An Ancient Choctaw Village Site

The Choctaw homeland is full of artifacts and archaeological sites bearing witness to the past presence of our ancestors. This month, Iti Fabvssa explores an important village site inhabited by Choctaw ancestors, during the pivotal time in our history spanning the period before and after European arrival.

This village was located in present-day Pickens County, Alabama, within a sharp, interior bend of the Tombigbee River where it intersects with a smaller stream called Lubbub Creek. The original Choctaw name for this ancient village has been lost, but we do know that the Choctaw name for the creek (Oka Lahba), means warm water, and that the original Choctaw name for the Tombigbee River (Hvcha Hattak), means river people. It could be that one of these names originally came from the settlement itself. In the early 1980s, an Army Corps of Engineers project largely destroyed the site. Before that, it was studied by archaeologists working under the National Historic Preservation Act. They named it Lubbub Creek, and the work they did tells us some interesting things about the history of the community and the people who lived there.

The spot for the Lubbub Creek settlement was carefully chosen by its founders, who picked an ideal location placing it in close proximity to patches of Black Belt Prairie, to several types of forest, and to floodplains. Together, these diverse ecozones offered a great deal of food resources in the form of diverse, wild plant life, excellent hunting areas, good waters for fishing, and productive shellfish beds. It also offered fertile soils for agriculture, clay for making pottery, and river gravel for making stone tools. This favorably located spot had periodically been used as a camp site for more than 10,000 years. By AD 1000, it had become a large base camp, occupied during the fall. For reasons not fully understood, around AD 1050 the people living at Lubbub Creek, like other communities in the Southeast, rebuilt their way of life and their town around corn agriculture.

With the shift to corn agriculture, the whole complexion of the Lubbub Creek settlement was changed. Most of the community dispersed into individual family farmsteads located along the floodplains in order to make the most efficient use of the soil for agriculture. The Lubbub Creek site itself became a residence for community leaders, a place where the community came together for social and religious functions and a fortified place where the community could protect itself if attacked. At this center, the community members laboriously built a pyramid-shaped earth mound. A large plaza/dance ground/ball field was located east of the mound. The plaza and mound were bordered by a series of clay-covered walls made of upright logs that stood about six feet high. The outermost of these walls was itself surrounded by a doughnut-shaped residential area.

This is where a small group of community leaders lived, occupying only a few houses at any given time. The Lubbub Creek settlement was protected on two sides by a 6-foot wall, with bastions for shooting arrows at would be attackers. The other two sides were protected by the Tombigbee River.

In the summer, the people living in the farmsteads around Lubbub Creek planted and tended corn, beans, pumpkin and other domesticated plants. Boys protected the fields from would-be predators using blowguns and small bows. This preserved the harvest and provided some animal protein to the diet. People also fished and collected shellfish during the warm months. In the fall, they collected hickory nuts and acorns. Men hunted deer into the winter. The cool season seems to have been the time when the surrounding community gathered at Lubbub Creek for feasts.

The people living at Lubbub Creek were politically aligned with Moundville, a major population center (see Iti Fabvssa dated March 2015), located on the Black Warrior River, approximately 30 miles to the east. The two groups had close cultural, social, and artistic ties. They participated in a trade network that brought them goods from hundreds of miles away. During the period from 1250-1450, when contacts with Moundville were particularly close, the defensive wall around Lubbub Creek was taken down, and a few more families set up permanent residence within the complex. This must have been a particularly good time to have lived in the community.

For reasons unknown, during the period of 1450-1650, the Lubbub Creek settlement shrank. The community again built defensive fortifications around the settlement's center. Surrounding farms stopped producing as much corn, and in its place people began relying more on wild acorns. By 1550 the great settlement

of Moundville itself was uninhabited; the population had dispersed to other areas. People continued to live at Lubbub Creek for a few more generations, but according to European records, the area was vacant of permanent Indigenous settlements by 1700. Archaeologists have attributed the abandonment of the village, after its 600-plus years of continuous occupation, to 1600s slaving raids from the Muscogee (Creek), and other groups sponsored by the English Carolina Colony. It may be telling that the defensive wall around the settlement was burned at the very end of the site's occupation. What happened to the people who lived there? In all probability, they relocated to more protected areas closer to the heart of the Choctaw homeland. Through the colonial era until 1816, the area

along the Tombigbee River was periodically a scene of confrontation between the Muscogee and Choctaw. Nevertheless, a few pieces of Choctaw ceramics from the site dating as late as the Trail of Tears, indicate that it was still revisited. One can only guess what interesting stories these visitors, closer to our own day and age, could have told us about the ancient

lives that were lived in this place. Today, although some parts of the history of Lubbub Creek are hidden in the mists of time, elements of the lifeway followed by the ancient people who lived there are still carried on by Choctaw people. Today's Choctaw language speakers could have understood the words spoken by the ancient people who lived at Lubbub Creek. Today's Choctaw traditional artists who do bow-making, pottery, basketry, and stone tools, carry on an unbroken line of traditional knowledge connecting them with Lubbub Creek. Choctaw social dances probably have roots at Lubbub Creek, as do our heirloom Choctaw crops. While Choctaw people fully live in the modern world, places like Lubbub Creek provide the foundation for what we are today.



Figure 2: A cooking pot from Lubbub Creek, found with hickory nut shells in it.



Figure 3: Stone arrow points from the Lubbub Creek site.

CHOCTAW VOTE Be a Voice Be a Choctaw Voter

Beginning in 2016, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma members will be required to officially register to vote in tribal elections with our new **Voter Registration Department**. The **Voter Registration Program** will:

- Promote transparency
- Increase voter participation
- Expand voter information

In the following months, **Voter Registration** applications will be mailed to all members, ages 18 and older, who have a current address on file with the Choctaw Nation Tribal Membership Department. Tribal Members will be required to register to vote with this **new Voter Registration Program, regardless of previous voter participation**. To be eligible to vote, you must:

- Be a member of the Choctaw Nation
- Be at least 18 years old
- Complete the Voter Registration application

As a tribal member, voting is a responsibility and privilege. Be sure to send in your application, and if you need more information or instruction, contact information is listed below.

Until 1971 Choctaws were not allowed to elect their own tribal leaders. Chiefs were appointed by the President of the United States. After ratification of the Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act, Choctaws were allowed to have their own Tribal Constitution to govern these matters. The Choctaws quickly formed a committee and by 1979 had ratified its first Constitution as the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. The Constitution guides the Chief, Tribal Council, and Tribal judges in creating successful lifestyles for the Choctaw people.



Choctaw Nation

Faith ♦ Family ♦ Culture

www.ChoctawNation.com/Vote

1.800.522.6170 or 1.580.924.8280

voterregistration@choctawnation.com

P.O. Box 1210, Durant, OK 74702

Trucker Turns Printer, Shows You Can Return Home

By **KENDRA GERMANY**
Choctaw Nation

Arnold Baker spent over 20 years in the trucking and heavy equipment business. When the oil industry crashed, Arnold’s trucking business took a hit. “The oil industry went down, and I probably could of found something else to sustain it, but I was ready to come home,” said Arnold.

Arnold and his wife Irene made the decision to leave the big city of Tulsa, to move back to the Jackfork Mountains in Choctaw country where he grew up.

“I was really tired of being in Tulsa. I never intended on being there that long,” said Arnold. “I went up there one day looking for some work, and 20 something years later I finally got to come home.”

The Baker family has lived in the same area of the Jackfork Mountains near Sardis Lake for generations.

His father Arnold Sr. was born on the same land, his grandfather and great-grandfather are buried on that land. According to Arnold, he too will be buried on that land.

“This is home. I grew up here,” said Arnold.

“I would always come down here and hang out for awhile, then go back. The last couple of years I lived in Tulsa, it was harder and harder to go back. So once the trucking kind of got slower and slower, there wasn’t a reason to go back. So, we started looking for other options,” said Arnold.

Irene worked for Blue Cross Blue Shield for 33 years, before retiring five years ago.

The pair decided to open up a printing business.

“We used to get jackets and t-shirts made for our trucking business. The



Photo by Kendra Germany

Arnold and Irene Baker pose with their 16-needle embroidery machine. Embroidery is one of the many different printing services offered at Straight Arrow Stitchery. The Bakers also specialize in direct to garment and dye sublimation.

process of printing, was very interesting to me,” said Arnold. “My mom was a seamstress and my parents did some upholstery work from time to time. So I grew up around that. It kind of just came natural to be interested in it.”

They decided they needed to go big or go home.

“He is the kind of person to go big or not do it at all,” said Irene.

Arnold did just that, purchasing a 16-needle embroidery machine and an Epson direct to garment printer. They have added a Roland vinyl cutter and Epson dye sublimation printer to their arsenal.

When looking for what to name their business, Arnold knew exactly what to call it. His aunt Christine Baker had a stitchery business she named Straight Arrow Stitchery. Arnold wanted to carry on that little piece of history, and Christine was more than happy to let

him use the name.

The services that set them apart from the rest are the direct to garment printing and dye sublimation.

The direct to garment printer is designed to deliver industrial level production speed, image quality, and reliability. This printing style is something unique that not all printing businesses offer. The efficiency of direct to garment, allows Straight Arrow Stitchery to complete orders of any size.

“Whether it is one or 2000, we can do it. With direct to garment, they provide us with the art. We send the image to the printer, put the garment on there and hit the go button.”

Dye sublimation is the one thing that truly sets Straight Arrow Stitchery apart from every other printing business in Southeastern Oklahoma.

According to Arnold and Irene, to their knowledge, they are the only

printing business in the area that has a dye sublimation printer.

“As far as we know, nobody else in Southeastern Oklahoma, or even this side of the state offer this. One or two company’s in the city have had dye sublimation,” said Irene. “It is a very unique market.”

Dye sublimation can be done on anything that is made out of polyester or has a polymer coating on it.

“It’s pretty unique. We can make phone covers, license plates, polyester shirts, running clothes, tiles, and mouse pads. Basically anything made of polyester or has a polymer coating, we can print on it,” said Arnold.

Irene showed off a coffee mug that had a logo printed on it using the dye sublimation printer.

“It’s not like the way they used to do it. Where they stuck a layer of sticky stuff onto it. This actually permeates into the polymer coating,” said Irene. “It stays, it will never fade.”

Arnold is a proud Choctaw.

I have always been proud of it, and taken it very serious to the heart,” said Arnold. “I’ve always felt that it was something to be proud of.”

Arnold credits his Choctaw pride and spirit for giving him the drive and determination.

“I look at my grandparents. My grandpa loved these mountains. He made railroad ties. My dad worked all of his life, and retired from Jones Academy where he worked as a janitor. You know, they were just hard working people.”

There is a picture of Arnold’s family in the Tim Tingle book “Walking the Choctaw Road.”

For more information about Straight Arrow Stitchery, visit straightarrow-stitchery.com or call (918) 876-3983.

2016 HEALTH FAIRS AT COMMUNITY CENTERS				
CENTER	COUNCILMEMBER	DATE	START	LUNCH
(DIABETES EDUCATORS)				
Smithville	Kenny Bryant	1-13	10:00	11:30
Durant	Ted Dosh	1-20	10:00	11:30
Stigler	Ronald Perry	2-03	10:00	11:30
Atoka	Anthony Dillard	2-10	10:00	11:30
Coalgate	James Frazier	2-24	10:00	12:00
Hugo	Perry Thompson	3-09	10:00	12:00
Wright City	Jack Austin	3-23	10:00	12:00
Antlers	Jack Austin	4-06	10:00	11:30
Spiro	Delton Cox	4-13	10:00	11:30
(COMMUNITY HEALTH NURSES)				
Idabel	Thomas Williston	5-04	10:00	12:00
Broken Bow	Tony Ward	6-01	10:00	12:00
Talihina	Kenny Bryant	7-13	10:00	11:30
Poteau	Delton Cox	7-20	10:00	12:00
Wilburton	Joe Coley	8-10	10:00	11:30
McAlester	Bob Pate	9-07	10:00	11:30
Bethel	Tony Ward	9-21	10:00	11:30
Crowder	James Frazier	10-12	10:00	11:00

2016 Education Classes

Choctaw Nation Adult Education High School Equivalency (HSE)

Class sessions will meet twice weekly for three hours each day for 12 weeks. Students can enroll only during the first two weeks of class.

Please bring Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB), Social Security card, and state-issued ID (driver’s license, permit, or ID).

The class will meet each week for approximately 12 weeks. Books, supplies, and testing fees are provided. In addition, a \$10 per day attendance stipend will be paid to those who attend classes on a regular basis and attempt the HSE/ GED test. Please contact Kathy Bench at the Durant office, (800) 522-6170 ext. 2122 for more information. A CDIB is required.

Apr - Jun

Monday, April 4, 9 a.m. - noon
Stigler, Choctaw Nation Community Cntr.

Tuesday, April 5, 1 - 4 p.m.
Broken Bow, Choctaw Nation Community Cntr.

Tuesday, April 5, 9 a.m. - noon
Durant, Headquarters South Building

Tuesday, April 5, 9 a.m. - noon
Wilburton, Choctaw Nation Community Cntr.

Jul - Sep

Monday, July 6, 9 a.m. - noon
Poteau, Carl Albert State College

Tuesday, July 5, 5 - 8 p.m.
Durant, Headquarters South Building

Tuesday, July 5, 1 - 4 p.m.
Hugo, Choctaw Nation Community Cntr.

Tuesday, July 5, 9 a.m. - noon
McAlester, Eastern Oklahoma State College, McAlester Campus

Oct - Dec

Monday, Oct. 3, 9 a.m. - noon
Stigler, Choctaw Nation Community Cntr.

Tuesday, Oct. 4, 1 - 4 p.m.
Broken Bow, Choctaw Nation Community Cntr.

Tuesday, Oct. 4, 9 a.m. - noon
Durant, Headquarters South Building

Tuesday, Oct. 4, 9 a.m. - noon
Wilburton, Choctaw Nation Community Cntr.

Reduce-Reuse-Recycle

FUN FACTS

ABOUT

RECYCLING

STEEL AND ALUMINUM CANS

1. Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV for three hours—or the equivalent of half a gallon of gasoline.
2. 350,000 aluminum cans are produced every minute!
3. More aluminum goes into beverage cans than any other product.
4. Once an aluminum can is recycled, it can be part of a new can within six weeks.
5. Because so many of them are recycled, aluminum cans account for less than 1% of the total U.S. waste stream, according to EPA estimates.
6. During the time it takes you to read this sentence, 50,000 12-ounce aluminum cans are made.
7. An aluminum can that is thrown away will still be a can 500 years from now!
8. There is no limit to the amount of times aluminum cans be recycled.
9. Aluminum can manufacturers have been making cans lighter—in 1972 each pound of aluminum produced 22 cans; today it yields 29 cans.
10. We use over 80,000,000,000 aluminum pop cans every year.
11. At one time, aluminum was more valuable than gold!
12. A 60-watt light bulb can be run for over a day on the amount of energy saved by recycling 1 pound of steel. In one year in the United States, the recycling of steel saves enough energy to heat and ligh 18,000,000 homes!
13. Every ton of recycled steel saves 2,500 pounds of iron ore, 1,000 of coal, and 40 pounds of limestone.
14. Please remember to use the recycle roll-offs in your community.
15. If you have questions about the location of a roll-off in your area, please call:

DURANT RECYCLING CENTER: 580-920-0488

POTEAU RECYCLING CENTER: 918-649-0343

Yakoke!



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

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

- Business Planning
- Business Counseling
- Business Registration

- Access to Financing
- 8(a) Certification Assistance
- Minority Business Registration

- Marketing
- Business Taxes
- Bid Assistance

January Events Calendar:

(Please contact CSBDS for more details and to register)

Jan 7th

Stigler: Business Planning

10:00 – 12:00

Jan 14th

Hugo: Business Planning

10:00 – 12:00

Jan 21st

Durant: Marketing Your Business

10:00 – 12:00

Contact Small Business Development Services today!

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

NOTES TO THE NATION

— Youth of the Nation —

Choose H.O.P.E.

By Brynнен City, Stigler,
of the Choctaw Nation Youth Advisory Board

“Once you choose hope,
anything is possible”
Christopher Reeve

Since I was a young girl, I have had the opportunity to be mentored by some of the most empowering women in our state. These women each worked to instill not only love and kindness, but most importantly hope.

As a Miss Oklahoma Star to Miss Oklahoma 2009, I have spent countless hours enjoying the company

of pediatric patients and Children’s Miracle Network recipients around our great state. These moments at children’s hospitals have given me my love for helping others, and the skills in service to become the role model I am today.

Choose H.O.P.E. stands for Helping Out Patients Everywhere. As an ambassador for The Children’s Miracle Network and the Oklahoma Teen Coordinator for Headbands of Hope, it is imperative that we embrace these patients and provide not only funding but also a positive outlook for those fighting a hard battle.

Headbands of Hope works to help kids conquer



Photo Provided

cancer, one headband at a time. For every headband sold, one is given to a young girl diagnosed with cancer, and \$1 is donated to cancer research.

This organization is fairly new, having begun in 2012.

... it is imperative that we embrace these patients and provide not only funding but also a positive outlook for those fighting a hard battle.

I was honored to be asked by the founder to become a teen state ambassador. Since its origin, Headbands of Hope has raised over \$30,000 for

cancer research.

As Miss Oklahoma State Fair’s Outstanding Teen, I will continue to partner with organizations like The Children’s Miracle Network and Headbands of Hope, allocating funds and providing hope for Oklahoma patients.

It will be my honor to share the memories I have had with these champion children, and highlight their unique gifts. I will continue to live by example as a role model for hope, proving that once you choose hope, anything is possible!

Seeking family

I’m a Choctaw of Folsom descent, and I’m trying to track down any living Choctaw Folsoms in or around the southeastern Oklahoma area.

Relations include Peter Pitchlynn (Principal Chief of the Choctaws from 1864-1866), Ebenezer Folsom and John Folsom. My great-grandfather was Luscious Folsom, and I am a descendant of Francis Folsom Cleveland, first lady to President Grover Cleveland. Her father was from the Choctaw line.

I am trying to see if there are any Choctaw Folsoms alive, so I can contact them.

My grandmother, Murial Erma Wing, lived in Oregon for years, until she passed away 20 years ago. She had a brother, Lowell Wing. Also family were Laurie Wing and Elsie Wing.

If you need more information on the Choctaw Folsoms, I’ll be glad to give you them.

Michael Kane
michaelkane122@yahoo.com

Gary Batton
Chief

Jack Austin Jr.
Assistant Chief

The Official
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of the

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

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

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

The BISKINIK is a nonprofit publication of the Choctaw Nation.

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

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



Letters of Thanks



Photo Provided

BEST FRIENDS. Children of the Choctaw Nation’s Head Start program in Antlers want to thank the Antlers Fire Department for hosting a fall tour of the station. The children met the firehouse doggie and also learned important fire safety tips. The Choctaw Nation operates 13 Head Starts and one pre-school for ages 3-5 throughout the 10.5 county service area. For information, call 800-522-6170, Ext. 2931.

Hello, Choctaw Nation. I was at the Veterans ceremony on Nov. 11. Had a great time. The “coat people” went above the call of duty to find the coat that fit me. Everyone seemed to be having a good time. Even the food was good. Thanks,

Jonathan and Fay Wilson
Ringold, OK

Halito, Miko Batton. Chim achukma.

Chief, thank you so much for believing in me, and that I could do the job at the Pocola casino, when I thought of being a quitter. That was awesome, and I took your advice not to even consider quitting. Now, I’m considered the 3rd fastest on our team.

Also, I just spoke with Pam Bundy, my loan officer with Choctaw Home Finance in Hugo, who guided me in filling out a purchase agreement for a home in Pocola, a town which my great-great grandfather, John Page, founded in the 1870s. Oklahoma Historical Society monuments to John Page, as well as my great-great-great uncle, Willis Folsom, stand side-by-side here in Pocola, a town that I’m so excited about being a part of, soon.

Thank you, sir, for your guidance along the way, your calm, strong hand in my life. I look forward with pride to continue to serve my Chahta family, sincerely yours,

Ron D. Page
Pocola, OK

I have needed to send a thank you to the Choctaw tribe for a while now for many reasons. First, let me tell you my background story. I have been bedridden since Jan. 1, 2015, due to complications from MS. We did not have a driveway, just a dirt path, and after having to call Eastern Bryan County ambulance service to take me to the hospital a few times (they came close to getting stuck in the mud each time), Marissa called Donna Williams at the Tribal Membership office. Then, Donna took care of me and as of Good Friday, I have a life-saving driveway. A special thanks to Marissa, Donna Williams, Councilman Ted Dosh, and Mr. Folsom. Thank you Chief Batton and Assistant Chief Austin. It is truly an honor and privilege to be a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

Donna Lyons
Blue, OK

To Chief Gary Batton, Asst. Chief Jack Austin Jr. and District 12 Councilman James Frazier,

Just a note to remind of how much you’re appreciated. Thank you for the help with travel and lodging during my trip to the Oklahoma Horseshoe Pitching singles championship. I am 1st Place, Class B, State Champion.

Paul Impson
Calvin, OK

On behalf of Broken Arrow seniors, members, and our pool players, we want to thank the Choctaw Nation and Councilman Ronald Perry for the donation of 18 chairs to the Broken Arrow Senior Center. Doantions are used for center operations to provide seniors with a place to go, meet their friends, have fun and often times learn something new.

Remember that all donations are tax deductible.

Once again, thanks for helping us maintain our programs and activities for those who have provided for us for so many years.Regards,

June Ross
Executive Director

Halito, Friends,

I want you to know that the piece you so kindly published in the October 2015 issue (“A Lineage Remembered”), resulted in two ladies from different parts of the country contacting me to say that they, too, are descended from the Choctaw woman Otemansha about whom I wrote. We are now sharing information.

Both women tell me they got my email address by contacting the newsroom at Biskinik, something that, I believe, few people would do. And, I’m wondering, among the many thousands of folks who receive the newspaper and may have read the story, how many more may have wanted to write me? So, I’m wondering if you might print a small follow-up in which you publish my email address. I would be delighted to hear from folks.

Thank you,

Ron Querry
rquerry@gmail.com

EVENTS

LIVESTOCK DISASTER ASSISTANCE NOW AVAILABLE IN SEVERAL COUNTIES

As a result of the extreme dry conditions from August through early October in 2015, Atoka, Bryan, Choctaw, and McCurtain Counties have all been designated drought counties eligible for the USDA’s Livestock Disaster Assistance Program. Livestock producers in these counties are eligible to sign up and receive payments from the USDA’s Farm Service Agency. Livestock producers should contact your local office to make an appointment to sign up.

Atoka County – (580) 889-2554 ext. 2
Bryan County – (580) 924-4131 ext. 2
Choctaw County – (580) 326-3655 ext. 2
McCurtain County – (580) 286-2574 ext. 2

USDA is an Equal Opportunity Provider & Employer.

Notes to the Nation Submissions

Send thank you notes and event notices to:
Biskinik, Attn: Notes to the Nation
P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702
or email to: biskinik@choctawnation.com

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Legal Assistance

A licensed attorney will be available to provide assistance with simple legal documents **free** to all Choctaw members. Examples of matters that the attorney may be able to assist with:

- Family law (adoption, divorces, custody, child support)
- Contracts and leases
- Guardianships and modifications

January Community Center Schedule

5th, Idabel, OK / 580-286-6116
14th, Broken Bow, OK / 580-584-6372
21st, Hugo, OK (Field office instead of community center) / 580-326-3528

February Community Center Schedule

4th, Bethel, OK / 580-241-5637
11th, Smithville, OK / 580-244-3289
18th, Wright City, OK / 580-981-7011
25th, McAlester, OK / 918-423-1016

All times will be 9 a.m.-1 p.m. and 1:30 p.m.-3 p.m.

Contact the community center to confirm the attorney will be there before traveling. The office does not provide representation in court or assist in criminal matters.

Choctaw Nation Vocational Rehabilitation

February 2016

Durant - Monday, Wednesday and Friday

Broken Bow - Monday, Wednesday and Friday

Idabel by appointment

Phone: 580-326-8304; Fax: 580-326-0115

Email: ddavenport@choctawnation.com

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

OBITUARIES

Joseph Junior Campbell

Joseph Junior Campbell, 60, of Atoka passed away on Dec. 13, 2015 in Coalgate. He was born on Oct. 1, 1955 ,to Joseph and Christine Marie (Allen) Campbell in Talihina.

He attended school at Harmony and graduated from Atoka High School.



Joseph worked as a mechanic and a welder. He was also a volunteer fireman. He enjoyed playing music, fishing, Baptist singing, gospel music and playing guitar.

Joseph married Sharon Henry on April 14, 1975, in Atoka. Sharon preceded him in death on July 2, 2005. Then Joseph married Susan Bates on Sept. 6, 2007 in Bartlesville.

He was preceded in death by his father; first wife, Sharon; grandson Michael Cook; sister, Betty Webb; and brother, Robert Campbell.

Joseph is survived by wife, Susan; daughter, Paula Cook of Bartlesville; son, Bradley Campbell of Bartlesville; grandchildren, Diana Campbell, Cody Cook, Caden Campbell, Elijah Campbell, and Isaac Campbell all of Bartlesville; mother, Christine of Atoka; siblings, Shirley McKendrick and husband Allen of Caney, Margaret Campbell of Kansas, Rieta Campbell of Hugo, Richard Campbell of Atoka, Mary Williamson and husband Steven of Farris, George Campbell of Atoka and Larry Campbell of Atoka; along with numerous nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Brown’s Funeral Services in Atoka. Interment was at High Hill Cemetery in Tushka.

Zetta Maxine Burkhalter

Zetta Maxine Burkhalter, 81, passed way on Dec. 5, 2015, in Eufaula. She was born on March 6

Zetta Maxine McGriff-Burkhalter was born March 6, 1934 to Eula Mae McIntosh and Benjamin Franklin McGriff in Hoffman.



Growing up, she lived in several communities in Oklahoma including, Hoffman, Pierce, McAlester, Checotah and Muskogee.

She graduated from Rentiesville High School. She met and married Alton Burkhalter. They had twelve children.

Zetta was well known for her cooking. She enjoyed providing large Sunday dinners for her family. Yeast rolls made the night before and set aside to rise for baking would highlight these dinners.

After raising a large portion of her children, Zetta returned to school, attending Connors State College. She studied criminal justice and earned a living outside the home as a cook for Douglas School of Checotah. She became site manger for Checotah Public Schools, food service manager for the McAlester State Penitentiary and Komar Manufacturing in McAlester.

After retiring, Zetta moved back to Checotah.

Zetta was preceded in death by her parents; sister Wanda B. Barnes; brother Johnny McGriff; son Alton Burkhalter Jr.; daughter Bostine Burkhalter-Whitfield; and one stillborn child.

Zetta is survived by sisters Mary and (Albert) Greenleaf, Wanda Jean Phifer of Oklahoma City; ten children, Brenda and (Troy Pierce Sr.) of Sperry, Ronald Burkhalter Sr. of Nuevo, California, James H. Burkhalter and (Ella) of Tulsa, John Burkhalter of Porter, Texas, Doyle Sr. and (Lois) Burkhalter of Wagoner, son-in-law Johnny Whitfield, Gloria Rea Burkhalter of Checotah, Marcus and (Eletha) Burkhalter of Checotah, Gwen and (Rev. Sanford) Nero, Cartez Burkhalter of Houston, Trenton Sr. (Rolonda) Burkhalter, and a sibling to her children Dr. Rebecca Joyce; (Michael) Wates of Kansas City, 40 grandchildren; 68 great-grandchildren; several great-great-grandchildren; and a host of friends and family members.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Keith D. Biglow Funeral Directors Inc. Interment was at Hawkins Cemetery in Hoffman.

Kimberly Marie Williams

Kimberly Marie Williams, 30, of Oklahoma City passed away on June 12, 2015. She was born on May 17, 1985, to Clifford Ray and Arlene Postoak Williams in Ada.

Kimberly attended Capitol Hill High School in Oklahoma City. She was a homemaker and of Presbyterian faith.

She was preceded in death by both of her parents.

Kimberly is survived by her children, Jorge Miramontes, Liliana Miramontes and Angel Miramontes; two sisters, Jean Williams and Jennifer Williams, both of Oklahoma City; brother, Clifford Williams and wife Kimberly of Choctaw; 10 nieces, eight nephews; and numerous other family members and friends.



Arrangements were made under the direction of Criswell Funeral Home in Ada. Interment was at the Corley Cemetery near Stratford.

John Wesley Durant

John Wesley Durant, 75, passed away on Nov. 15, 2015, in Hugo. He was born on Dec. 15, 1939, to Emezhiah W. and Martha May (Wesley) Durant in Antlers.

John enjoyed gospel singing and playing guitar at church. He was a longtime member of Homas Chapel. John worked hard as a farmer and ranch hand for many years.

He was preceded in death by his wife; both parents; brother, Smallwood Dan Durant; sister, Dorothea (Durant) Herrera; and daughter, Irene Bond Jones.

John is survived by granddaughter, Harolyn Myers and husband Bradley of Hugo; four great-grandchildren, Bruce Thomas, Bryanna Myers, Aryiel Myers, and Angelica Myers, all of Hugo; numerous cousins, nieces, and nephews; as well as other family and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Prater-Lampton-Mills & Coffey Funeral Home in Hugo. Interment was at the Homas Cemetery.



William ‘Bill’ Theodore Collier

William “Bill” Theodore Collier,83, passed away on Dec. 3, 2015, after a long illness, at Brooke Army Medical Center in Fort Sam Houston, Texas. He was born on Oct. 7, 1932, to Dr. Carl Collier Sr. and Mrs. Elizabeth Collier Bell in McAlester.



He spent his formative years in Oklahoma. He graduated from McAlester High School in 1951. Bill attended school at the Oklahoma Military Academy, earning an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) in May 1953, and later attending the University of Oklahoma obtaining a Bachelor of Science degree in August 1956.

Bill was commissioned in the U.S. Army as a second lieutenant in November of 1956 and attended the U.S. Army Infantry School in Fort Benning, Georgia. Bill served in several countries during his distinguished career including Vietnam, Germany, Korea, and Turkey. While serving as an infantry officer in Vietnam, he was awarded the Bronze Star medal. He later was awarded an additional Bronze Star medal during his second tour in Vietnam. His awards also include the Legion of Merit, the Defense Meritorious Service medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Joint Service Commendation medal and the Order of Military Medical Merit.

During Bill’s tour in Turkey he met his wife Hurnevin (Nevin) Gurkaynak, a journalist covering the Turkish Parliament. Fate threw them together as both of their official duties allowed for attendance at official social events where their relationship bloomed.

Bill retired from active military service in November of 1987. He continued his federal service when he took a job as an Army civil servant in March of 1990.

Bill was an active supporter of many community activities including the Boy Scouts of America, American-Turkish relations, and was a continuous sponsor for international military soldiers and their families through the Army Medical Department Center & School, International Students Office.

His membership in professional organizations included the Top Level Management Association, University of Oklahoma Management Association, American Logistics Association, and president of the Turkish American Association. Bill was very proud of his Native American heritage and as a member of the Choctaw Nation promoted its history and traditions at every opportunity. Bill was a humble man who was loved and respected by all who were fortunate enough to have made his acquaintance. He loved life and cherished the blessings of it right up until his final breath on this planet.

He was preceded in death by his parents; two sisters, Rebecca Ann and Elizabeth Ruth. Bill is survived by his loving wife Nevin, a brother Dr. Carl Collier Jr., twin sister Mary, two children Rebecca (Becky) and Kemall; along with many nieces, nephews and other family members and friends who will miss him.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Colonial Funeral Home, in Universal City, Texas. Interment with military honors was at the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery.

Nicki Darlene Johnson

Nicki Darlene Johnson, 68, of Shannon Hills, Arkansas, passed away on Nov. 13, 2015. She was born Nov. 22, 1946 to Robert Bible and Billie Beard Bible in Rush Springs.

Nicki was of the Southern Baptist faith. She was a proud member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Robert and Billie; grandparents, Levi Lee Beard and Dona Beard; and two sons, Jack Paul Smith and Chris Lynn Smith.

She is survived by her husband, Ronald J. Johnson of Shannon Hills; two sons, Ronald Joe Johnson, Jr. (Bridgett) of Sardis, Arkansas, and Tommie Lee Johnson (Jillian) of Benton, Arkansas; two brothers, Robert Bible of Houston, Texas and Charles Jenkins of Longview, Texas; sister, Donna Danzis of Keystone Heights, Florida and six grandchildren.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Ashby Funeral Home in Benton.



Rosie Mae Simon

Rosie Mae Simon, 81, passed away on Sept. 4, 2015, in South Gate California, with her children by her side. She was born on June 2, 1934, to Abbott and Virgie Jim in Bentley.

Rosie was a proud, full blood member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. She was a fluent Choctaw speaker.

As a little girl, Rosie grew up in the church with her family. Rosie accepted the Lord as a teen.

At age 17, Rosie married Albert Simon and moved to California for a better life. Staying home and raising eight children, Rosie settled in the life of a mother and wife of a minister. She served the Lord and sang in the church. Rosie went to school and became a certified nurse’s assistant. She received her license and worked in several convalescent homes and eventually in Rancho Los Amigos Hospital of Downey California. On July 6, 1998, Rosie retired after 20 years of service from the county of Los Angeles.

Rosie had a passion for flowers, especially roses. She loved spending time working in her garden. She also loved to crochet and make quilts. Rosie had a love for gospel music and classic country music. She also had a love for her favorite singer, Elvis Presley.

She was preceded in death by her parents; sister Joan Ramos; brother Lester Jim; and two half sisters, Myrtle Mitchell and Omerine (Joyce) Erickson.



Rosie is survived by her eight children, Alvin Simon, Marvin Simon and Bernadette, Michael Simon and Lavern, Gary Simon, Alberta Di Angelo and Danny, all of California, Norma Cook, Melvis Wilson and Anthony, and Lena Tiger and Darryl, all of Oklahoma; 14 grandchildren, Michael Padilla, Amanda and Jasmine Simon, Denise, April and Cheryl Tiger, Candace and Kelly Revell, Andrea and Daniel Simon, Annette and Andrew Cook, Rachelle Di Angelo, and Alex Wilson; two great-grandchildren, Hailey Martinez and Ava Ripley; and one brother, John Jim of Oklahoma.

Interment was at Rose Hills Memorial Park in Whittier, California.

Martha Lee McHenry

Martha Lee McHenry, 80, passed away on Nov. 28, 2015. She was born on Jan. 30, 1935, to Elias and Lela John in Idabel.

Martha was a resident of Coweta. She was a proud member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.



She attended school at the Wheelock Academy in Millerton for nine years. The first year, she had to learn how to speak English. After graduating from Wheelock, she attended Durant Public Schools. While in Durant, she resided at the Oklahoma Presbyterian College dormitory. She graduated in 1955. She attended Southeastern Oklahoma State University for three years.

Martha married Ronald McHenry on Aug. 18, 1958, in the OPC Chapel in Durant. They were married for 57 years.

Martha worked at Collinsville and Coweta Public Schools. She was a devoted football coach’s wife, attending over 300 football games.

She was a member of the Broken Arrow Indian United Methodist Church. She was active in her church, holding offices in the church. She was also a member of her local and regional United Methodist Women’s Unit. She attended years of school of missions at Mount Sequoyah in Fayetteville, Arkansas. Martha was also willing to help out at the region youth camps. She was head cook, and made delicious meals.

Martha was an early riser, reading her Bible and drinking coffee. She enjoyed feeding and watching the birds, squirrels and other wildlife in her backyard. She also enjoyed reading the newspaper, magazines and doing her crossword puzzles throughout the day.

She was preceded in death by both of her parents; father-in-law, Walter McHenry; and beloved son, Jon Walter McHenry.

Martha is survived by husband, Ronald McHenry of Coweta; children, Eli and Cordelia McHenry of Broken Bow, Ronda McHenry of Dallas, Joe McHenry and Lisa Deere of Broken Arrow and Steve and Traci McHenry of Ponca City; grandchildren, Jessica McHenry, Coweta, Joseph and Rachel McHenry of El Paso, Texas and Luke McHenry of Ponca City; close relatives, Betty and Carl Kupic of Idabel; and mother-in-law, Josephine McHenry.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Hayhurst Funeral Home in Broken Arrow. Interment was at Vernon Cemetery in Coweta.

Gayle Earlene Intolubbe Wilks

Gayle Earlene Intolubbe Wilks, 81, of McKinney, Texas passed away peacefully at McKinney Health Care and Rehabilitation Center on Dec. 1, 2015. She was born on Jan. 16, 1934 to the late Earl C. Intolubbe and Velma Goodner Intolubbe in Oklahoma City.

Earlene loved playing bingo, doing zumba, reading, socializing with her friends at the health care center and attending a local Methodist church. Most of all she loved God, her friends, family, and especially her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by both of her parents.

Gayle is survived by her daughters Laura Sorensen (Ed Sorensen), and Cynthia Wilks; a brother James Intolubbe; two sisters-In-law Lynn Intolubbe and Carol Montague; six grandchildren, Scott and wife Cheri, Shannon, Brandon, Ashton, Chris and Aaron; four great-grandchildren, Dylan, Ryan, Brooklyn and Colby; and multiple nieces, nephews and cousins.

Arrangements were made under the direction of ARIA Cremation Service & Funeral Home in Dallas. A celebration of life was held in her memory.



Ralph Franklin Wilson

Ralph F. Wilson, 91, passed away on Nov. 9, 2015, due to age related causes. He was born on April 12, 1924, to Ray and Ivy Wilson in McAlester.

Ralph was one of twelve children. He lived in McAlester until he joined the Army in 1942, serving in the U.S. Army Air Corps. After his discharge, Ralph moved to Springfield, Oregon. Some of his family already resided there.

He met Melba Taylor Horne, his future wife, while living in her mother’s boarding house. He married Melba in 1952 and immediately became a father to her two sons John and Jim. Daughter Terry came along in 1953 making the family complete.



Ralph was a hard worker determined to provide a comfortable living for his family. He drove beverage trucks for over 30 years before retiring and moving on to a less strenuous job at LCC in the maintenance department.

Ralph loved to tinker with cars and made sure his kids knew how to maintain them. He taught them to change tires and the oil. When daughter Terry married her husband Robert, who owns a car dealership, he was thrilled. He would stop by the garage and shoot-the-breeze with the technicians.

Ralph’s biggest passion, besides his family, was horses. Wherever the horses were boarded, he spent countless hours caring for them and riding. He was a familiar figure on Mt. Pisgah and at Elijah Bristow Park.

Ralph was a dedicated member of the Springfield First Christian Church for over 60 years. He was a familiar face to all either as a deacon or greeting people at the front door. Always available to help, he was the go-to person in the neighborhood for anything from helping to work on cars, raking leaves or running errands for those that couldn’t.

He is survived by wife Melba; sons John and Jim Horne; daughter Terry (Robert); four grandchildren, Jamie Horne (Tina), Mindy LeRoux (Doug), Emily and Sam Scherer; two great-grandchildren Evan and Connor Horne; and one sister, Irene Tennent.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Springfield Memorial Funeral Home in Springfield Oregon.

OBITUARIES

Sean Michael Kirkpatrick

Sean Michael Kirkpatrick, 44, passed away on Nov. 16, 2015, after a long battle with cancer. He was born on Dec. 1, 1970, to Ed and Amy Kirkpatrick in Garland, Texas.

Sean graduated from Berkner High School in Richardson and attended Texas A&M University. He was a proud member of Zavalá Masonic Lodge #1059 and Hella Shrine. Sean's family would like to thank his employers, North American Stone for their continued support during their trying time.

Sean is survived by both of his parents; his beloved daughter, Amber; as well as numerous aunts, uncles, cousins and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Aria Cremation Services & Funeral Home. A memorial service was held in his memory on Nov. 23 at North Dallas Funeral Home in Farmers Branch, Texas.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to Shriners Hospitals in Houston or Galveston or to The Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children.

John Nathaniel Hamilton

John Nathaniel Hamilton, 93, passed away on Oct. 23, 2015, at the Sulphur Veterans Center. He was born on June 25, 1922 to Margaret Susan (Potts) and Roy Frank Hamilton in Albion.

John moved to Wynnewood at an early age and spent the rest of his life there.

He had served his country in the US Navy during World War II. After his naval service, he worked in the oil field.

He was married to Myrtle Mae Roberts for over 65 years, before she passed away on September 19, 2015. He was a longtime member of the First Baptist Church in Wynnewood.

He was preceded in death by his wife Myrtle Mae; grandson, Brett Nipper; two brothers, Chester and Harold Hamilton; and sister Ida Mae MacSpadden.

John is survived by his daughter, Peggy and husband Paul Nipper of Wynnewood; sons Edwin and wife Reba Hamilton of Ada, Johnny and wife Becky Hamilton of Wynnewood; brother, Bill Hamilton of Roswell, New Mexico; sisters, Clyda Phillips of Wynnewood, Lyda Owens of Pauls Valley, and Catherine Clark of Antlers; five grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren; along with numerous nieces, nephews, great-nieces, greatnephews, and other loved ones.

Arrangements were made under the direction of DeArman Funeral Home of Wynnewood. Interment was at Oaklawn Cemetery in Wynnewood.

James Robert “Bob” White

James Robert “Bob” White, 90, passed away Nov. 21, 2015. He was born May 27, 1925, to Tuck Simpson White and Augustine McCrary White in Paris, Texas.

At the age of five months he moved with his parents to Globe, Arizona where he was raised.

He was a proud member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

Bob served as an officer of the Valley National, where he assisted the bank's executive management in dealing with the major socio-economic issues affecting Arizona and the Southwest. He headed the bank's governmental affairs, including legislative interests and extensive involvement in a wide variety of public interests.

He served as manager of public affairs for the bank, and earlier headed the bank's national economic and industrial development activities and worked with both in-state and out-of-state firms to promote the economic growth of Arizona.

Bob graduated from Globe High School in 1943. He played football, served as a class officer, was awarded the American Legion Scholarship Medal and attained the rank of Eagle Scout.

Bob was a proud graduate of the University of Arizona. He served on the faculty as its director of publications. An accomplished artist, he designed the original campus mascot, the Arizona Wildcat, which had been used for over fifty years and was recognized as one of the best recognized college mascots in the country. In 1999, Bob was awarded an honorary varsity letter for his contributions to the University's athletic program. Both, the University of Arizona, and his fraternity, Kappa Sigma, elected him into their Halls of Fame for his contributions and legacy.

Bob was a retired Naval aviator and officer. He had over 1,200 hours of flight time in various aircraft, including transports, anti-submarine, reconnaissance and high-performance jet fighters. He served during both World War II and the Korean Conflict. He held a commercial pilot's license with instrument ratings in single and multi-engine aircraft, for land and sea. He maintained an active roll with former Naval aviators in the Association of Naval Aviation.

Bob served on nearly 30 different committees, clubs and boards during his lifetime. He was a founder of the Valley of the Sun Visitor's and Convention Bureau.

Bob enjoyed traveling the world, camping, backpacking, hunting, and spending time in their summer mountain homes in the Rim Country with his “very best friend,” Jane, and his family. He is a pushover for his four grandsons and has enjoyed attending and cheering at all their sporting activities. He loved his flying. He had a passion for golf with his wife and pals. He was a member of the Arizona Country Club, the Phoenix Country Club, was a founder of the Rim Golf Club, and Chaparral Pines Country Club.

He was an active member of the Valley Presbyterian Church.

Bob is survived by his beloved wife of over 67 years, Jane Heron White; brother, Paul; sister-in-law, Gayle Heron; two sons, James Robert “Rob” Jr. (Cheryl); Kent Bradley; and four grandsons, Tucker, Dakota, Logan and Brolin White.



Patricia (Corley) Burkhalter

Patricia (Corley) Burkhalter, 66, passed away on Nov. 15, 2015. She was born on June 4, 1949, to J.R. and Helen Ruth (Hiberd) Corley in Durant.

Pat dedicated her life to educating others. She graduated from Durant High School in 1967. Pat continued her education by receiving a bachelor of arts degree in 1970. She received her master's in 1976 from Southeastern Oklahoma State University. Pat taught at the Bokchito School from 1970-1991 instructing many grade levels in reading skills, while also serving as the Title 1 Coordinator. After the Rock Creek Schools consolidated she taught reading, computer labs for second grade while also supervising federal, state and local programs from 1991 to 2007. Pat was the registrar at Colbert Middle School and High School from 2003 to 2012. During her 42-year career in education she served on numerous state department committees. Pat was very proud of her family. She was also a proud member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

She was preceded in death by both of her parents; husband, Roger Burkhalter; and mother-in-law, Ruby Burkhalter.

Pat is survived by her daughter, Ginger Lynch and husband Paul of Durant; son, Christopher Burkhalter of Durant; grandchildren, Tyler Lynch, Alyssa Lynch and Brayden Burkhalter all of Durant; brother-in-law, Bruce Burkhalter and wife Annita of Rogers, Arkansas; special family, Don and Sherry Herron and families, Curtis and Diane Vaughn and families, Wesley and Roberta Morgan and families, Kenny Jackson, Kevin Jackson, Nathan Parker, Jeanne Walls and Marsha Ingram.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Holmes-Coffey-Murray Funeral Home in Durant. Interment was at Highland Cemetery.



Hazle Murphy West

Hazle Murphy West, 71, passed away on Nov. 11, 2015 in Paris, Texas. She was born Nov. 18, 1943, to Ernest and Susie Gardner Murphy in Golden.

Her mother was an original enrollee of the Choctaw Tribe. Hazle attended school in Idabel and Ashfork, Arizona. She married Ray West on June 1, 1959 in DeQueen, Arkansas.

Hazle was one of the first employees to be hired when they built the Walmart store in Hugo. She was employed there over 23 years. In her younger days, Hazle was an avid softball player, bowler and race car driver. She loved working in her yard, taking care of her flowers and spending time with her grandkids.

Hazle was preceded in death by her husband Ray; both parents; son, Tony West; sister, Kathleen Minter; and brothers, Winston, James “Bud”, J.W., Lloyd, Pink “Joe”, Carl, Audis, Jimmie, Billy, Frank and Gary Murphy.

She is survived by two daughters, Marsha Magby of Fort Towson, and Debi Clay of Hugo; son, Daryl West of Fort Towson; grandchildren, Chad Magby, Kristin Payne and husband, Kaleb, Aaron Rowden and wife, Tammy, Jennifer Kemp and husband, Preston, Sarah Rowden, Bailey Clay, Daymon West and Kaden West; great-grandchildren, Kayden Payne, Kaleigh Payne, Brodey Magby, Nadalie Rowden, Mark Rowden, Willaim Kemp, Matthew Kemp and Cameron Kemp; brothers, Lewis Murphy, Sr. of Phoenix, Arizona, and Amos Murphy and wife, Connie of Chino Valley, Arizona; along with many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Miller & Miller Funeral Home in Hugo. Interment was at Fort Towson Cemetery.



Larry Dean Juzan

Larry Dean Juzan, 63, passed away on Dec. 6, 2015. He was born on Nov. 16, 1952, to Isaac and Fern E. (Wesley) Juzan in Oklahoma City.

Larry had lived in McCurtain County since 1982. He was preceded in death by his father and brother, Isaac Henry Juzan.

Larry is survived by his mother; siblings, Angela Tollison of Broken Bow, Glen Juzan of Idabel, Hiawatha L. Jimenez of Garvin, and Dewayne Oloff of Oklahoma City; along with a host of other relatives and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Miller & Miller Funeral Home in Valliant. Interment was at Forrest Hill Cemetery in Idabel.

Melinda Sue ‘Minnie’ Thompson

Melinda Sue “Minnie” Thompson, 47, of Bokoshe, passed away on Nov. 20, 2015. She was born Dec. 9, 1967, to Lewis and Brenda (Isaac) Lawson in Poteau.

She was preceded in death by daughter, Christy Lynn; father; grandparents, Presley Jr. Isaac, Wanda (Ritter) Harrison, Sonny Lawson.

Survivors include husband, Sherman Thompson of the home; mother, Brenda Graywolf of Spiro; sister, Melissa Harris of Gans; brother, Presley Lawson of Spiro; grandmother, Pat Isaac of Poteau; nieces and nephews, Melanie, Zachery, Alex, Ashlynn, Konna; and other relatives, loved ones and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Evans & Miller Funeral Home in Poteau. Interment was at New Hope Cemetery.

Obituary Policy

Obituary submissions are for Choctaw tribal members and are free of charge. The Biskinik will only accept obituary notices from funeral homes or other official sources. Family members/individuals may still submit funeral notices as long as the notice is from the funeral home or printed in their local newspapers through a funeral home service. Full-length handwritten notices will not be accepted. The Biskinik strives to serve all Choctaws, therefore, any handwritten notices received will be searched online for official funeral home notices. If none are found, efforts will be made to contact the family and make arrangements for an official notice. Notices may be edited for space limitations.

Send official obituary notices to:
Biskinik
PO Box 1210
Durant OK 74702
email: biskinik@choctawnation.com

Anita Louella Holderbee

Anita Louella Holderbee, 78, passed away on Nov. 14, 2015. She was born on July 19, 1937 to Claude Ethan and Madle (Slocum) McCoy in the Potato Hills at Tuskahoma.

Anita spent most of her childhood traveling across the Southwest and Western United States picking cotton and other crops with her parents and two brothers.

She had many jobs in her lifetime. A soda jerk, dime store clerk, and cotton and fruit picker. Her favorite job however, was working as a teacher's assistant at Talihina Elementary School for eleven years.

Anita was a proud member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. She was a descendant of the famous McCurtain Dynasty. She was the great-granddaughter of Choctaw Chief Jackson Frazier McCurtain and wife Jane Austea McCurtain. Chiefs Green McCurtain and Edmond were her great-great-uncles.

Anita was a member of Tate Freewill Baptist Church in Yanush. She dearly loved her church family.

Anita is survived by children: Dale Murry and wife, Lisa Murry of Clinton, Arkansas, Aaron Holderbee of Buffalo Valley, Lisa Shaw of Tulsa, Sheri Allen of Oktaha; stepsons; Rick Holderbee, Dick Holderbee, Larry Holderbee and Joe Holderbee; numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren; and best friend Pamela Penley.

She was preceded in death by her parents; brothers, Eugene, Bill and Johnny McCoy; sister, Norma Jones; husbands, Earl Murry and Charles Holderbee; eldest son, Carl Murry.

Her family and friends dearly loved her. She will be greatly missed.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Burkhart Funeral Service of Talihina. Interment was at Old Town Cemetery in Tuskahoma.



Arlie James Bell Jr.

Arlie James Bell Jr., 63, passed away on Dec. 1, 2015, at his home near Goodland.

He was born on Sept. 23, 1953, to Arlie James and Oleta (Walker) Bell in Hugo.

He married Wanda Elaine Chadrick of Hugo, on Dec. 2, 1970. They lived in the Hugo area all of their lives.

Arlie worked his first job at Campbell Soup. After that, he worked as a roofer with Wanda for a period of time. However, he spent his career mostly as an ironworker for commercial construction.

Arlie was a volunteer for the Choctaw Nation Senior Citizens Center.

He also worked at the Choctaw Ballfields in Grant, where he managed the concession stand.

He got along with everyone. Arlie liked to joke and have fun with his friends. Arlie loved woodworking, hunting and fishing. He had bought a boat to go boating with his grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by both of his parents; sister, Louise Bell; and sister-in-law, Judy Bell.

Arlie is survived by his wife, Wanda; two children, Michael Bell of Hugo and Sebrina Bell and husband David Moffitt of Hugo; two granddaughters, Rilee and Morgan Moffitt; great-grandson, Keyondra Gaffiney; two brothers, James Bell of Hugo, David Bell and wife Vickie of Hugo; sister Wyonna Webb of Hugo; and a host of nieces, nephews, family and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Prater-Lampton-Mills & Coffey Funeral Home in Hugo. Interment was at Goodland Cemetery.



Doyle Hunter

Doyle Hunter, 77, passed away on Dec. 5, 2015, in Dallas, surrounded by family.

He was born Dec. 15, 1937, to Charles “Buck” Hunter and Pauline Ruth (Rogers) Hunter in Haworth.

Growing up in Hugo, he attended Emmanuel Baptist Church.

He graduated from Hugo High School in 1957.

Doyle then served in the U.S. Army Reserves for many years.

He moved to Dallas to work for Dallas Power and Light. Doyle worked as a lineman for 25 years, and then worked in accounting for six years. He worked in administration for the procurement division for four years before retiring in 1992.

After retirement, Doyle moved back to Hugo, where he enjoyed country living and cattle ranching.

Doyle was a loving father and lived his life for his kids. He always said it's “all for ya'll,” when talking to his family.

Although he really enjoyed being with family, he would always be available to help just about anyone in need at anytime.

Doyle was preceded in death by his parents; four brothers, Charles Edward Hunter Jr., John Douglas Hunter, Jimmie Allen Hunter, and Billy Gene Hunter; sister, Patsy Ruth Thompson; granddaughter, Ashlee Gayle Morris; and great-grandson, Jackson Edgar Northcutt.

Doyle is survived by his children, Susan Morris and husband Kern, of Wolfe City, Texas, Charles Hunter and wife Joyce, of Dallas, and Dena Hogue and husband Kevin, of Wolfe City; brothers, David Hunter and wife Dena of Hugo, Jerry Hunter and wife Sharon, of Hugo, Howard Hunter and wife, Susan, of Dallas; and sister, Judy Kay Campbell of Hugo; eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Prater-Lampton-Mills & Coffey. Interment was at the Springs Chapel Cemetery.



PEOPLE YOU KNOW



Tushka Reaches Career Milestone as Community Barber

Alonzo Tushka, a 28-year-old Choctaw originally from Broken Bow, built a career for himself and support for his family by becoming a barber.

In his youth, Tushka remembers skipping hair cuts to save money. When he was older and able to buy his cuts on his own, he learned a new appreciation.

“I can remember how it felt finally getting something I wanted and actually being able to pay for it,” he said, “And the feeling of getting out of the chair, realizing just a simple haircut can make you feel different, it can make you feel better about your day.”

So Tushka started cutting hair in his parents’ garage, sometimes on the front porch. He picked it up quickly, and knew it was what he wanted to do.

But life got in the way, Alonzo said. He had to put his dreams of being a barber on hold to support his wife Cyndi Tushka and two sons Kamdyn and Elija Tushka. He started working in a chicken processing plant, similar to the plants his parents had worked in. Tushka said his mother wanted better for him, wanted him to go to school and reach higher.

“One day I’m standing in the processing line and I look around and see these people who have more than 20 years



Tawnya Lansdell opens family clinic

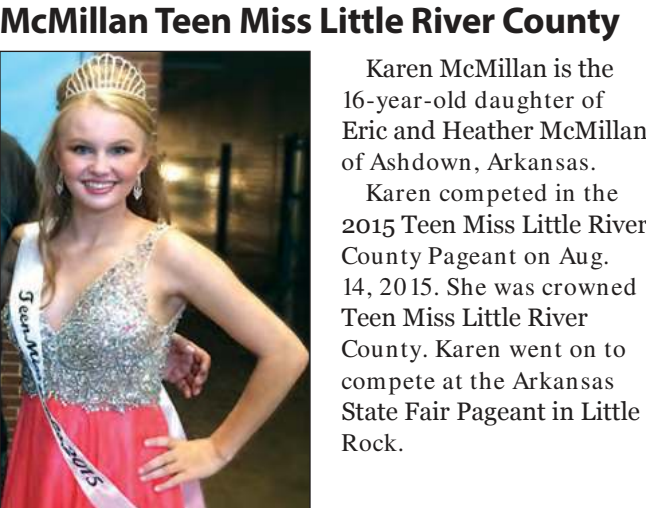
Nurse practitioner and member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Tawnya Lansdell opened her new medical clinic in Dequeen, Arkansas, on Nov. 20, 2015.

A ribbon cutting ceremony was held at the Lansdell Family Clinic, and Choctaw princesses were on hand to welcome visitors.

Tawnya worked for the Choctaw Nation Clinic in Idabel for approximately 10 years before venturing out and opening her own business. Tawnya also served in the Air National Guard for four years with an AFSC of administration.

Tawnya is the daughter of Charles and Georgie (Cusher) Griffin and the granddaughter of the late Lee and Ennie Cusher of Broken Bow.

Tawnya is proud of her heritage and proudly wears the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Seal on her white coat.



McMillan Teen Miss Little River County

Karen McMillan is the 16-year-old daughter of Eric and Heather McMillan of Ashdown, Arkansas.

Karen competed in the 2015 Teen Miss Little River County Pageant on Aug. 14, 2015. She was crowned Teen Miss Little River County. Karen went on to compete at the Arkansas State Fair Pageant in Little Rock.

Shilah Allen Earns her Bachelor’s Degree

Shilah Allen has earned her bachelor of science degree in environmental biology from Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado. She had the distinction of graduating with honors. Shilah is focusing on wildlife biology.

Shilah and her family are thankful to the Choctaw Nation for their educational assistance and scholarship program through the Higher Education Program.



Robinsons Awarded Parents of the Year

Rick and Lisa Robinson have been a wonderful asset to the Choctaw Nation foster care program. They have taken in children without notice even just for the night or the weekend.

The couple has adopted three children through the program and fostered numerous others. Rick and Lisa are currently fostering three children.

Lisa has been instrumental in creating the Choctaw Resource Parent Association that provided gifts for Choctaw children this Christmas. The Choctaw Nation Children and Family Services would like to thank Rick and Lisa for being a Choctaw Resource Home. Their love and dedication to the Choctaw Nation and Choctaw children is greatly appreciated.



Block Performs in The Nutcracker

Emma Block was selected to perform the lead role of Klara in Virginia Regional Ballet’s Nutcracker. Performances took place on Dec. 12-13 in Williamsburg, Virginia. Emma is the daughter of Paul and Sara Block, and granddaughter of Charles McKinney and Margaret Dodson Findley.

in this plant,” Tushka said. “It was then I realized this isn’t something I want to do for the rest of my life.”

He started taking classes, balancing his class time with work and family time. His program lasted 15 months and required 1,500 hours—time spent learning everything from hair cutting techniques to doing facials and pedicures. Tushka made sure to learn everything, the works, so he could serve everyone equally.

“I really wanted to learn every texture of hair, every style of hair, that way I wouldn’t have to turn down anybody,” he said. “I would be able to cut anybody’s hair who sits in my chair, whether they were black, white, or brown.”

Tushka now takes pride in the barber shop where he works, Genesis Plaza in Idabel. His mentor, “Scooby” the barber hired Tushka on two years ago. He has enjoyed every bit of it.

“Barbershop life is exciting. You get everything from sports, news, to just life stories,” Tushka said. “I’m the one trying to bring up conversation or trying to make everybody laugh. I don’t like to be sitting in the shop and just hearing clippers and crickets.”

Tushka developed a clientele, which is necessary for a barber. He said if you aren’t cutting hair, you aren’t getting paid.

“I’ve been able to maintain a job, a steady clientele, and provide for my family,” Tushka said. “There’s a saying in the business, you’re only as good as your last cut. I do my best every cut, not just every day, but with every person who sits in my chair.”



LittleBull finds Academic Success

Brianna LittleBull is a 6th grader at the Wapato Middle School in Wapato, Washington. She was awarded first quarter honor roll with a 3.74 GPA, perfect attendance, and November student of the month.

Brianna is the daughter of LeRoy and Kathy LittleBull, granddaughter of Lyda Ann Thompson and the late Truman Mack Thompson, and great-granddaughter of the late Simon and Sammy Peters.



Focks Wins School Poster Contest

Serenity Focks, 13, won first place in the Annual Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts poster contest at Ft. Towson school.

She also won a \$20 check at Wilburton for the poster.

Paul King Illustrates Fictional Novel about Choctaw Ponies to Raise Awareness

Paul King is a noted Choctaw artist and educator from Glenpool. When he visited the foundation herds of Choctaw horses in Antlers and Soper last year, he was inspired to paint them in order to bring awareness to their birthright and to encourage increased funding for their conservation. His recent collaboration with the writer Sarah Silver has produced the new book *Dream a Pony/Wake a Spirit*; the Story of Buster, a Choctaw Pony Survivor. King contributed the cover art and illustrations for the book. The book is now available both through Amazon and at the Choctaw Store.

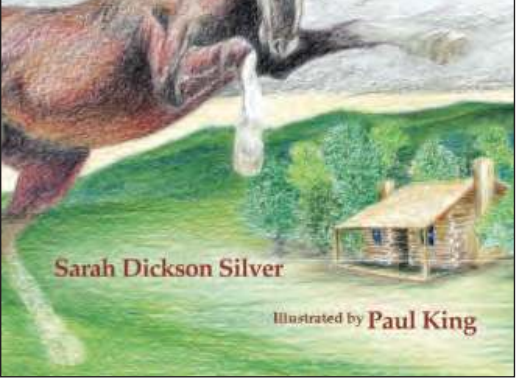
Book sales are supporting the intense volunteer efforts to provide feed, pasture, vet care, and education about these beautiful horses. The horses have been designated the Heritage Horse of Oklahoma.

A key volunteer in this effort, the Choctaw historian, Francine Locke Bray, manages a GoFundMe site at www.gofundme.com/hstvio where contributors are giving whatever amount they can to the critical needs of these rare and historically important tribal horses.

Dream a Pony/Wake a Spirit is a historical, fiction novel about a diverse group of friends growing up in a rough frontier railroad town in Choctaw Nation, Indian Territory, around 1900. It is also a tale of survival and resilience in the turbulent years just before the Territory became part of the new state of Oklahoma. The story features two young brothers, Luther and Cecil, and Buster, the Choctaw pony stallion they rescue, and tells of their many exciting adventures with their Choctaw school friends. It is a poignant and often funny tale that reveals how life is not always fair or safe in a place where people of different races and cultures must interact.

The story unfolds during a time in which diseases such as tuberculosis often tragically claim family members and where an ambitious young man with dwarfism had to rise above public ignorance. Above all, the early 1900s in Indian Territory was a challenging period, during which ancient tribal traditions and vital knowledge of the natural world were being lost. Even the unique horses that had been bred by the Choctaw for more than three centuries, and which had sustained them on the Trail of Tears, were being threatened with extinction.

Dream a Pony is a book that appeals to any age reader and is of special interest to those with family ties to southeastern Oklahoma. It is dedicated to every child who ever dreamed of a pony and to all those who cherish and conserve our Nation’s first horses. It is a great small book for reading groups and school projects and includes a resource section with discussion and research questions, a glossary of Choctaw words used, and links to additional information about the time period and about the historic role of the Choctaw horse in our Nation, then and now.



Councilman Anthony Dillard stands with members of the Atoka Choctaw Senior Group after they had their glamorous portraits taken.

Atoka Seniors Glam it up for Christmas

The Atoka Choctaw Senior Group spent an evening together on Dec. 16 after a Christmas dinner being made up to take glamorous photographs.

Sherley Zaicek, kitchen supervisor for the Atoka community center, held the event as a gift for the seniors. She and Dorothy Clubb dressed and made up every senior who wanted their picture taken. The process took over three hours.

Pebbles Smith Celebrates 50th

Pebbles A. Smith celebrated her 50th birthday in August with her family and her Red Hat sisters. Pebbles was born on Aug. 1, 1965. She is the daughter of the late Bob and Barbara McDonald and the wife of Gregory Smith. Her grandparents were the late Lucille and Marvin Howell and the late Plesia Marie and Loral Ray McDonald.




Jocelyn James makes Theater Debut


Jocelyn James, a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, recently gained experience in her first theater production.

Jocelyn played the role of Sarah Jane in the Chickasaw Nation Division Nation of Arts and Humanities production “Christmas Journey.” The performance took place at the McSwain Theater in Ada.

Jocelyn attends Sulphur Intermediate School where she is in the third grade. Her favorite subjects are reading and math, and she enjoys riding horses, dance, softball, and playing the piano.

Jocelyn is the daughter of Jerrod and Laura James of Ada. She is the granddaughter of Pam McKinney of Broken Bow and Ted and Sharon Brewer of Haworth. Jocelyn is the great-granddaughter of Ed McKinney of Honobia.





High School Student Services

A Choctaw Nation Education Program

The Choctaw Nation High School Student Services Program serves students in grades 9-12 who are tribal members. The goal of the program is to assist our students with academic information to promote education and/or career path beyond high school.

Requirements for eligibility:	Available services:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Choctaw Tribal Member• Have a Parent Permission Form on file• High school students in grades 9th thru 12th	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ACT test fee reimbursement• ACT workshops• College prep study guides• Parent-Teacher Conferences• College Fairs• Tribal education information

(580) 924-8280, ext. 4105

HEALTH

Temple Grandin Promotes Autism Awareness Event at Choctaw Grand Theater opens dialogue and educates public

By **KENDRA GERMANY**
Choctaw Nation

Part two of the Autism Community C.A.R.E.S: Coming Together Summit was held on Dec. 17 at the Choctaw Grand Theater. The second round of the conference brought world-renowned speaker Temple Grandin in to share first hand experiences and information on autism.

Dr. Temple Grandin is an accomplished professor, inventor, and New York Times best selling author. She was named one of Time Magazine’s 100 Most Influential People in 2010. She is a professor of animal science at Colorado State University. Her livestock handling systems revolutionized the cattle and slaughter industry. Temple is a highly successful and respected academic. She also happens to have autism.

Temple is considered a hero by many in the world of autism and beyond. She rose above the stereotypes and misconceptions about autism. She knocked down every barrier that stood in the way of her dreams.

Temple doesn’t let the disorder define her. “Autism is a very important part of who I am, but I’m a professor first,” said Grandin.

Temple is one of the world’s foremost speakers on autism and advocates for autism research. She was diagnosed at an early age, during a time where little was known about autism. Her mother Eustacia refused to give up on Temple.



Photo by Kendra Germany

Dr. Temple Grandin addresses the crowd during her keynote speech Dec. 17. Behind her is a picture of the high definition fiber tracks of Temple’s brain. Grandin offered first-hand experience and insight into the world of autism.

dress themselves.” With the new guidelines, the spectrum has broadened, making room for those who previously would have just been labeled socially awkward.

The need for awareness and programs was brought to Choctaw Chief Gary Batton’s attention while he was visiting with the community. “One thing I kept hearing people talk about, was that we need help with Autism,” said Chief Batton. This prompted him to take action and bring up the question of what CNO can do to help.

Sr. Director of Home Visitation and Disability Services with the Outreach Department Angela Dancer played a huge role in getting things set in motion. She helped initiate the Tribal Early Learning Initiative, or TELI.

TELI brought in a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to help develop collaboration between early childhood programs within CNO. These programs included Head Start, Early Head Start, Child Care Assistance, and Tribal Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting.

TELI helped to make the “Coming Together Summit” possible. According to Rebecca Hawkins, Education Director for CNO, plans are starting to take shape within the nation.

“We have just begun. We don’t have all of the answers. We just know there aren’t a lot of resources in this area. So it comes back down to educating, making aware, that’s what this whole effort is. It is opening the door for us to start asking questions, start getting answers,” said Hawkins.

The Choctaw Nation is still developing and infrastructure to fully assist families, but for now, Kelli Brown, Family Engagement Coordinator, can assist families by connecting them with local resources. She can be reached at (800) 522-6170 ext. 4618.

NURSERY NEWS

Jasper Dale Yagher

Jasper Dale Yagher was born at 1:51 p.m. on Oct. 13, 2015, at Choctaw Nation Hospital, Talihina. He weighed 7 pounds 4 ounces and measured 19 3/4 inches long. His parents are Joe and Christy Yagher of Hartshorne. He is the grandson of Jerry and Karen Yagher of Dana Point, California, and Adonna Bond of Hartshorne and Darrell Steidley of Manford. He is the great-grandson of Leon and Flo Burke of Hartshorne.



Healthy Goals for New Year

By **ERIN ADAMS**
Choctaw Nation

Halito, Happy New Year!

Another start to a wonderful New Year filled with happiness, joy and hope. As we look to this New Year and what is in our future, my hope is for health in this New Year. So much is thought about when we think about “health.” Some may think about exercise, diet, diseases which can cause pain. Health, to me, is living and having a good quality of life. When the body is healthy, there are so many things we can go and do, without even thinking about it. Even if the body does have a chronic disease, by living a healthy lifestyle one can still go and do the things they love. Be it dancing, hiking, fishing, playing ball or just running around playing with the kids and grand-kids, a healthy lifestyle is well worth the joy and happiness we gain. This New Year many of us will reflect on our lives and want to make a change for the better. This is a very good move! Remember a few points when setting goals for a healthy New Year:

- Set obtainable goals. Setting goals which are drastic changes in lifestyle, appearance, or lab work can be self-defeating.
- Obtainable goal – decrease weight by four pounds every month.
- Self-defeating goal – I will lose 100 pounds this year
- Obtainable goal – I will try a new vegetable every month
- Self-defeating goal – I will go to the store and buy out the produce department and fill my refrigerator with fruits and vegetables.
- Obtainable goal – I will walk every day for 5 minutes adding 5 more minutes/day each month.
- Self-defeating goal – I will go to the gym sign up to have \$100 taken out of my bank account every month.

Change does not have to be big to have big changes happen in your life or health. Below is a recipe to help cut the cold winter winds and help keep us in good health, I hope you will enjoy!



Spinach, Chicken, and Wild Rice Soup *Recipe from Diabetic Living*

Recipe of the Month

Ingredients

3 cups water
1 14 oz. can reduced-sodium chicken broth
1 10 ¾ oz. can reduced-fat and reduced-sodium condensed cream of chicken soup
2/3 cup uncooked wild rice, rinsed and drained
½ teaspoon dried thyme, crushed
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
3 cups chopped cooked chicken or turkey (about 1 pound)
2 cups shredded fresh spinach

Directions

1. In a 3½ or 4 quart slow cooker, combine the water, broth, cream of chicken soup, uncooked wild rice, thyme, and pepper
2. Cover and cook on low heat setting for 7-8 hours or high heat setting for 3½ to 4 hours
3. To serve, stir in chicken and spinach. Makes 6(1½ cup) servings

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: 1½ cup

Calories	216	Total Fat	4g
Cholesterol	64mg	Sat. Fat	1g
Total Carb	19g	Fiber	2g
Protein	26g	Sodium	397mg

I hope you enjoy this recipe and have a healthy New Year! For further information you may contact: Erin Adams, RD, LD, Choctaw Nation Diabetes Wellness Center (800) 349-7026 ext. 6959.

CHOCTAW NATION FOOD DISTRIBUTION

WAREHOUSES & MARKETS

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

FOOD DISTRIBUTION SITES FOR JANUARY

(AS OF FEB. 1 THE BROKEN BOW CENTER WILL OPEN AND THE TAILGATE SITES WILL CLOSE; SEE ATTACHED TIME CHANGES)

Bethel: Choctaw Community Center
Broken Bow: Choctaw Community Center
Idabel: Choctaw Community Center
Smithville: Choctaw Community Center

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; Fax: (202) 690-7442, or Email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

***** HOURS *****

Open 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday;
9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Thursday

ANTLERS

Market open weekdays February 1-29, except for:
Closed: February 15 for holiday and 26 and 29 for inventory.
Cooking with Carmen: February 2, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

BROKEN BOW

Market open weekdays February 1-29, except for:
Closed: February 15 for holiday and 26 and 29 for inventory.
Cooking with Carmen: February 16, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

DURANT

Market open weekdays February 1-29, except for:
Closed: February 15 for holiday and 26 and 29 for inventory.
Cooking with Carmen: February 4, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

MCALESTER

Market open weekdays February 1-29, except for:
Closed: February 15 for holiday and 26 and 29 for inventory.
Cooking with Carmen: February 9, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

POTEAU

Market open weekdays February 1-29, except for:
Closed: February 15 for holiday and 26 and 29 for inventory.
Cooking with Carmen: February 11, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

Choctaw Nation WIC

WOMEN, INFANTS and CHILDREN



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

Do You Need Help Paying For Your Child’s Daycare?

The Choctaw Nation Child Care Assistance Program

May Be Able To Assist You!

Eligibility Requirements

1. The child must be under the age of 13
2. The child must have a CDIB or reside with an Indian Family
3. The child must reside within the boundaries of the Choctaw Nation 10 1/2 county service area
4. Both parents must be working, in training, or attending an educational program
5. You must meet income guidelines based on family size and income

Child Care Assistance Eligibility Caseworkers:

Margie Cloud Atoka, Bryan, Coal, and Choctaw counties mcloud@choctawnation.com 580.924.8280 ext. 2387	Laura Matthews Hughes, Haskell, Latimer, LeFlore, McCurtain, Pittsburg, and Pushmataha counties lmattthews@choctawnation.com 580.924.8280 ext. 2390
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EDUCATION

Group Produces First Graduates



Photo by Brandon Frye

Kim Allen, Marie Battiest, Paula Griffith, Vicki Perez, Rehauna Wesley, and Vanessa Jefferson display their newly earned certificates after graduating from the Chahta Ohoyo Tikba Hikia Program. Their graduation on Nov. 17 marked the end of a year spent together learning.

By **BRANDON FRYE**
Choctaw Nation

Seven Choctaw women from southeast Oklahoma shared 2015 as a time of bonding, learning, growing, and ultimately graduating from a Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma (CNO) program meant to honor and empower Choctaw women: Chahta Ohoyo Tikba Hikia.

On Nov. 17 in Broken Bow, Paula Griffith, Marie Battiest, Cassandra Davis, Rehauna Wesley, Vicki Perez, Kim Allen, and Vanessa Jefferson reached a new milestone with their graduation from the program. The event was held at the Broken Bow First Assembly of God.

Chahta Ohoyo Tikba Hikia (Choctaw Women Leaders) is a program for Native American women who want to start their own business, own their own home, or learn about leadership. Cultural activities and art are also taught during classes.

Chief Gary Batton, Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr., and District 2 Councilman Tony Ward attended the graduation to offer their support.

“Women are important to our families and communities,” Melissa Cress, Director of Chahta Ohoyo Tikba Hikia, said. “As a Native woman myself, I feel it is important we learn to communicate this and build up our communities in this way.”

Each of the graduates took turns addressing the audience, which also consisted of friends and family members. As an aspect of leadership, the program

had taught them skills in public speaking, and this occasion gave them the opportunity to show off what they had learned.

“These ladies stood up, gave their testimony, and talked about their family,” Chief Batton said. “This is what we want for all of our tribal members, to be proud, to be strong, to stand on their own two feet. It was a great blessing to see these ladies do this.”

A running theme among their speeches was the sense of family, which had developed among the students who had met in February and seen each other once a week since.

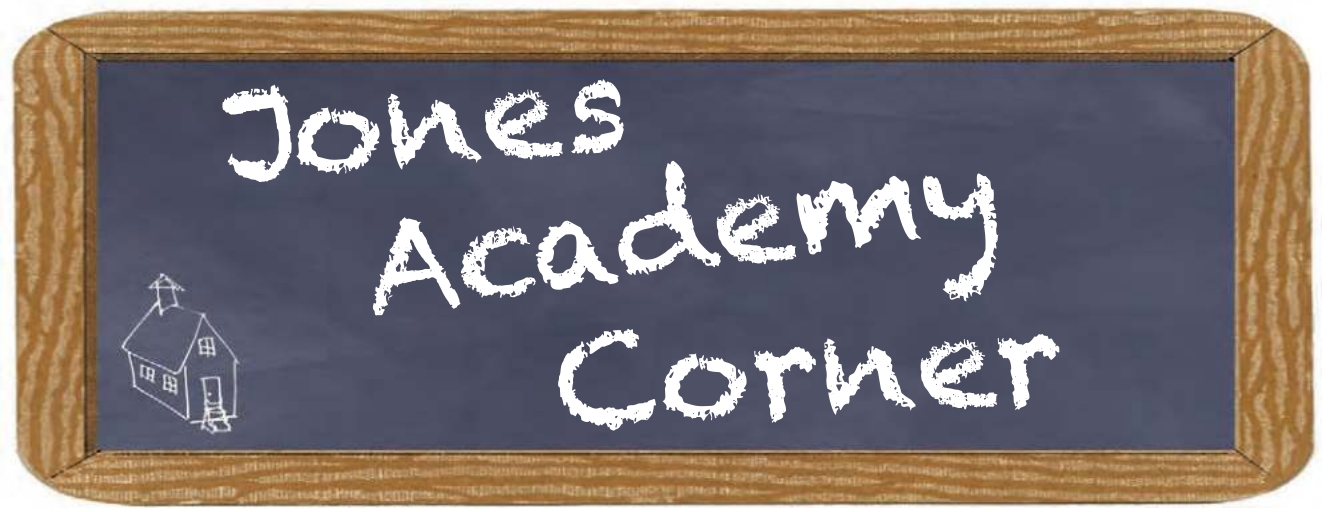
“I encourage every woman who can to enter the program,” graduating student Marie Battiest said. “It has been exciting. It has helped me, because I have a dream to open a bead shop. In two years I plan on opening this online bead store from my home.

Cassandra Davis recalled the story of how she first entered the program.

“When I found that pamphlet, I took it home and stuck it in my Bible,” Davis said. “The next Sunday at church, the preacher said, ‘God gives us ideas, and he gives us dreams.’ I showed my husband the pamphlet, and he said do it!”

Davis continued to explain how thankful to her tribe she was for this program. “Because, to me, it is important they would do something for a Choctaw woman,” she said.

For more information about Chahta Ohoyo Tikba Hikia, contact Melissa Cress at (800) 522-6170 ext. 6031.



Chief and Assistant Chief Spread Christmas Cheer at Jones Academy

Chief Gary Batton and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. made their yearly trek to Jones Academy to visit and break Christmas bread with students and staff. Both the Chief and Assistant Chief spoke privately to the students with words of kindness and praise.

They acknowledged that they kept abreast of the students’ progress and activities by regularly reading the school’s newsletter. Chief Batton relayed messages from individuals who had witnessed the students’ good conduct and character in settings outside of the Academy. He urged them to continue to strive to do their best even when they might have had a “rough life.”

The Chief spoke to the students on a personal level and identified with them. He also advised them to be grateful and to thank and show appreciation to the school’s staff. It was a warm conversation and a timely visit. Their encouragement was a balm for the teenagers at Jones Academy who are living in a difficult age.



(From left) Chanelle Bell and Jimmy Trejo-Rains read over 100 books so far in the 2nd grade at Jones Academy.

Students Read over 100 Books

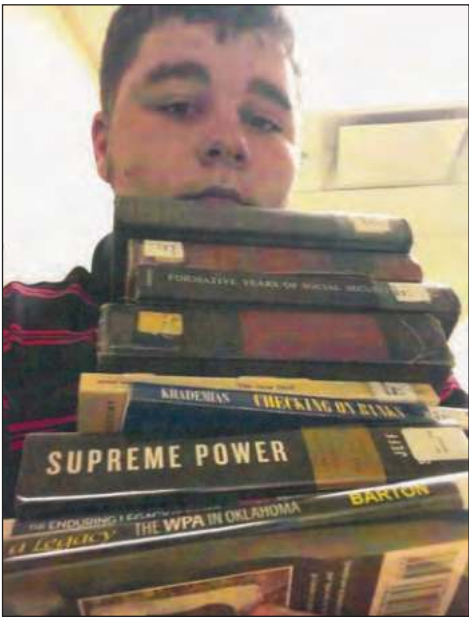
Ms. Kathy Patton, 2nd grade Jones Academy teacher, wanted to show off two of her students who have read many books.

Chanelle Bell and Jimmy Trejo-Rains read over 100 advanced reading books, and in doing so received \$25 gift cards to reward their dedication to reading.

Trejo-Rains just passed the 100 mark and is well on his way to the next goal of 200. He enjoys reading and is “going bananas” over the fun times he has in his 2nd grade class, Patton said.

Chanelle Bell has also passed over 100 advanced reading book tests and is still working hard, reading every day. Chanelle’s reading has improved greatly and she has truly excelled with excellent rate and tone while reading passages for the class, Patton said.

“If you are in the area, please feel free to view our rapidly growing Banana Reading Tree and see just how hard our students are working toward their reading goals,” Patton said.



Junior class member Zach Bennett shows off his brain power while doing research on a term paper.

Study Hall Power

A great part of student life at Jones Academy is spent in study hall. Students striving for high grade point averages and others needing additional help receive tutorial services in the evenings and weekends throughout the school year. Homework is the quiet, tedious task that students labor over every day while at the academy.

Supervising and assisting in the work are the tutors. These instructors, who specialize in several academic areas, commonly have regular teaching jobs. Some are retired educators or qualified college students plying their

craft. The inglorious part of learning occurs in study hall. There is no fanfare or noticeable transformation. There is the silent, meticulous toil of solving arithmetic problems and learning the mechanics of grammar. There are research papers to submit and projects to complete. In one U.S. history class this year, the juniors at Jones Academy turned in 17 term papers.

All were due before the Thanksgiving break. Needless to say, the student hall was very busy with activity. Finishing the assignment was the imperative. Tutorials are the backbone of Jones Academy. Study hall helps the student achieve his or her goals. The aim of the school is to produce academically prepared and capable students who can continue their education at a higher level through vocational training, a college degree, or military service.

It is the school’s objective to empower students to go beyond educating themselves and become productive and contributing members of society. Study hall helps a student develop solid learning habits and a strong work ethic. It is where the unnoticeable transformation occurs.

Chahta Anumpa
Aiikhvna
◆◆◆ Lesson of the Month ◆◆◆
Need a Babysitter - Dialogue

Pair with a partner and practice speaking Choctaw. Then, fold the paper so the English words are hidden, and speak Choctaw to one another. Eventually, speak Choctaw without the worksheet.

Speaker 1:	Halito! Chim achukma?	Hello. How are you?
Speaker 2:	Vm achukma. Chishnato?	I am good. How about you?
Speaker 1:	Vm achukma kiyo.	I am not doing good.
Speaker 2:	Katimi ho?	Why?
Speaker 1:	Himak nittak a toksvli la hiekiyo.	I cannot work today.
Speaker 2:	Ahlika?	Really?
Speaker 1:	A. Vlla apesvchi vt ik svm iksho.	Yes. I do not have a babysitter.
Speaker 2:	Katimma ish atoksvli?	Where do you work?
Speaker 1:	Choctaw Nation abeka aiasha. Abeka apesvchi sia.	Choctaw Nation hospital. I am a nurse.
Speaker 2:	Chi apela la hinla ho? Vlla apesvchi sia.	Can I help you? I am a babysitter.
Speaker 1:	A, Yvmmvt achukma!	Yes. That is great!
Speaker 2:	Chekusikma ona la chi.	I will arrive soon (in a little bit).
Speaker 1:	Ome! Yakoke!	Okay. Thank you!
Speaker 2:	Ome!	Allright.

www.choctawschool.com

SUPPLEMENTAL INITIATIVE
Next Step

Do you make too much to receive commodities?

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS:

► MINIMUM OF ONE (1) CHOCTAW TRIBAL MEMBER IN HOUSEHOLD

► NO HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS PARTICIPATING IN THE SNAP PROGRAM (FOOD STAMPS)

► RESIDE WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA (10 ½ COUNTIES)

► MUST BE A WORKING HOUSEHOLD (SOME EXEMPTIONS APPLY – SSI, SS, GA, RETIREMENT, ETC.)

► OVER FOOD DISTRIBUTION INCOME REQUIREMENTS (COMMODITIES) – \$.01 TO \$500.00

Note: All qualifications are established on individual basis. In order for an accurate assessment, please call a Next Step Social Worker at your local Food Distribution Center listed below.

Antlers – Amanda Heath 580.298.6443

Broken Bow – Tracey Risner 580.584.3832

Durant – Michael William Williamson 580.924.7773

McAlester – Nikki Heath 918.420.5716

Poteau – Hank Harris 918.649.0431

Janie Semple Umsted: from Sculpture to Batik

By CHARLES CLARK and
SHELIA KIRVEN
Choctaw Nation

There is something soothing and whimsical about the studio of an artist—a real artist. There are the easels, whether Monet French, Carolina H, SoHo Urban or, as often the case, handmade A shapes. There are frames and matting, and pads of paper and, cloth canvases leaning against walls. Light is important. Natural light, coming through windows is best. Color is everywhere, from squished tubes of oil and acrylic paint to finished works. Ideas lay about, unfinished, in the form of sketches and incomplete paintings.

If an artist is also a sculptor, there will be the smell of clay intermingling with the paint and turpentine.

Curious objects of inspiration, little and big, tend to be scattered and staring from nooks and crannies.

Native American artists always seem to have artifacts and artwork by other Native artists on hand.

If they have been doing it long enough and they are good enough, there will also be trophies and certificates from shows and wins.

Jane Semple Umsted is a real artist. She works in just such a studio near downtown Durant. Her Choctaw heritage is displayed in abundance in a former wood-frame residence that she now calls her studio.

In an exhibition that could only be by an Indian artist with a sense of humor, Umsted’s many contest-winning ribbons of all colors, including a substantial number in blue, hang from a decorated stick like coups counted on a warrior’s lance.

When a red ribbon was cut last summer, opening the new addition to the Choctaw Casino/ Resort & Spa, new art also went on display.

From the hotel reception desk to the hallways of the top floor, more than 70 works by five contemporary Choctaw artists now greet guests and visitors. Included in this elite group is Umsted.

Umsted provided 15 works for the hotel, mostly acrylic paintings, the largest of which is 5 ft. x 15 ft. It depicts a line of traditional social dancers.

She has also completed life-size bronze sculptures for the City of Durant and the Choctaw Nation. She majored in sculpture when attending the University of Oklahoma at Norman, before earning her master’s at Southeastern Oklahoma State University.

Her first large-scale bronze was a figure of the city’s founding father Dixon Durant. It stands in Market Square, 1st and Evergreen.

The Choctaw Nation commission is of two Native girls surrounded by small animals of the forest and prairie—animals often found in Choctaw folktales. The hardest part for her may have been in creating the possum. “It’s such an unattractive animal, but it figures prominently in so many Choctaw stories, I knew I had to include it,” she laughed.

Located on the historic Capitol Grounds of Tvshka Homma, “Choctaw Youth, Connecting, the Culture” was unveiled during the 2015 Choctaw Nation Labor Day Festival.

Janie Semple was born four days before Christmas 1946 in Durant. The apple did not fall far from the tree—both of her parents were artists.

“I came from a very artistic family. So, as far back as I can remember... three, four, five years old, we were sitting at the kitchen table with my mother who was an artist, instructing my older brother and I. So it came so naturally and it was a part of our everyday lives. So I guess you’d say since I was three or four years old, I’ve been drawing,

painting, talking about art... We looked at our home and my mother’s paintings were everywhere. My aunt’s paintings were everywhere. They were just part of our family. I have cousins that are artists, brothers and sisters that are artists, a brother that’s an architect, and a sister that’s an architect. So that just was our thing...I don’t know that I really thought that I would become an artist. That’s just what I knew that I was good at. It’s kind of funny...I was a junior in college at OU, taking a lot of art classes, an art major. But until I was a junior, my dad said something to me about working. I said, ‘well, I’m not sure.’ And he said, it might be good if you get a teaching degree to go with that, and I didn’t want to do that. But I did at his advice. And that was very good thing because I became a teacher. And that was wonderful because I moved several different places and I always had an opportunity to have a job because of that.”

Her mother, Jane French Semple, in addition to being an artist, was a tennis player at Southeastern. Her father Bill Semple had been a pilot in World War II. He went to Southeastern, then Oklahoma A&M (which later became Oklahoma State University) and is often credited with being one of Bryan County’s first veterinarians with a degree.

Her grandparents also had attended Southeastern. Earl (Gus) Umsted, her husband, is an alumni. There’s a lot of family history intertwined with the university. And, it was only a five-block bicycle ride from the house she grew up in. That nearness provided many educational and cultural opportunities during her public school years. Later, it would provide her a job for 10 years as the director of public relations for the university.

While inspiration came at an early age at home, formal instruction soon followed.

“I’ve had a lot of training. I started private art lessons at Southeastern actually. The art teacher that was teaching college students was my private teacher when I was eight years old... Madeline Stevenson, the art teacher at Southeastern back in the 50’s.”

Other art instructors followed. “While all the other people were maybe taking piano lessons, I was taking art lessons... Then it was a natural segway for me to go away to college and become an art major.”

Though school may have stopped, learning has continued by “Having experience with doing commission work and entering shows and being in competitive situations with my art and continuing to paint and draw and do artwork of lots of different kinds throughout my lifetime.”

One of the experiences that captured her imagination and has become one of her trademark styles is batik.

“It’s a challenge and I love it,” she said, as she explains how melting on and peeling off wax from the canvas to provide layers of color and design is a time-consuming process.



Photo by Deidre Elrod

Jane Semple Umsted is shown here in her Durant studio. The 5 ft.x7 ft. acrylic painting on board behind her, “Twelve Mile Prairie in Choctaw Territory—1800’s,” is displayed in the Grand Hotel hallway outside of the Magnolia Ballroom.

The classic portrait of Peter Pitchlynn, one of her ancestors is a prime example of Umsted’s batik work. It’s a media that has proved successful for her.

“I did get excited a few years ago the first time I entered Red Earth competition in Oklahoma with one of my batiks. I won a first place in that division, not in the batik division but in the water-based medium painting division. And then the next year I won again. So to win at Red Earth when you are relatively new at entering that show is a very big highlight for me.”

Still, Umsted is difficult to pin down on her favorite media. She sketches, of course.

“And then I love to do watercolor. I love to do acrylic paint, which I never started until I was in college, because it wasn’t even invented before I was in college. But I like that because it dries pretty fast and has some of the same attributes as oils. But I was really mainly trained in drawing and watercolor and oil painting... So those three things are my basic media that I feel really, really comfortable with.”

Comfort aside, Umsted seems to keep challenging herself. One of her next projects is a larger-than-life sculpture of an exciting Choctaw tradition.

“I have always been inspired by anything whether it be things in nature, symbolism, perhaps spiritual themes that have to do with my Native American heritage,” she said.

And in another full circle of Umsted’s life, “I have worked in so many different situations,” she said. “Through my lifetime, I found myself working in my kitchen at night after my children had gone to bed. I always dreamed of having a studio, a place that would be my own and now later in life, I do have a studio. And I love coming here. I love to come to my studio. I can have all of my resources here. I can shut the world out if I need to, but invite the world in if I need to do that also. But mainly I just have a lot of stuff. I keep everything. I keep canvases. I keep lots and lots of paints and lots and lots of equipment, doing particularly paintings you have to construct to canvases... Having a studio is really a wonderful thing and it has taken me a long, long time to do it.”



Joseph Oklahombi served as a code talker in Company D of the 141st Infantry. Near the end of the war, German soldiers separated Joseph Oklahombi and several of his fellow Choctaw soldiers from the rest of their company. But they bravely stormed the German’s stronghold and took over a machine gun. The Choctaw soldiers then held the Germans Captive for four days. In the end, Oklahombi’s group captured 171 Germans.

For his bravery, Oklahombi received the American Silver Star and the Croix de Guerre, or French War Cross, from the French government. He also received the unofficial title of “Oklahoma’s Greatest War Hero of WWI.”

Few of Oklahombi’s friends back home knew of his bravery and he never spoke of being a Choctaw code talker. Without fanfare, Oklahombi and the other code talkers served their country and returned to live out the remainder of their lives quietly.

Mannsville Students Pursue Medal of Honor for WWI Choctaw Hero

Honor long over-due for Code Talker

By KENDRA GERMANY
Choctaw Nation

Students at Mannsville Public Schools have made it their mission to secure a Medal of Honor for WWI hero Joseph Oklahombi, a Choctaw Code Talker.

Current and former Mannsville students have been leading the quest for the Choctaw war hero to be awarded a long over due Medal of Honor for his heroic efforts in combat.

After working for several years on this effort, the students are so close to achieving their goal. They now need the assistance from the public in finding any relatives of Oklahombi, anyone who knows of relatives, or just simply wants to show support for Oklahombi.

Anyone who has contact with friends or family who know Oklahombi are encouraged to share their memories and stories with the Mannsville students in pursuit of the medal.

The students recently presented Jason Self with Congressman Markwayne Mullin’s office a binder full of letters supporting the award.

Members of the Navy presented a

descendant of Joseph Oklahombi, Pat Tatum-Metheny, with a flag in honor of Oklahombi and his service.

Oklahombi rose above and beyond the call of duty in his time of service.

It is reported on Oklahombi’s citation for unusual bravery, issued at the close of the war:

“Under a violent barrage, he dashed to the attack of an enemy position, covering about 200 yards through barbed wire entanglements. He rushed on a machine gun nest, capturing 171 prisoners. He stormed a strongly held position containing more than 50 machine guns and a number of trench mortars. He turned the captured guns on the enemy and held the position for four days in spite of a constant barrage of large projectiles and gas shells. He crossed No Man’s Land many times to get information concerning the enemy and to assist his wounded companions.”

Letters and stories are being gathered in the hopes that they will show the passion that still lives in the memory of a hero long departed.

Letters of support can be mailed to: Mannsville School, P.O. Box 68, Mannsville, OK 73447

Over 18 years old?

Don’t forget to update your membership card.

If you have recently turned 18 or will be turning 18 within the next 60 days and have not yet obtained your Adult Membership card please complete a new Tribal Membership application and return to the Choctaw Nation Tribal Membership Department. The application can be found online at www.choctawnation.com or by contacting the Tribal Membership office at (800) 522-6170 or (580) 924-8280.

SAVE THE BOX TOPS

10¢

Choctaw Nation will select a school district within the nation to be the recipient of each Box Tops Program. The 2015-16 recipient will be Hartshorne Public School. Don’t have anyone to give your box tops to? Here’s how you can help!

It’s easy for anyone to get involved with Box Tops.

It’s simple. Buy the products; clip the Box Tops; drop off or send the Box Tops to the Choctaw Nation and help earn cash for the things the school needs like: books, school supplies, playground equipment, teacher training, computers, etc.

Drop-off locations:

- Choctaw Nation Community Centers
- Choctaw Nation Travel Plazas
- Choctaw Nation Headquarters

Send to:

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
Attn. Jerry Tomlinson
P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702

For further information contact Jerry Tomlinson at 580-924-8280 ext. 2904

SPORTS

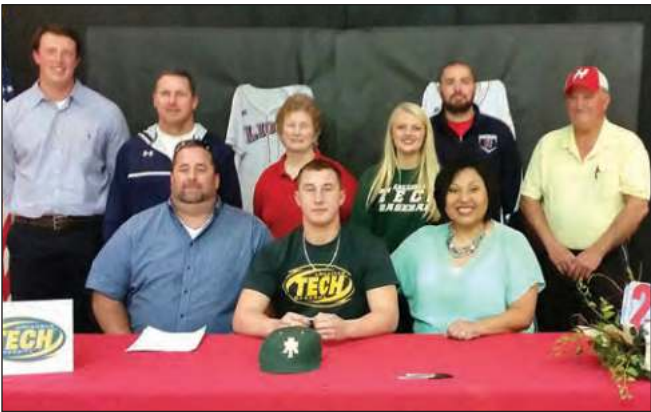
Broken Bow Athlete Signs with Bacone College to Play Football



Tyler McKinney’s life-long dream came true on Dec. 21 when he signed a scholarship to play football for Bacone College in Muskogee. Tyler graduated from Broken Bow High School in 2014 and has been active in basketball and football playing in the positions of quarterback, running back, tight end, full back, and wide receiver. He was named offensive MVP his senior year and led the team in tackles and solo tackles. He has been an active stickball player for three years with team TvshkaHomma, also playing a number of positions. Born into an athletic and competitive family, Tyler has always been a game changer both on and off the field. He’s active at the Myrtlewood Church near Broken Bow and volunteers to help the community youth.



Tushka Lady Tigers Win Championship
The Tushka Lady Tigers won the Oklahoma 2A Fast Pitch Softball State Championship on Oct. 10, 2015. Tushka took home the championship trophy, after closing out a 5-3 win over Dale at ASA Hall Of Fame Stadium in Oklahoma City.



Lansdell Signs with Arkansas Tech
Hunter Lansdell, a senior from Horatio, Arkansas, signed a letter of intent to play baseball for Arkansas Tech University in Russellville. Hunter is a strong right-handed pitcher, with a fastball speed of 90 mph. Hunter is the son of Michael and Tawnya Lansdell. He is the grandson of Charles and Georgie (Cusher) Griffin of Froglevel, Arkansas, and Harold and Virginia (Clark) Lansdell of Alleene, Arkansas. Hunter is also the great-grandson of the late Lee and Ennie Cusher of Broken Bow.



Youth Stickball Looking for 2016 Participants

January means it’s time to sign up for a youth stickball team. Please fill out the form to the right, include all relevant information plus insurance verification and a copy of tribal membership then return form to your team coach. Be sure and check the team you will be playing for and sign the form at the bottom. A list

of the rules and regulations will be given to you after you sign up. For more information, contact Jared Tom at (580) 775-0725.

2016 STICKBALL TEAMS:

- TALIHINA/CLAYTON/ SURROUNDING AREA KOH-SKITINI**
Heather Grey/Black/ Gold
Keosha Ludlow – Head Coach 580-317-6642 or 580-326-8304 ext. 6059
Ross Green II – Assistant Coach 918-493-0700
- BROKEN BOW/MCCURTAIN COUNTY HILOHA OSI (LITTLE THUNDER)**
Grey & Blue
Stanley Shomo – Head Coach 580-236-3902
Kerry Willis – Assistant Coach 580-236-5756
Brad Willis – Assistant Coach 580-612-2424
- HUGO/ANTLERS NASHOBA HOMMA**
Red & Black
Brandy Sigler – Head Coach 580-775-1648
Stoney Trusty – Assistant Coach 580-317-3495
Sonny Winship – Assistant Coach 580-775-3685
- DURANT OSI HELI (FLYING EAGLES)**
Grey & Neon Green & white

- Jared Tom – Head Coach 580-775-0725
Brenner Billy – Assistant Coach 580-236-2135
Ryan Spring – Assistant Coach 580-775-7092
Robert Baker – Assistant Coach
- POTEAU-YVNNVSH HOMMA (RED BUFFALO)**
Silver & Red
Dewayne Hornbuckle – Head Coach 918-721-1294
Roderick Hornbuckle – Assistant Coach 918-721-1390
Jennifer Roberts – Assistant Coach 918-658-8012
- MCALESTER-TANVP ISSUBA (WAR HORSE)**
Fluorescent yellow & Purple
Whitney Pope – Head Coach 918-470-1161
Rashad Cusher – Assistant Coach 918-424-1220
Chris Jacobs – Assistant Coach
- CHICKASAW NATION- BAK BAK (WOODPECKERS)**
Turquoise & Red (1) Yellow & Red (2)
Clovis Hamilton – Head Coach 580-235-6247
Andrea Mann – Assistant Coach & Coordinator

CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA
2016 – STICKBALL YOUTH MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
AGE RANGE – 8 – 17 YEARS

CHILD’S NAME: _____

ETHNICITY: ☐African American ☐Caucasian ☐American Indian ☐Hispanic ☐Multi-Racial ☐other

DATE OF BIRTH: _____ / _____ / _____ AGE: _____ GENDER: ☐M ☐F SHIRT SIZE _____

STREET ADDRESS: _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

HOME PHONE: _____ CELL PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

FAMILY INFORMATION:

PARENT/GUARDIAN’S NAME: _____

CELL# _____ WORK# _____

PLEASE LIST ADDITIONAL RELATIVE AND /OR FRIEND TO CONTACT IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY AND PARENTS CANNOT BE REACHED.

NAME: _____ RELATION _____ PHONE: _____

NAME: _____ RELATION _____ PHONE: _____

If you have any serious medical problems/conditions/handicaps, explain in detail: _____

PLEASE ATTACH HEALTH INSURANCE VERIFICATION AND A COPY OF TRIBAL MEMBERSHIP IF APPLICABLE

TEAMS: ☐ TALIHINA ☐ MCCURTAIN COUNTY ☐ HUGO/ANTLERS ☐ DURANT

☐ Poteau ☐ McAlester ☐ Chickasaw Nation

*****PARENT PERMISSION*****

My child is joining The Choctaw Nation Stickball League with my permission. I understand that Choctaw Nation is not responsible for injury, medical expense, or loss of personal property while this CHILD is participating in the league. If, in my opinion of Choctaw Nation staff/volunteers, my child has a medical emergency, I give my permission for him/her to be examined/treated by licensed medical personnel at my expense. An ambulance may be called if deemed necessary for transportation. By signing below, I also give my expressed permission for my child to be videotaped or photographed for publicity purposes.

CONSENT FOR TRANSPORTATION: As a participant of the Choctaw Nation Stickball League, I understand the representatives of the Choctaw Nation Stickball League may provide transportation to the player as part of this activity. I also understand that the player may engage in activities while in the company of the Choctaw Nation Stickball League representatives, which may involve the risk of personal injury and/or property damage.

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

dream to achieve

2016 career expo

Open to all job seekers!

Meet with top-notch employers and training facilities!

FINANCIAL AID ASSISTANCE

Bring your resume

Front row seat to the best jobs in the region!

SECTION 100

ROW A

SEAT 1

GUEST SPEAKER DR. RICK RIGSBY

EVENT ADMISSION TICKET

2016 CAREER EXPO

Southeast Expo Center

4500 W Hwy 220 • McAlester, OK 74501

WED. FEB. 24th 2016

10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

For more information contact Choctaw Nation Career Development @ choctawcareerexpo.com 866.933.2260

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

No. 84248

2016 Annual Choctaw Nation

Livestock Show

Wilburton (EOSC Campus)

Saturday, Feb. 6 & Sunday, Feb. 7

Swine Show, Heifer Show, Doe Show, Steer Show, Wether Show, Lamb Show

Durant (Bryan County Fairgrounds)

Saturday, Feb. 6th & Sunday, Feb. 7

Swine Show, Heifer Show, Doe Show, Steer Show, Wether Show, Lamb Show

For information: www.choctawnation.com (888)767-2518

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

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

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