



Senior Day celebration

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Outreach at the Beach

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Okla Chahta Gathering in Bakersfield

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CHOCTAW NATION

# BISKINIK

The Official Publication of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

June 2013 Issue

## Remembering the Long Walk

*The first of the annual Trail of Tears Commemorative Walks was held in 1992 with a 21-mile journey from Horatio, Ark., to Eagletown, Okla. The walks are scheduled every third Saturday of the month of May and are alternated between several sites where Choctaws first made their homes including Skullyville Cemetery in Spiro, the Choctaw Nation Capitol of Tvshka Homma, and Wheelock Academy in Millerton.*

*Cultural activities are held to show participants how Choctaws make pottery, baskets and jewelry.*

*Families and friends are reunited on a day set aside to honor the resilience and progressiveness of the Choctaw people.*

■ See event photos and information on Page 20



Choctaw Nation: CHRISSEY SHEPARD

### Leading the way...

Choctaw Nation Color Guard leads the group of walkers on May 18 at the annual walk along the 4.5-mile trek from Skullyville Cemetery to the Choctaw Community Center in Spiro.

### 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](http://www.choctawnation.com) or by contacting the Tribal Membership office at 1-800-522-6170 or 580-924-8280.

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#### The Mission of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

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

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

## The art of Dylan Cavin

By BRET MOSS

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

J. Dylan Cavin, a comic book kid from Chickasha, has accomplished a goal many only contemplate. He has turned what he loves into his career, producing impressive results along the way.

Cavin is a multi-talented artist, able not only to put paint to canvas, but pixel to screen, shape to mold, and even ink to skin. His work has been featured on everything from personal effects to commercial placement. His designs can be seen advertising Oklahoma City's 2013 Red Earth Festival on billboards, benches, bus stops and T-shirts.

Cavin and his talents will also be showcased at this year's Choctaw Days at the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C., June 21 and 22.

No stranger to event exhibits, Cavin has also been featured at Choctaw events such as Choctaw Day in Oklahoma City in 2012. His artwork also hangs among other notable pieces inside the tribal headquarters in Durant.

Immersion in the universe of art came early for Cavin, winning his first contest in middle school and having his picture in the paper for his drawing of the Statue of Liberty. He was drawn further into the realm of art when he was introduced to comics at the age of 10. "I became completely swallowed up by them," Cavin declared.

Cavin reminisces of times when he and his buddy would make high contrast photocopies of comics and color them in with markers. These actions inevitably led to completely redrawing images and eventually art classes to hone his newly discovered skills.

As he made his way through Noble School, Cavin was fortunate to have the support of his instructors. "I had a couple of really great art teachers in high school that saw something in me," Cavin mentioned. "I certainly never felt like I was the most talented in the class but I was



Choctaw Nation: LISA REED

Cavin displays his artwork, "Overalls and Bright Skies" and "Gold Skies," at the Choctaw Cultural event in Norman on May 23. "Gold Skies" was a cover of Oklahoma Today Magazine, and "Overalls and Bright Skies" took Best in Show at the 2012 Choctaw Nation Labor Day Art Show.

always attentive and a good student willing to learn," he continued.

When graduation neared, a decision was made to continue his exploration of art in college. He earned an Art Talent scholarship with his artistic abilities, which led him to the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma in Chickasha, where he graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 2000. This would allow him to find a career in the field of graphic design.

"I feel like I got a very well-rounded education," stated Cavin as he spoke of his opportunity to experiment with many forms of art before deciding on graphic design as his major. "I had a really great core group of professors that helped along the way," he continued.

Cavin mentioned that his professors were focused on hands-on education, an aspect that Cavin believes is necessary for a student of art to flourish. Professor Kent Lamar, who taught figure drawing and sculpture, stands out as one of the most influential of his collegiate career. "His figure drawing classes really helped me develop a style that I felt was my own. His encouragement was what really got me through a lot of those higher level college courses, when I think a lot of students start to second guess their majors," he declared.

Upon graduating, Cavin began working for a company where he did full services design for

**See CAVIN on Page 16**

## Choctaw Nation 2013 tribal election

The Choctaw Nation election for 2013 will be held for the seats of councilpersons in two districts, Districts 4 and 9, on July 13. Four other Choctaw councilmen in this election cycle were unopposed.

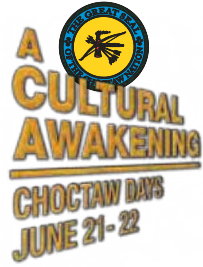
The candidates in District 4 are incumbent Delton Cox of Pocola and Richard Box of LeFlore. Polling places for District 4 are: the Dale Cox Community Center, 208 B Street (behind Rubin White Clinic) in Poteau; the Choctaw Community Center, Hwy 271, turn North on AES Road, in Spiro; the Senior Citizen Community Center, 34635 Reichert Summerfield Road (old Summerfield School) in Summerfield; and the Methodist Church at 205 E. Ave. B in Heavener.

District 9 candidates are incumbent Ted Dosh of Bennington and Berdie Williams of Durant. Polling places for District 9 are: Town Hall, 102 East Woodcraft Road in Bennington; the Methodist Church at 111 S. McKinley Ave. (2nd and Main) in Calera; and the Choctaw Nation cafeteria at 1705 W. Locust (former Senior Citizen Center at the tribal complex) in Durant.

Absentee ballots were automatically mailed to all voters who have affiliated with Districts 4 and 9 but reside outside the territorial boundaries of the Choctaw Nation. These were mailed May 31 to the address shown on the official voter registration list with the Tribal Membership office, providing the address is correct.

Requests for absentee ballots must be received by the Election Board no later than June 26. An absentee ballot will be sent to the voter via U.S. Postal Service once the Election Board has approved the voter's request. The ballot must be received by the Election Board via U.S. Postal Service no later than 4:30 p.m. on July 12.

Contact information for the Election Board is: Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Election Board, P.O. Box 748, Durant, OK 74702-0748; fax 580-920-1132; or phone at 800-522-6170.



## Choctaw Days in Washington, D.C.

Join the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma June 21-22 in a celebration of culture, heritage and tradition at the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C.



# Assisting neighbors after the storm

*From the Desk of Chief Gregory E. Pyle*

The devastating tornadoes in Oklahoma left many families homeless and hurting. That is why the people of the Choctaw Nation donated fuel proceeds for one week from our 11 travel plazas to the Salvation Army relief efforts. This money from the fuel sales, along with donations collected since the storms, totalled \$50,000, and was sent to assist the victims of the recent Oklahoma tornadoes.

The morning following the Moore storm, some of the Choctaw tribal safety officers were on-site to assist with initial efforts, and other teams have been assembled to volunteer as other resources are needed in areas such as cleanup of the debris and cooking meals for the victims and

those helping in disaster relief. The Choctaw Emergency Assistance Office has been working with individual families who were impacted by the Shawnee, Moore and El Reno tornadoes.

Oklahomans have always been resilient, and the Choctaws have helped set a foundation for that endurance and determination. Since the Trail of Tears in 1831 until now, Choctaws have had our ups and downs, and have always been strong, recovering from adversity thanks to the grace of God and support of our loved ones.

Helping others is ingrained into Choctaws – our ancestors taught us to help wherever possible, just as Choctaw people in 1847 gave generously to the Irish during the Potato Famine. Our tribe continues to reach out to those in need today.

The prayers of myself, my family and the



Council are with the families and friends of those who have lost people who are dear to them in the storms, as well as those who have lost homes. We are blessed to be able to help through the Choctaw Nation in the recovery effort. The Choctaw Nation is committed to supporting our communities in good times and in these times of need.

## Tribal Council meets in regular May session

The Choctaw Nation Tribal Council met in regular session on May 11 at Tvshka Homma.

Council members voted to:

- Approve budgets for the Native American Basic Grant, Injury Prevention Program, PREP Program, Chahta In-chukka Program and Chahta Villa Impela Program.
- Approve the disposal of surplus vehicles by the Fixed Assets Department.
- Approve the lease of 20 acres.

The Choctaw Nation Tribal Council holds its regular session at 10 a.m. on the second Saturday of each month in the Council Chambers at Tvshka Homma.

# Honor our heritage by voting in this summer’s election

*From the Desk of Assistant Chief Gary Batton*

Part of the tremendous heritage of being Choctaw is being able to elect our Council and Chief. Elections for these leaders are every four years with the Council seats being staggered on two-year cycles, with six of them filing for re-election this year. Four

of those six were unopposed, with two incumbents drawing opponents, which means there will be ballots issued for Districts 4 and 9 this year. As a fellow Choctaw, I urge each tribal member age 18 and over who is registered in one of these two districts to exercise their right to vote in this year’s election!

I have always felt that as an American, it is more than my privilege to be allowed to

vote – it is truly a duty. I feel the same way as a Choctaw. Each tribal member should be honored that their voice can be heard through their vote regarding the choice of leadership for this great Indian Nation! Casting a ballot is one of the most exciting rights I have as a Choctaw Tribal Member!

Please join me in making this summer’s election a huge turnout of voters on July 13. Yakoke.



# Taking a stab at salt pork preparation

*By Vonna Shults Guest Columnist*

In my last story to you I shared my experience of discovering the most delectable of Choctaw foods, salt pork. Other Choctaws may call it salt meat or dry salt, but it is the same food. I somewhat consider myself more on the adventurous side of cooking in my kitchen so I knew I was going to attempt to prepare this dish. I enjoy cooking food for friends and family even if it is a food I am unfamiliar with preparing. I like to accept new culinary challenges. Preparing salt pork is different because every Choctaw has a grandma, aunt, mom, sister, friend, etc., etc., who prepares it better than anyone else on the planet. I decided that I was going to learn how to cook salt pork no matter how harsh critics would be towards me.

My first step when cooking any type of dish that is unfamiliar to me is to find a reputable person to help me get started in the right direction.

Luckily for me I happen to have two very trusted Choctaw ladies on my speed-dial list that are known for their cooking skills. My go-to Chahta cooks are Lorene Blaine and Shirley Barboan, both from Durant.

These ladies know how to cook and please large groups of Choctaws and friends of Choctaws without missing a beat. So, I called them up and asked for help. Without hesitation both ladies gave me their tried-and-true method of preparing salt pork in a way that would make me a very popular friend to invite to a potluck dinner. I now felt ready to tackle this new dish.

You can purchase salt pork at most grocery stores and it will usually come in a one or two pound block. I picked up a couple blocks and headed home in a hurry as, in my mind, I could already smell and taste what was in my white grocery sack. I could almost hear the “ooohs” and “ahhhs” from my co-workers who I use as guinea pigs when I try a new dish.

The directions that were given to me seemed to be so simple and easy, surely it wouldn’t be long before I became well-known as a great Chahta chef. There is an old saying, “if something sounds too good to be true, it usually is,” and I was about to find out first hand why many folks do not like to prepare this wonderful dish.

I grabbed the sharpest knife I have in my kitchen, sliced opened the first block and began to slice away. I was instructed to slice the pork at least a quarter-inch thick but not too thick



and I realized right away I could never make a decent living as butcher. Slicing the pork is about as easy as applying false eyelashes to a cat. I could not get a good grip on the pork and it kept trying to run away from me on the cutting board. Sweat and frustration was beginning to build at a momentous speed. But then I had a great idea – I would put the pork in the freezer for just a little while to firm it up a bit. So I did just that and waited one whole hour. Once I retrieved it from the freezer I was finally able to slice the pork. I am not going to be a holabbi chito and tell you that the pork I sliced resembled anything close to what I have seen served from my Choctaw friends.

Once you have the salt pork sliced you will need to boil it for approximately 30 minutes to get some of the salt out of the meat. After you finish boiling the meat you will need to pat it dry with paper towels. Do not, I repeat, do not rush through this portion of preparation. If you do you will pay dearly for your haste. I prefer to cook my pork in a cast iron skillet as it tends to maintain temperatures better than most skillets I own. Once I get the skillet hot I place my first few slices of salt pork on to cook.

This is where salt pork takes on a mind of its own. There is nothing more random on this earth than the direction of splatter from salt pork as it cooks in a skillet. Although I do have a few chef jackets I wear when I prepare food for any of the tribe’s events I do not wear them at my home. I can honestly say the best thing to wear when cooking salt pork would be to borrow a shiny, silver protective suit from the folks who enjoy exploring active volcanoes for a career.

Salt pork is prepared pretty much the same as bacon, cook until done on one side, then flip it over and cook the other side. Some folks even prefer to flour their pork before they fry it in the skillet, although I choose not to. I have been told flouring the pork before cooking may control some of the splatter issues that it may present.

So the next time you are browsing the breakfast meat aisle, go ahead and grab a block of salt pork and prepare some for your family. They will love it. They will love you even more than they already do.

Cooking salt pork will give you the greatest appreciation for the poor soul in charge of cooking vast amounts of salt pork for the church’s annual wild onion dinner.

Who knows, maybe next March you can be the person in charge of salt pork??

## Chaplain’s Corner

# How to get the most out of the Bible

Are you having a good summer? I start the Chaplain’s Corner with this question: “What happens when we fail to study the Bible?”

We begin by turning to an Old Testament passage in Jeremiah 8:9 to answer the question, “What happens when we fail to study the Bible?”

In this passage, Jeremiah is speaking to and against the leaders of Israel. The leaders have misled the people. The prophets have failed, the scribes have failed and the wise men of the nation have failed in leading the nation of Israel to the truth of God.

This is what Jeremiah says in Jeremiah 8:9: “the wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the Word of the LORD; and what kind of wisdom do they have?” The implication is that they don’t have any.

Wisdom comes from God, and it comes through His Word, and apart from His Word there is no real Spiritual Wisdom.

When the leaders of a nation of Israel, even the nation of Israel, rejected the Word of the Lord, there is no wisdom.

What happens to a nation that abandons the Bible authority?

We read the Bible and learn the history of the nation Israel. God has promised them He will bless them if they are obedient to His Word and worship Him only. When the Israelites forget or reject His Words they begin to worship other things, they worship Idols. It is not idols of statues or pictures. Anything you think of and worship before God is an idol.

Results of idolatry leads to immorality and God’s judgment, but God will forgive a repenting heart.

When nations forget or reject the Biblical truth, they are following the same path to God’s judgment. What should we do?

You have heard the record of the long lost book in II Kings 22. Hilkiah, the High Priest, while he was cleaning the temple, found this book.

The book was brought to Josiah, who was eight years old when he became king. The book was brought to him when was just 18 years old when he said “read it to me.” After Shaphan the secretary read to him, King Josiah said, “You have made the commandment of God of none effect by your traditions.”

We must repent for all our neglect, for all our sins, or the nation will be destroyed.

He said reformation shall begin with the king. The head of this nation will put himself in sack-cloth and ashes.

Because your study of the Bible is so important to the blessing of your life, it is so important to your joy, it is so important to your usefulness, it is so important to the glory of God.

If you have a weak view of Scripture, you will have weak interest in it. It is the seriousness with



REV. BERTRAM BOBB  
Tribal Chaplain

which you read your Bible, this motivates you in its study.

Understand the value of the Bible. Understand its riches in treasure. The Psalmist said, “It is more precious than gold and sweeter than honeycomb.” It is the view of Scripture that is the foundation of everything in the Scripture, study it with great diligence and care.

What is right is determined by what God has said. And God has spoken of moral, ethical and spiritual truths with very clear terms. No society will survive abandoning the Bible. Our society will continue to disintegrate at a rapid rate until there is a return to the Word of God.

The Bible claims amazing things for itself. We will study three of them: These are things the Bible claims for itself.

First, it claims for itself to be infallible, which is to say that everything it says is absolute truth. If it says something about capital punishment, and it does, what it says is true. If it says something about marriage and divorce, what it says is absolutely true. If it says something about Jesus Christ, that is true. If it says something about the nature of men, what it says is absolutely true. If it says something about the history of Tyre or Sidon, it is absolute truth. If it says something of Babylon, of a beast, or about an Antichrist, it is true. If it says something about a man named Peter, a man named David or a man named Paul, it is true. If it says something about a man named Adam who had a wife named Eve, and they had children, Cain, Abel and Seth, and it says something about a garden, everything that it says is absolutely true. It is infallible.

Second, it is inerrant. When I say it is inerrant, I mean the Bible written by the inspired writer was without error. When the Word of God was written it was written without error as the Spirit of God directed the writer: We read in Proverbs 30: 5-6: “Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.”

Third, the Scripture is complete. That is to say that this is all God to inspire. This is it. From Genesis to Revelation, all the 66 books sum it up. We read in Deuteronomy 42, “you shall not add to the word which I am commanding you nor take away from it.”

Holy men of God were moved by the Holy Spirit as they wrote this. It is not of any private origin. It came from God; it is infallible, inerrant and complete. “For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven” (Psalm 119:89).

God’s Words will always be fulfilled. It is effective. Wherever it goes, it penetrates powerfully. It penetrates the heart. It cuts deep; it achieves God’s power, sometimes for grace, sometimes for judgment. What God says will come to pass.

May God bless you. Perhaps God has spoken to you to commit your life to Him by trusting Jesus as your Savior.



# Atoka Community Meeting exhibits culture



Councilman Anthony Dillard is pictured with District 10's 2013-14 Sr. Miss K'Tnna Billy, Little Miss Choctaw Nation Josephine Gilmore and Atoka's Little Miss Maci Wagoner.



The youth began a pick-up game of stickball.



Vangie Robinson explains some of her work to Dorothy Silvers.



Above: Assistant Chief Gary Batton stops to say "halito" to Raymond Cooper.

Left: Bubba Cooper brought his beadwork to the Atoka Cultural meeting on May 9.



Guests get involved in traditional dancing. Dances included the Snake, Duck, Raccoon and more!



Tim Longwell is an artist who specializes in oils and acrylics. He enjoys doing landscapes, murals and portraits.



Carolyn Jackson takes time from helping with the cooking to visit with language instructor Lillie Roberts.

Photos by LISA REED | Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma



# Poteau community hosts Choctaw day



Miko Cox gives Dallas Roberts and Koe Cox a little shade.



Assistant Chief Gary Batton, Karl McKinney and Chief Gregory E. Pyle.



Photos by LISA REED | Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma



Deloris Cox introduces her grandson, Miko Cox, to Assistant Chief Gary Batton.



Right: Members of the Antlers Pottery Club – Mary Frazier, Maudell Mashaya and Wyona Meshaya.



Brody Akins shakes hands with Chief Gregory E. Pyle. Also pictured are former Jr. Miss Choctaw Nation Adrianna Curnutt, Councilman Delton Cox and Assistant Chief Gary Batton.



Mary Frazier works on her pottery.



Assistant Chief Gary Batton and Amber Colwell, the Choctaw Nation's 2011-12 Senior Miss 1st Runner Up.



Delton Cox addresses the crowd.



Recipe of the Month

Mustard Grilled Walleye

Recipe from Doneen Hollingsworth, South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks

**Ingredients:**  
1/2 tsp. dry mustard  
1 1/2 tsp. dried parsley flakes  
1/8 tsp. garlic powder salt  
2 tsp. lemon juice  
1 pound walleye filets

**Directions:**  
Mix lemon juice, mustard, parsley flakes and garlic powder. Spray cooking spray in the center of a large, heavy-duty sheet of aluminum foil. Arrange walleye on the center of sprayed foil. Brush walleye with lemon juice mixture until well covered. Wrap foil around the


walleye to form an airtight, covered bag. Grill for 20-30 minutes depending on the thickness of the filets, turning once. Walleye should be flaky when done.

**Nutrition Facts:** Foil entrée serves four.  
Calories - 100, Total fat - 1g, Saturated fat - 0g, Cholesterol - 80mg, Sodium - 115mg, Carbs - 0g, Protein - 20g.

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

10 tips to help you stretch your food dollars

- Get the most for your food budget! There are many ways to save money on the foods that you eat. The three main steps are planning before you shop, purchasing the items at the best price, and preparing meals that stretch your food dollars.
- Plan, plan, plan!**  
Before you head to the grocery store, plan your meals for the week. Include meals like stews, casseroles, or stir-fries, which “stretch” expensive items into more portions. Check to see what foods you already have and make a list for what you need to buy.
  - Get the best price**  
Check the local newspaper, online, and at the store for sales and coupons. Ask about a loyalty card for extra savings at stores where you shop. Look for specials or sales on meat and seafood – often the most expensive items on your list.
  - Compare and contrast**  
Locate the “Unit Price” on the shelf directly below the product. Use it to compare different brands and different sizes of the same brand to determine which is more economical.
  - Buy in bulk**  
It is almost always cheaper to buy foods in bulk. Smart choices are family packs of chicken, steak, or fish and larger bags of potatoes and frozen vegetables. Before you shop, remember to check if you have enough freezer space.
  - Buy in season**  
Buying fruits and vegetables in season can lower the cost and add to the freshness! If you are not going to use them all right away, buy some that still need time to ripen.
  - Convenience costs... Go back to the basics**  
Convenience foods like frozen dinners, pre-cut vegetables, and instant rice, oatmeal, or grits will cost you more than if you were to make them from scratch. Take the time to prepare your own – and save!
  - Easy on your wallet**  
Certain foods are typically low-cost options all year round. Try beans for a less expensive protein food. For vegetables, buy carrots, greens, or potatoes. As for fruits, apples and bananas are good choices.
  - Cook once, eat all week!**  
Prepare a large batch of favorite recipes on your day off (double or triple the recipe). Freeze in individual containers. Use them throughout the week and you won't have to spend money on take-out meals.
  - Get your creative juices flowing**  
Spice up your leftovers – use them in new ways. For example, try leftover chicken in a stir-fry or over a garden salad, or to make chicken chili. Remember, throwing away food is throwing away your money!
  - Eating out**  
Restaurants can be expensive. Save money by getting the early bird special, going out for lunch instead of dinner, or looking for “2 for 1” deals. Stick to water instead of ordering other beverages, which add to the bill.



# Choctaw Nation WIC

## WOMEN, INFANTS and CHILDREN

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

Discovering the great outdoors

A world of green and adventure awaits you. The beauty of spring turning into summer is beckoning us to come and enjoy all the outdoors has to offer. Not only is this a wonderful way to enrich spirit, this is also a fun way to improve our health. While most of us think of the woods or mountains for camping and hiking when we hear “The Great Outdoors,” there are many other places and ways to enjoy the great outdoors. Canoeing, rafting, hunting, fishing, riding a bike, playing with the kids in the park, going for a walk in the neighborhood or just camping out in the back yard with the kids are just a few different ways to enjoy the great outdoors. According to the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) the possibilities

are endless. The NWF has a Summer Activity Kit available for parents to help get the entire family involved in outdoors activities.

The kit includes:

- Printable outdoor activities to stick on the fridge like Bug Bingo
- Summer Safety 101 – how to avoid sunburn, poison ivy, heat exhaustion and jellyfish stings
- Fun games to play – and stay cool – at a summer outdoor birthday party
- Easy campsite crafts
- Beach activities
- Tips to Beat the Heat – water games

Just go to [www.nwf.org](http://www.nwf.org) for the kit and much more.

And for all those fishermen and women here is a wonderful way to enjoy your catch of the day!

Dealing with diabetes

If your mother, father, husband, wife, grandfather, grandmother or another loved one has diabetes, some people might feel in denial, a lack of control, overwhelmed, scared, depressed or angry.

There are things a person can do to live a healthy life with diabetes. This is what your loved one might be doing every day:

- Testing blood sugar several times each day
- Changing their eating habits to eat foods with less sugar and fat
- Changing their eating habits to include more fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean protein
- Being more active by walking, working out at a wellness center, splitting wood, etc.
- Resting when needed and trying not to get “stressed out”
- Going to medical appointments more often
- Taking diabetes pills every day or giving themselves insulin shots

Ways you can help your loved one deal with diabetes include:

- Keep up your usual relationship with them
- Ask them if there is anything you can do to support them with their diabetes, such as provide a ride to the clinic, or be a support person at the doctor's appointment
- Be positive when they are

drinking water instead of pop or eating baked foods instead of deep-fried foods

- Try not to nag or judge them when they make a choice you think isn't healthy for them
- Join them in making healthy food choices
- Walk with them or invite them on a walk
- Let them rest and have stress-free time to take care of themselves

One of the best ways you can support your loved one with diabetes is to let them know they are inspiring you. You can become a champion in the fight against diabetes. You can prevent diabetes by being physically active every day and staying at a healthy weight. Tell your loved one, “I want to help you stay healthy with diabetes, and I want to be healthy myself. Let me join you in making healthy lifestyle changes. You have inspired me to stay healthy and fight diabetes. Thank you.”

Finding the condition early is important and proper screening is the key. If you or your loved ones suspect you may have diabetes or need more information, contact the Choctaw Nation Health Services Diabetes Wellness Center at 800.349.7026 x6959 or x6942, or visit the American Diabetes Association website at [diabetes.org](http://diabetes.org).

Article provided by the CNO Health Services.

## FOOD DISTRIBUTION

**ANTLERS**  
Market open weekdays July 4-26, except for:  
**July 3:** Idabel 9-11 a.m.; Broken Bow 12-2 p.m. (market open)  
**July 10:** Bethel 9-10:30; Smithville 12-2 (market open)  
**Closed** July 4 for holiday and 29-31 for inventory  
**Cooking with Carmen:** July 17, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

**DURANT**  
Market open weekdays July 1-26, except for:  
**Closed** July 4 for holiday and July 29-31 for inventory.  
**Cooking with Carmen:** July 3, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

**MCALESTER**  
Market open weekdays July 1-26, except for:  
**Closed** July 4 for holiday and July 29-31 for inventory.  
**Cooking with Carmen:** July 19, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

**POTEAU**  
Market open weekdays July 1-26, except for:  
**Closed** July 4 for holiday and July 29-31 for inventory.  
**Cooking with Carmen:** July 1, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

## CHOCTAW NATION FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Open 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Monday thru Friday. Staff will take lunch from 11:30 to 12 noon.

### WAREHOUSES & MARKETS

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

### FOOD DISTRIBUTION SITES


**Bethel:** Choctaw Community Building  
**Broken Bow:** Choctaw Family Investment Center  
**Idabel:** Choctaw Community Center  
**Smithville:** Choctaw Community Center  
**Stigler:** Choctaw Community Center

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NURSERY NEWS


**Anthony Gonzalez**

Anthony Ray Gonzalez was born March 19, 2013, weighing 7 pounds 6 ounces and measuring 21.5 inches long. He is the great-grandson of Helen Berniece and Emerson Willis Sr. of Temple, Texas; the grandson of Sharolyn and Bobby Flippo of Wimberly, Texas; and the son of Erika Flippo and Mario Gonzalez of San Marcos, Texas.




**Lindsey Coughlin**

Lindsey Skye Coughlin was born on March 14, 2013, at the Methodist Dallas Medical Center in Dallas, Texas. She weighed 8 pounds 5 ounces and measured 20.5 inches. Her parents are James and Rechinda Coughlin; siblings are Aiden Perry, 7, and James Coughlin IV, 5; grandparents are Gloria Perry and Phillip Blakely, and Susan Coughlin and Jim Coughlin; uncles are Walter Perry and Michael Perry; and her cousin is Jennifer Perry. "We are extremely happy and blessed to have a happy and healthy baby girl."




**Primrose Rowell**

Primrose Onnat Isht Ia Rowell was born at 9 a.m. on April 25, 2013, at the Methodist West Houston Hospital in Houston, to proud parents Philip Yuka Keyut Atta Rowell and wife Adrean Rowell. She weighed 8 pounds 5 ounces and is the first child of Philip and Adrean, and is the grandchild of Jim and Julia Gipson of Houston, and Philip and Geraldine Rowell of Broken Bow.




**Kaje Boston**

Larry and Janice Boston of Atoka are proud to announce the birth of their son, Kaje Wheeler Boston. He was born at 5:17 p.m. on April 4, 2013, at the Choctaw Nation Health Care Center in Talihina. He weighed 8 pounds 1.1 ounces and was 20 inches long. He joins big sister Haley and big brother Jake Boston. His proud grandparents are Janette Parsons of Hugo, the late Joe Parsons, and Larry and Dena Boston of Atoka. Great-grandparents are Martha Wade and the late Emerson Wade of Boswell, the late Joyce and Frank Parsons of Hugo, Bill and Quinta Sturdy of Coalgate, and the late Lee and Irene Boston of Stringtown.




**Liana Hernandez**

Liana Jade Hernandez was welcomed to the world on May 3, 2013, by her parents Emelio and Monica (Grass) Hernandez of Lyons, N.Y. Her siblings are Dana, Cheyenne and Caleb Hernandez; grandparents are Ralph and Hiahwahnah Grass of Independence, Mo., and LeRoy and Carrie Taylor of Lyons; great-grandparents are Elijah and Rosie Mae Parish Ludlow of McAlester, and Luther and Louise Grass of Brawley, Calif.




**Caleb Whiteman**


Caleb Jourdan Whiteman was born at 3:27 p.m. on May 13, 2013, at Women and Children's Hospital in Lafayette, La., weighing 7 pounds 1 ounce and measuring 19.5 inches long. Parents are Kenneth and Tamara Whiteman of Abbeville, La., and siblings are Kristian and Jazlyn Whiteman.



**Selin Bisbee**

Selin Wat'huweis Bisbee was born at 3:52 p.m. on May 19, 2013, at St. Joseph's Regional Medical Center in Lewiston, Idaho. Selin weighed 9.3 pounds and measured 21.5 inches long. Parents are Brett Bisbee and Ayisha Williams of Lapwai, Idaho; siblings are Kendrick and DJ Wheeler of Lapwai; maternal grandparents are Joanne Bohanan of Vancouver, Wash., and Harold Williams of Shiprock, N.M.; maternal great-grandparents are Newton Bohanan Sr. of Kamiah, Idaho, and the late Marian Bohanan; and paternal grandparents are Shirley and Norman Bisbee of Lapwai.






**Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline**  
**1 800 QUIT NOW**  
784-8668 OKhelpline.com

### CNHSA Women's Health News

A recent project proposal submitted by the Choctaw Nation Health Services for the Breastfeeding Support funding opportunity through the Office on Women's Health has been approved.

The project will allow staff caring for pregnant women and newborns at Choctaw Nation Health Care Center the opportunity to complete “Breastfeeding: A Continuing Education Program for Health Care Providers”. This program, offered by Rising Star Education, Incorporated, is designed for nurses, physicians, dietitians, lactation consultants, and others who assist mothers to have a successful breastfeeding experience. Amber Arnold, RN and Leslie King, RN of Choctaw Nation Health Care Center are trainers assisting staff to complete the program. Up to 21.5 hours of continuing education credit will be earned by each participant.



**Choctaw Nation Health Services**  
*Women's Health*  
(800) 349-7026 Ext. 6368

One Choctaw Way | Talihina, OK 74571 | [www.cnhsa.com](http://www.cnhsa.com)

"Funding for this activity was made possible in part by the HHS, Office on Women's Health. The views expressed in written materials or publications and by speakers and moderators at HHS-sponsored conferences, do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services; nor does the mention of trade names, commercial practices or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government."



# NOTES TO THE NATION

# EVENTS

## Seeking family members

I am trying to connect with living family members of the King family line, specifically from my great-great-grandfather.

If you have any information on the following, please contact me: Anderson King, one of his sons; McGee King, whose wife was Demmie Skinner King; Silas King, Adaline King Jones and her daughters, Dora and Julia; James Madison King, brother to Anderson King, born 1812 in Choctaw Nation, Miss., died around December 1837 in San Bois County, Indian Territory, who married Mitilda; Hiram King, born July 3, 1813, in Choctaw Nation, Miss., died Jan. 17, 1884, in Midway, Carroll County, Miss.; Tecumseh King, born around 1834, died after 1875; Mary King, born 1807 in Leake County, Miss., died in Oklahoma; and children of Tecumseh, Amy King (born 1850), William King (born 1851) and Hampton King (born 1853).

I have a big family. I was born in California, and my grandfather, Roy Ivy King, moved here. If you have any information, please email me at [kenearlking@charter.net](mailto:kenearlking@charter.net).

Ken Earl King

## Seeking relatives

We are seeking information on relatives of the following: Charles Moran and Elisabeth Burkholts Moran, Daniel Savannah Moran and Willie Agnes Melton, and Emit Bartley Moran and Allie May Martin. If you have any information, please email us at [csmoran@msn.com](mailto:csmoran@msn.com).

Curt and Suzi Moran

## Looking for friends' information

Bill and Star Weddle are trying to locate Ed and Doris Postoak. The last known address for the Postoaks was in Ada. If you have any information on the Postoaks, please contact Bill and/or Star at 512-718-4538 or 806 Jefferson St. Bastrop, Texas 78602.



## Cards for Soldiers project

I would like for the people to be aware of our Cards for Soldiers project in my area. I lead a group of ladies making new cards from used cards every Monday. We send "thank you for serving our great country" messages to soldiers. We meet at Meadowood Baptist Church located at 2816 N. Woodcrest Dr. in Midwest City, right across from the YMCA on Reno. Pictured are some Cards for Soldiers participants, Kathy Meyer, Dolores Davis, Jolane Gardner (project leader) and Jo Ann Johnson.

If you want to have a fun time, or just want a soldier you know to receive a card, we would love to hear from you. Feel free to contact me for more information at 6009 Saddleback Dr. Oklahoma City, OK 73150-6126 or call at 405-736-1244 or 405-476-1244.

Jolane Gardner

## Seeking language teacher and thank you

My name is Aaron Williams and I am from Albuquerque, N.M. I was hoping to find a person in the Albuquerque area who is fluent in the Choctaw language and who is willing to teach classes. If you are interested, please contact me at 505-385-8124.

Also, I just finished Security Officer Training. I want to thank Chief Pyle and the Nation for giving me a chance to start another career move. Bettye in Career Development was very helpful in making all of this come true. Also, Karen S. helped me getting started. They are truly assets. Thank you again, Chief Pyle.

## Keaton thanks the Choctaw Nation

I would like to thank the Choctaw Nation, specifically the Scholarship Advisement Program and Higher Education department for all the support they have given me over the last four years. I was able to graduate with honors and obtain a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, Management Information Systems, with a minor in Healthcare Informatics from the University of Tulsa. If it weren't for the support of the Nation, the opportunities I am faced with today would have been nonexistent. Again, I would like to express my gratitude for all the support I have received, as I wouldn't be here today without the encouragement and assistance from the Choctaw Nation.



Keaton Watts

## Looking for family

I am looking for my husband's great-grandfather, Jacob Moore's, family. He married Elizabeth or Lizzie Vandeventer in 1885 in Linn, Okla. He died about 1895 and is buried in Lehigh, Okla. They had two sons, John R. and Thomas Greer (my husband's grandfather) Moore. Her second husband was Henry H. Young. John and Thomas are members of the Choctaw Nation by blood.

If you have information on the family, please email me at [wildcatcreek04@att.net](mailto:wildcatcreek04@att.net) or call me at 918-341-8976. Thank you.

Paula Barchenger

## Thank you for support in education

I would like to thank the Choctaw Nation for continued support in the form of the Choctaw scholarship for Higher Education these last four years. I recently graduated Cum Laude from Rice University in Houston, Texas, with a B.A. in history. During my time at Rice, I had many opportunities, including leading community service trips to South Dakota and Austin, serving as the president of the Rice Native American Student Association, studying abroad in Spain, and teaching English in Ecuador. I loved my time at Rice, and I am now preparing to start my next chapter on full scholarship at the University of Texas School of Law.

I am the granddaughter of Charles McClure of Dallas, Texas, and the great-granddaughter of the late original enrollee, Ruby Marx McClure. Again, I would like to thank the Choctaw Nation and my grandfather, Charles (pictured), for their help and support in my education.



Michelle Synhorst

## Meely family reunion

The Meely family reunion will be held July 13 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at 401 E. Oklahoma Ave. in Sulphur. Bring your favorite dish with a recipe, cameras and pictures to share. In memory of our loved one who started our reunions, Rosemary, we would like to have a moment to remember her through joy, laughter and tears.

For more information, contact George at 405-694-883, Donna at 580-993-0085, Butch at 405-735-6286 or Lavella at 405-485-3654.

## Livingston Buck/Angeline (Mitchell) White reunion

The Livingston Buck and Angeline (Mitchell) White reunion will be held June 29 at the Summerfield Community Center between the hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Everyone, please bring a covered dish, dessert and/or drinks. Also, bring your genealogy and pictures to compare and share information.

For more information, contact Kim White Robertson at 918-647-3598 or Tracie Cox at 918-677-2235.

## Going family reunion

The Going family reunion will be held at the gymnasium at Jones Academy in Hartshorne on June 15 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. There will be a potluck lunch, everyone is asked to please bring your favorite dish.

For more information, call Sherry at 918-917-0806.

## Birthday singing for Sinaklin

Everyone is invited to attend Sinaklin Forbit's 83rd birthday singing on July 6 at the Choctaw Nation Family Investment Center in Broken Bow, supper at 5 p.m. and singing at 6:30 p.m. Henry Battiest will serve as emcee. Gigi and Randy Burgess of Princeton, Texas, will perform. For more information, contact Charles Forbit at 972-603-8438.

## Nail/Henington reunion

The late Dock Nail and the late Lewis Henington family reunion will be held July 6-13 at Cardinal Point. Everyone is invited to come out and camp or just visit. For more information, call Lillie Nail Henington at 918-429-3382, Benjam Henington at 918-470-5885 or Pat Henington at 918-470-3997.

## Carnes/Pistubbee/Bully/Bacon reunion

A family get-together for the descendents and relatives of Allen Carnes, Elizabeth Cole Pistubbee, all Bullys, and Silas Bacon, who was married to Sophia Jones Jr., will be held Aug. 17, starting at 10 a.m. at the Choctaw Nation community center, located at 2750 Big Lots Parkway off of South 9th St. in Durant. Bring a covered meat, vegetable or dessert dish; dinner will be served in the late afternoon. Also bring a camera and a notebook in which to write.

Please RSVP to 580-380-1408, and leave a message if no one answers, or email at [chahta.siah@yahoo.com](mailto:chahta.siah@yahoo.com).

## A thank you and congratulations

I would like to thank the Choctaw Nation for helping my family out with financial aid through the Higher Education department. We always brag that our tribe does the right things with its money. Thanks again.

I would also like to congratulate my daughter, Kelsey Hoklotubbe (pictured), who graduated from UCLA in just three years, having gotten accepted to Pepperdine for her master's degree/the teaching credential program. Kelsey did great work along with plugging into the UCLA scene. She led many campus crusade programs along with a heavy school schedule.



Tom Hoklotubbe

**Gregory E. Pyle**  
*Chief*

**Gary Batton**  
*Assistant Chief*

The Official  
Monthly Publication  
of the  
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

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**Lisa Reed, Director/Editor**  
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If you are receiving more than one BISKINIK at your home or if your address needs changed, we would appreciate hearing from you.

The BISKINIK is a nonprofit publication of the Choctaw Nation.

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

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

BISKINIK 2013

# Choctaw Nation Vocational Rehabilitation Calendar

	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
J U L Y		1 Durant 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. <small>Canada Day</small>	2	3 Broken Bow 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Idabel by appt.	4 <small>Independence Day</small>	5	6
	7	8 Durant 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.	9 Antlers by appt.	10 Talihina 10 a.m.-2 p.m.	11	12 Broken Bow 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Idabel by appt.	13
	14	15 Durant 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.	16	17 McAlester 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Stigler by appt.	18	19 Wright City by appt.	20
	21	22 Durant 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.	23 Crowder by appt.	24 Poteau 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.	25	26 Atoka by appt. Coalgate by appt.	27
2 0 1 3	28	29	30 Wilburton 10:30 a.m.-2 p.m.	31			

**Durant - Mon., Wed. and Fri.; Broken Bow - Mon., Wed. and Fri.; Idabel by appt.**  
**Phone: 580-326-8304; Fax: 580-326-2410 Email: [ddavenport@choctawnation.com](mailto:ddavenport@choctawnation.com)**



# PEOPLE YOU KNOW

## Kinley turns 1

Kinley Ludlow of LeFlore turned 1 year old on June 3. She celebrated her big day with family and friends. Happy birthday, Kinley Taloa, from Momma.



## Tamaka recognized and honored

Congratulations to Robert Tamaka Bailey for being honored as one of three finalists for the Asian Pacific American Heritage Lifetime Achievement Award and receiving recognition from the California State Assembly. Tamaka is the son of Dorothy Durant.



Sisters Betty Brown, left, and Karen Hamilton, both of Fort Worth, visited the tribal complex in Durant on May 15 to present Chief Pyle with a brass key fob adorned with the Seal of the Choctaw Nation. The key fob was handmade by their brother, Ronnie Gibbons of Amarillo.

## Choctaw artist's work featured

Congratulations to Choctaw artist Charles Pierce of Idabel, whose work was recently featured in Western Art Collector magazine. Charles is a member of the Paseo Arts Association. He began drawing and painting in high school, and since then has progressed to abstract painting and photography, allowing him a freedom of expression that he once dreamed of as a boy while watching the red-tailed hawks soar overhead on warm summer days. It is hard to separate the artist from the land, which comes through in his color palette. Ranging from vibrant sunrises to deep shadows, Charles' deliberate use of color is evocative of traditional Choctaw art. His photographs reflect the beauty of the land as well, capturing the preciousness of everyday sights. Charles will be opening a studio in Haworth this December.

## Happy birthday, Ella

Ella Elizabeth White turned 1 year old on March 26. She celebrated her birthday with a ladybug theme. Ella is the daughter of Will and Ileah White of McAlester. Her maternal grandparents are Charles and Vanessa Frazier Allen of Tannehill. Her paternal grandparents are Roger White of McAlester and Laurie Kirkpatrick Brown and Jason Brown of Arpelar. Her maternal great-grandparents are the late Rev. Edmond Frazier Sr. and the late Ella Mae Frazier. Her family would like to wish her a very happy birthday.



## Lloyd turns "94 years young"

Happy birthday to Lloyd B. Morris, who was born May 5, 1919, in Haworth to Gilbert A. Morris Sr. (original enrollee) and Deedia Morris (Blankinship). At the age of 12, Lloyd went to Chiloco Indian School and worked at the poultry department raising turkeys for the school. In 1934, he won the National Championship at the International Poultry Show in Chicago with his entrance of black minorca eggs. He was in the aggie club, the 4H club and band and orchestra. He graduated in 1936. In 1937, Lloyd joined the 18th field artillery in the Army at Fort Sill. He was expert gunner on howitzers. He also won the battalion boxing championship at 147 pounds. He received honorable discharge after three years, and in 1942, he returned to the Army in the same unit, where he went overseas. Early in 1944, they landed in Wales after training in Gordon, Ga., went to England then to France. Thirty days after D-Day, he went through Hedge Rows. His unit was attached to the third armored spearhead division 7th corp. to Belgium, the artillery was being used night and day. After reaching Germany, they were detached from the third and assigned elsewhere. Later, they came to the Battle of the Bulge. After World War II, Lloyd received five battle stars and other medals, but the best was his discharge medal. He then went back to Oklahoma, but there were no jobs, so he went to California. He was working at DiGiorgio Ranch when he met his late wife, Margie. She was from Oklahoma also. After the ranch, Lloyd went on to work for the Southern Pacific Railroad then the post office, working full-time for the government. He retired when he was 60 years old, and he and Margie came to Oklahoma in 1979. Lloyd is now a great-great-grandpa. He is 94 years old and says he is going to make it to 104.



## Happy birthday, Bill

William "Bill" King, World War II veteran, turned 90 years old on April 11. He was given a surprise birthday party. Also, he and his wife, Dorothy, renewed their wedding vows; they have been married for 55 years. Those attending the party were: William and Dorothy King, Richard and Becky King, Shane King, Amber and Jase Graynor, Tyler and Jordan Parson, Newman and Chewelah Fry, Joshua, Bailey, Elizabeth Fry, Latilda Harrison, Brent Fry, Lindsay Hackler, Christa Fry, Shelton Fry, Mason and Sammy Smith, Joe and Pam Perry, Laney Farmer, Harold and Betty Perry, Elizabeth, Brock and Brille Burnett, Wayne Perry, Jim and Nelda Steidley, J.R. Steidley, Tammy and Tye Turney, Jerry Nave, Needham and Asa Williamson. Pictured are Richard King, William and Dorothy King, Chewelah Fry and Joe Perry as William and Dorothy renew their wedding vows.

## Happy birthday, Melissa

Choctaw elder Melissa Bohanan's family would like to wish her a very happy 80th birthday on June 2. Melissa has 135 grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren. She was able to spend her birthday doing something she loves: fishing. Happy birthday, Melissa!



## Happy birthday, Lois

Happy 95th birthday to Lois Brown on June 28. Lois is an alumni student of Wheelock Academy and is proud to be Choctaw. Her family and friends wish her a happy birthday.



## Happy birthday, Lynda

Happy birthday to Lynda Kay Sawyer, who turns 60 on June 20. Her family would like to share that God has opened doors for her to pursue filmmaking once again, and they are proud she's not slowing down in life, but speeding up. This spring, Lynda produced a promotional video for the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian Artist Leadership Program. It can be viewed at: vimeo.com/RockHavenProductions. When she was a young girl, her daddy told her to be proud that she was an Indian. She's shown her children and grandchildren what it means to be a proud member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and is now working to preserve her ancestors' story through film. She is the granddaughter of original enrollee Willie Odell. Her family says she is a strong part of their lives yesterday, today and forever. Happy birthday, Mama, from Doug, Clint, Jon, Sarah and all your grand-babies and grand-dogs.



## Lady Dragons take second place

Congratulations to the HFV Wilson Lady Dragons sixth-grade select basketball team, who participated in a Prime Time Sports Tournament held in the Lewisville/Lake Dallas, Texas, area and took home a second-place finish in their first tournament as a team.

## Happy birthday, Serenity

Happy birthday to Serenity Raelyn Tiger Stamps, who turned 1 year old on April 2. She is the daughter of Sherry and Terry and the granddaughter of Faye and the late Jimmie James Tiger. Serenity celebrated her birthday with her family, grandmother, aunt, cousins and a few friends at the park.



## Happy birthday, Pope

Happy birthday to O.P. "Pope" Proctor Jr., who turns 92 on Aug. 2. He is the son of original enrollee Nora Fidelia Turner and grandson of original enrollee Robert F. Turner. Pope was born on a family farm near Indianola and went to school in Indianola and McAlester, graduated from the University of Oklahoma and was a lieutenant in the Navy during World War II and the Korean War. He currently resides in Bartlesville and enjoys playing golf and volunteering at the local food bank.



## Friends place in state tourney

Pictured are Caleb Richter and Levi Coleman with their third-place double medals won in the state tennis tournament recently in Oklahoma City. Caleb is a junior at Piedmont High School and is the son of Ken Richter of Piedmont. Levi is a freshman at Piedmont High School and is the son of Brad and Robie Coleman of Piedmont and the grandson of Mary Ann Childers of Idabel, Bob and Janis Coleman of Yukon, Jerry and Charlene Ezell of Tishomingo and the late Robert Thomas. Congratulations, guys!



## Choctaw Language and Culture Class

The Introduction to Choctaw Language and Culture Class finished its semester on May 10, earning each student a certificate of completion. The 16-week class focuses on sounds, vocabulary, greetings and beginning word order of the Choctaw language and how it ties into the culture of the people. The class was taught by instructors from the Choctaw School of Language and was facilitated by Choctaw U, which allowed students to earn a university credit hour if they elected to do so. The next class will begin in August in correspondence with the fall semester and will be available for employees of the Choctaw Nation. If you would like to know more about being a part of the class, please contact Choctaw U at jhedrick@choctawnation.com. For more information, on the language of the Choctaw Nation, visit choctawschool.com. Pictured in the Durant class (right) is Jim Parrish, director of the Choctaw School of Language; Teresa and Curtis Billy, Choctaw Language and Culture Class instructors; Susan Cockrill, Destiny Sullens, Linda Cook, Kathy Springfield, Whitney Malott, Melissa Kindred, Carolyn Cross, Warren Choate, Jerry Tonubbee, Wanda Vanderveen, Tricia Keyes and Shawn Young. Pictured in the Hugo class (left) is Kenneth Winship, Jennifer Davidson, Tim Holt, Darcy Wall, Jana Boykin, Darryl Brown, Paul Roberts and instructor Dora Wickson. Not pictured are Brittney Jackson, Brandi Sigler and Brandi Smallwood.



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**HCR 74 Box 102-5**  
**Hartshorne, OK 74547**



# EDUCATION

## State Regents recognize Eastern Oklahoma State College and Choctaw Nation Health Center partnership

*Submitted report*

Eastern Oklahoma State College was among 27 businesses and higher education partnerships throughout the state recognized for innovative collaborations that strengthen Oklahoma's workforce.

The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education's Economic Development Grant for the Regents Business Partnership Excellence Award is designed to highlight successful partnerships between higher education institutions and businesses and to further cultivate the higher learning environment through State Regents' Economic Development Grants.

Institutions involved in these partnerships provide \$500

for tuition waivers to employees of the partnering businesses; internships for current students of the institutions to work at the partnering businesses; faculty externships with the partnering businesses; and/or enhancement of the partnerships with additional equipment, materials or supplies. The State Regents provide a \$500 match to the tuition waivers.

"These successful partnerships link real-world business experiences to the higher education process," said Chancellor Glen D. Johnson. "One of the key benefits from these partnerships is the results-driving solutions generated to resolve business problems."

This year, EOSC partnered with the Choctaw Nation Health Center. The Choctaw Nation Health Center has a

long-standing partnership with EOSC in training health care workers in southeastern Oklahoma. Health center employees have attended and facilitated student learning in a simulated learning environment at the EOSC nursing skills lab. Students also utilize equipment within the hospital setting at the health center.

The work students do within the cardiac simulation lab provides them with a better understanding of trauma care equipment. In addition, this partnership is invaluable in providing funding to students in EOSC's nursing program through scholarships and grants. Many graduates have also obtained gainful employment with the Choctaw Nation health care services upon passing the National Council Licensure Examination.

## Haileyville High School Choctaw language program earns awards

The Haileyville High School Choctaw language program is proud to announce its book placing at the Oklahoma Native Youth Language Fair. Both Choctaw I and II placed in the book category; both were written in the Choctaw language. The Choctaw class wrote and illustrated a book of nursery rhymes, such as "Three Blind Mice," "Three Men in a Tub," and others. It received a green honorable mention ribbon. The Choctaw II class wrote and illustrated, "The Unusual Friends." It was about a snake with stripes, a human foot, and an ugly, stubby horse. It ends tragically with a moral to the story. This book placed first. Louise Mitchell (Ohoyo Sipokni) and Brian Weaver (Issi Chito) are proud of the achievements of the program. In the past four years, they've won two first place, one second place, two third place and an honorable mention in the book competition. Also, they want to acknowledge their esteemed teacher, Virginia Espinosa, a patient, wonderful teacher fluent in the language. It was her primary language as a child. They want to thank the Choctaw Nation for the opportunity to learn the language and culture. They look to the future to continue the program with success.

## Brooke receives full scholarships

Brooke Severson of Shawnee is a 2013 recipient of the Gates-Millennium Scholarship award. The award is given to 1,000 minority students annually for recognition of academic excellence. It is a scholarship good through graduation to be used at any college of her choice. This year, there were 54,000 applicants, so to be chosen was truly an honor.



Brooke is the daughter of Jon Severson of Norman and Cara Severson of Shawnee. She is the granddaughter of Lynn and Rita Hodges of Waxahachie, Texas, and great-granddaughter of Tom and Bertha Hodges of Yukon. Brooke's lineage as a Choctaw extends back as far as her great-great-grandfather, Cearil Vance, of the San Bois-Kinta area of Oklahoma, and transcends through the Hodges side of her family. San Bois is where Brooke's great-grandmother, Bertha, grew up. Brooke's godparents and great-uncle and aunt, Steve and Jackie Hodges, reside in Mandeville, La. She has chosen to attend Columbia University in the borough of Manhattan in New York City. She intends to pursue a career in medicine or pharmaceutical science.



## Amber graduates with master's

On May 11, Richard and Beckie Bronaugh were able to witness their daughter, Amber Nicole, graduate from Tarleton State University in Stephenville, Texas, with her master's in Educational Administration. Amber is a former graduate of Springtown High School.

## Ainsley inducted into NHS

Congratulations to Ainsley (Hamlin) Simpson, a freshman at Skyline High School. On May 7, she was inducted into the National Honors Society. She has worked hard for this honor, with a GPA of 4.5. Ainsley is the granddaughter of Deborah Simpson (Hamlin) and great-great-granddaughter of Frank B. Hamlin of New Mexico.



## Julia graduates

Julia Cathrine Martinez graduated Magna Cum Laude on May 11 from Hardin Simmons University in Abilene, Texas. Julia plans to pursue her master's degree in psychology in the fall. Her family is grateful to the Choctaw Nation for the scholarships provided to aid in the education of Julia, whose proud parents are Andy and Cathy Martinez.



## Victoria furthers her education

On May 3, Victoria (Hamlin) Lively graduated from the Honor's Program at the University of West Florida and was an active member of the Phi Sigma Sigma sorority. On May 4, she graduated from UWF, where she received her bachelor's, majoring in English Writing and Education. She also made the Dean's honor roll and graduated with honors. She plans to continue her education and get her master's degree. Victoria is the granddaughter of Deborah (Hamlin) Simpson.



## Youth to the Nation

The Youth Advisory Board has been a marvelous and gratifying experience for us. We love helping people, and we are excited about the prospect of lending a helping hand to our community. Through YAB, we were capable of providing that help to our society. It was a blast helping people, and we love doing it. We are thankful to YAB for making this possible. It will be hard to say goodbye to our fellow YAB members, our fearless leader and the sponsors who make YAB exist. We are grateful for YAB for provid-

## Chapter thankful for opportunities YAB has provided

By: Atoka Senior YAB, Atoka Chapter

ing us a way to reach out and help people within our town. We are excited that we managed to recruit some fresh faces for the upcoming year. It's awe-inspiring to see the younger generation take a stand. We are happy to see that our posters and talks with different kids have allowed the spread of our group. It's always refreshing to see somebody willing and eager to help out their community. Thank you, YAB, leaders and sponsors. We were lucky to be able to be a part of this exceptional group.



## JA fifth grade visits Eufaula dam

On May 2, Jones Academy fifth-grade students were able to journey north to Eufaula to tour the Eufaula hydroelectric power plant. The students got to go down inside the dam and see how electricity is produced. It was amazing to see and have a better understanding of how water pressure can turn a turbine that turns a shaft at 100 RPM and then turns a generator that causes electrons to move on down the line. We often turn on electrical devices, from lights to TVs, and the fifth-grade students now have a better understanding of where the energy comes from after such a tremendous field trip to the Eufaula dam.

After touring the dam, the Native American students got to view a wonderful arrowhead collection at the Eufaula Nature Center. The center had a variety of hands-on activities that the students enjoyed. The working beehive was an attraction that had the students talking about honey. Some students

enjoyed observing the mountain lion, buffalo and other stuffed animals. Students looked through binoculars and now better understand that these instruments can help enlarge organisms at far distances to help study their characteristics. The ladies at the nature center were very knowledgeable and showed the students a variety of turtle species. Fifth-grade students also got to see our state reptile, the collar lizard. Some enjoyed looking at the cold-blooded organism, the copperhead snake, which the students learned to identify by its copper color and markings.

Overall, the class had a fantastic day, having many questions answered. Lots of smiles on the students' faces made for an unforgettable day in fifth grade. It was really heartwarming to hear such great comments about the students behavior from the ones who gave tours and showed the class many interesting exhibits.

## JA fifth-grade field trip to Elm Point on Lake Eufaula

On May 10, the fifth-grade students at Jones Academy were able to take a fishing field trip to Elm Point, a part of Lake Eufaula. Prior to the trip, students took part in the fishing clinic held in the fifth-grade classroom at Jones Academy. The materials were provided by the Oklahoma State Department of Wildlife. Students learned about tying knots, fish identification, casting instruction, outdoor ethics, water safety, water pollution, fishing equipment, fish cleaning and fish cooking.

The students got their crappie fishing gear ready, which consisted of rods and reels, corks, hooks and minnows, and headed to the lake to catch fish. Kendra Wakolee (pictured) caught the biggest crappie, which made a few boys question their fishing skills. Darius Sewell caught the second biggest crappie, which put more fillets on the stringer.

Students were able to eat charcoaled hot dogs with chili, cheese and onions for an outdoor lake-side lunch. The students were generous to feed several elders at the lake that were fishing in the same fishing area. They had a great time at the lake and picked up around the area to make it better than when they came.

Later that day when returning to the Jones Academy campus, the students got to watch firsthand how to clean a fish and prepare it to eat. The kitchen staff was so kind as to get the cast iron skillet hot and ready for the fish after the students bettered the fillets. The fishing clinic did not teach how to eat the fish, but the students didn't seem to have any problem with that. Learning life skills, like fishing, is something that fifth grade does not take lightly.



## Jones Academy girls active in Hartshorne softball teams

The Hartshorne Lady Miners slow-pitch softball season has ended with a bang. Despite the fact that it was a rebuilding year and the team was young, their athleticism showed much promise. Their regular season record was 8-7 with an early finish in districts. Coach Jim Bert Curliss, however, saw a lot of potential for the next few years.

This year, the team was led by senior Jones Academy student Melissa Sam, who was selected as a Kiamichi Softball Girls All-Star by area coaches. Another starter was Caitlin Allen, who was a standout player both in defensive and offensive categories.

Students from Jones Academy playing for the Hartshorne High School Lady Miners this season were: Danielle Murillo, Caitlin Allen, Breanna Toledo, Tiffany Taylor, Darrienne Valdez, Kaitlin McCollum, Emily Cooper, Melissa Sam and Anika Antone. Acting as team managers were Amber Anderson, Keanna Watashe, Sunshine Hendricks and Shelly Williams. Playing for the Junior High Lady Miners were Taron Wise, Felicity LeFlore and Shelby Tushka.

Pictured above is Melissa Sam rounding third base and heading for home, scoring a home run for the Lady Miners.



# Language class celebrates a year of success

By **BRET MOSS**  
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

High school students from across the Choctaw Nation traveled to the Event Center in Durant on May 1 to attend the annual Language Finale, an event held to acknowledge the accomplishments of students enrolled in the Choctaw School of Language. The event was a fun gathering of students laced with cultural activities, presentations and words of encouragement.

Choctaw singer Brad Joe initiated the proceedings when he sang the Lord's Prayer, completely in the Choctaw language, as Miss Choctaw Nation Cheyenne Murray interpreted in sign language. The Coalgate Community Language Class then sang the National Anthem in Choctaw following the posting of the colors by the Choctaw Nation Color Guard.

Other presentations from students included a reading of Choctaw Hymn 48, "Prayer To The Holy Spirit," by a trio from Colbert High School, and an action skit of "Bigfoot Returns," presented by Broken Bow students. As they appeared on stage, all students spoke entirely in Choctaw, demonstrating their growing skills in the enduring language of their ancestors. "I appreciate everyone that made the event possible. The staff for their contribu-



Students from Broken Bow present the skit, "Big Foot Returns," while speaking completely in Choctaw.

tions, and the students for all of their hard work during the year," stated Director of Choctaw Language Department Jim Parrish.

Chief Greg Pyle, Assistant Chief Gary Batton and tribal council members were in attendance to display their support for the efforts of the Choctaw youth. Pyle and Batton addressed the audience, exhorting their appreciation for the efforts set forth by the students to learn the language of their people.

Parrish then recognized language teachers Eleanor Caldwell and Charles Hines for their services to the Choctaw language efforts by

presenting them each with a certificate of appreciation. "They have both been a great asset to the department and strong contributors to the spreading of the Choctaw language," stated Parrish.

Following the conclusion of the on stage presentations, Choctaw traditional dancers then took the attention of the crowd, first demonstrating dances and then involving the students in the act. During the Stealing Partners Dance, many members of the audience were "stolen," and encouraged to dance.

Pizza and drinks were provided proceeding the dancing, allowing students and

faculty to fellowship with other schools offering the Choctaw language courses. Door prizes were also given during the occasion, adding to the excitement of the day.

Currently, Choctaw language classes are available in 32 high schools with approximately 700 students enrolled. If you would like to know more about Choctaw language education, visit [choctawschool.com](http://choctawschool.com) or call 800.522.6170 x2250.



Coalgate Community language class sings the National Anthem following the posting of the colors.

Photos by **BRET MOSS** | Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma



A group from Colbert recites Choctaw Hymn 48, "Prayer to the Holy Spirit."



Charles Hines receives his certificate of appreciation from Jim Parrish.

## Program introduces youth to workforce

By **LARISSA COPELAND**  
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Since the 1960s, the Choctaw Nation has worked to provide employment and job training experiences to its younger generation by participating in the Tribal Youth and Supplemental Youth Work Experience Programs (formerly called Summer Youth Program). A component of the Workforce Investment Act, the Supplemental Youth Work Experience Program is a federally funded program, which is supplemented by tribal dollars for the Tribal Youth Program, that provides entry-level work for Native American teens between the ages of 14-21.

The programs are a win-win for both the youth participants and the employers who hire them. "This introduces the kids to the workforce," says Patty Mink, director over the programs, "and the employers are not out any money to take on them on because we pay their wages."

The teens participating in the programs are allowed to work up to 40 hours per week during the five-week summer programs at a job of their choosing.

"They job shadow at different businesses," says Mink, "and it can be any type of business, public, government, nonprofit – we let them choose. We try to get the kids to do something that they enjoy or that they think they may want to do later on in life and get a feel for it."

"If they feel they want to get into childcare then they could go to work at a day care for this time period and see if that's what they think they want to do," she continued. "Maybe if they are interested in cosmetology then they could work at a beauty shop, or they could try a clinic if they are thinking about the medical field. The list can go on and on. The kids pick their own places of employment."

This allows the teens to be exposed to a particular career field and get a feeling for what it entails. It also helps them to build a resume and work history, making them more competitive in the job market, which can be a confidence boost to the young workers.

The CNO kicked off the work programs on June 10 and it runs through July 12. The size of the programs has grown year to year, with approximately 1,700 workers participating this year, about a hundred more than in 2012.

To be involved in the programs the youth must have their tribal membership and/or CDIB card, live in the 10 1/2 county tribal area, and meet certain age and income requirements. For more information on the Tribal Youth or Supplemental Youth Work Experience Programs contact 800-522-6170. Applications for next year will be available from Jan. 1 until April 15.

The boys line up in front of the girls as the stealing partners dance begins. The guys will then "steal" a girl from the end of the line and have them as a partner.



Once the guys chose their partner, they take them to the middle of the circle and give them a twirl.



Eleanor Caldwell receives her certificate of appreciation from Jim Parrish and Hannah Bryan.

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GARY BATTON

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GREG PYLE

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Adolescent Family Life	Family Preservation	Outreach Services
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Community Outreach	Land Title and Records	Vocational Rehabilitation
Cultural Resources	Law Enforcement	Wheelock Museum/Gift Shop
Domestic Violence	LIHEAP (energy assistance)	Veterans Advocacy
Economic Development	Mail Order Pharmacy	Vocational Development
Educational Talent Search	Modular Housing	Women, Infants & Children
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## Choctaw Nation to aid with loans

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

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

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

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

Choctaw Nation Community Center in Stigler  
June 28 from 9:30-11 a.m. and 12-1:30 p.m.



# Choctaw Nation annual *Senior Day* celebration



Stigler elders waiting for the festivities to begin are Alice Stout, Willard Timmons, Lucille Timmons, Carol Johnson, Eugene Branan and Edith McMann.



Rick Plonter speaks with Chief Gregory E. Pyle.



Jerry McKinney of Smithville has his blood pressure checked.



Walter Amos and Lorene Blaine



Mary Watson and Carolyn Bohanan of Wright City wearing traditional dresses.



Assistant Chief Gary Batton with John A. Hoosier.

Photos by KAREN JACOB | Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma



Winners of the name tag contest are, from left, second place District 1, first place District 3 and third place District 9.



Above and below, Choctaw elders perform the Lord's Prayer in sign language.



Tying for first place in the singing contest is District 6.



Durant elders Phyllis Knight, Shirley Barboan and June Sidles are getting ready for the day.



Tying for first place in the singing contest is District 2.



Durant elders Phyllis Knight, Shirley Barboan and June Sidles are getting ready for the day.



Second place winners of the singing contest are District 1.



Proud winner of a beautiful fruit basket is Lucille Jameson with daughter Concetta Gragg, both from Crowder.

Helping distribute door prizes to Choctaw Elders at Senior Day 2013.



David Francis of Crowder received pamphlet information about health care from a Choctaw Nation Health Service employee.



Third place winners of the singing contest are District 9.



# Identifying ways to save energy

By LISA REED

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Too much light, or to clarify in most cases – too much *artificial light* when there is natural light available – is a waste.

The Choctaw Nation Utility Authority has the daunting task of identifying potential ways the Nation can save not only in its existing facilities, but is also brought in during planning phases for new construction and acquisitions.

“Choctaw Nation’s utility costs have been reduced by at least \$1 million annually,” said CNUA Director Nick Cody. And, in conservation language, that translates to reducing greenhouse gases by over 8,000,000 pounds of CO2, 18,150 pounds of SO2 and 11,200 pounds of NOX every year. Any way you say it, the CNAU is revitalizing the tribe’s stewardship of the land and its people.

Armed with light meters, Cody, Natural Resources Manager Chuck Tillman or Energy Manager Doug Wood can be seen measuring the amount of foot candles (a measure of light) in a given space.

“Almost every office building has too much light,” said Wood. Energy audits have been performed throughout the Choctaw Nation’s 10.5-county service area. Examples of what has been accomplished include – 950 light bulbs removed from headquarters buildings in order to reduce light levels to recommended foot candles; approximately 2,000 32-watt fluorescent lamps have been removed and 2,404 incandescent lamps have been retrofitted with compact fluorescent lamps at the resort in Durant. These measures alone

have saved over \$227,000 annually as well as reducing air conditioning costs.

Removing light bulbs is just one of the many ways CNUA helps to sustain resources.

“We focus on energy conservation,” said Cody. “One of our goals is to eliminate waste of electricity, gas, water and sanitation.”

Motion sensors have been installed in several buildings to prevent lights from staying on when not needed. Sewer charges have been negotiated for discounts. An energy audit of the Bethel Community Center pinpointed a problem with the ductwork and the need to replace an old air conditioner. In the past year, the field office’s electric bill was \$1,026 less.

“It can also be as simple as checking to make sure there isn’t anything blocking a vent and obstructing air flow,” said Cody.

The Utility Authority has become the centralized “go-to” source for the Choctaw Nation’s 689 utility accounts, the single point-of-contact for all utility companies in the area. Through ongoing and continuous oversight of utility usage, and by being engaged in the planning phases for new construction/acquisitions, CNUA will be positioned to proactively manage CN utility usage effectiveness.

CNUA researches utility rates, negotiates discounts and searches for rebates. They search for available grants and any opportunity to reduce usage and costs.

As they continue to monitor Choctaw



Choctaw Nation: LISA REED

**Performing energy audits** – Nick Cody, left, does a check on one of the complex gas meters. Doug Wood, center, uses a light meter to check the amount of light being put out in the Choctaw Nation offices. Chuck Tillman, right, checks the air conditioner units at the tribal complex.

Nation facilities, the team will follow up with a “Best Practices Guide” providing suggestions on utility efficiency for each building or group of offices’ specific needs.

Finding ways to lower consumption and conserve water is another area in which CNUA has moved forward. All of the casinos, hospitals and travel plazas utilize low flow faucets and toilets. Most architects and engineers specify these type of products now as a norm.

Increasing communication throughout the Choctaw Nation service area also helps raise awareness among employees and tribal members. Teaming up with other Choctaw Nation Departments such as the BISKINIK, Social Services and Community Health Representatives (CHRs) makes it easier to share conservation information and tips, educating on practices that can work at home as well.

The Choctaw Nation is a very large energy consumer in the southeast Oklahoma region and CNUA strives to ensure utility efficiency is maximized with minimum utility usage.

Data is collected on utility conservation that has been achieved and research is ongoing to identify and implement new cost-effective renewable energy projects.

Cody, Tillman and Wood have a base office at 207 Jim Monroe Rd. in Hugo. The three coordinate with Utility Authority Board Members Tracy Horst, T.R. Kanuch, Cecilia Armendariz, Duane Winship and Clay Julius and with the Choctaw Nation Construction Department, Facility Maintenance, Housing Authority, Go Green committee and Recycling Center.

“It is a team effort,” said Cody. “We are learning as much as we can through training and want to stay abreast of any new construction or rehabilitation of facilities.”

Plans for educational strategies are in the works for the upcoming Labor Day Festival at Tvshka Homma and to schedule presentations at community center dinners.

And there are days they will be back in the field – checking gas meters, air units and more light bulbs – the conservation agents protecting resources in any way they can.

# Jax lift spirits of overlooked tornado victims

McCurtain Sunday Gazette-News  
Reprinted with permission

Wright City’s baseball team spent the first day of the long Memorial Day weekend lending a hand to tornado victims.

Twelve of the Lumberjax accompanied head coach Kyle Butler and boys basketball coach Joel Dickerson for the trip. That group included the four seniors Devin Ward, Jeffery Hawkins, Wade Taylor and Dalton Darby, plus Colby Crosby, Austin Hibbs, Trevor Kirkes, Kendall Ward, Ethan Crosby, Wade Young, Brett Bohanan and Steven Knox. Bo Bohanan, father of Bret Bohanan, and a bus barn employee for Wright City, also made the journey.

That group of volunteers set out Friday morning with a trailer load of relief supplies, donated from various local organizations including the Wright City faculty, the community of Wright City, First Assembly of God of Broken Bow, 1st Baptist Church of Wright City and the 1st Baptist Church of Valliant. Some of those donated items included baby formula, diapers, toothpaste and toothbrushes, soap, deodorant, Gatorade, clothes, nonperishable food and “an unbelievable amount” of water.

On the way north, Dickerson and Butler learned by phone and listening to the radio that the city of Moore was overwhelmed with volunteers and victims.

“A FEMA rep was asking those wanting to help to please go to Little Axe or Shawnee,” said Dickerson. “Moore was just too busy and congested.”

So the Jax headed for the community about half an hour east of the metro area.

“When we arrived at the relief center the volunteers could not believe what we had brought,” said Dickerson. “They were even more impressed that an entire baseball team came to work and help out.”

The relief center and an old church next to it were almost entirely full of goods and donated items.

“But they said it would not take long to deplete their supplies. They needed baby formula, food, and daily essentials the most and

we had a lot of those items,” said Dickerson. Dickerson said the volunteers at the center were grateful.

“They continually thanked the team and took pictures,” he said. “They couldn’t believe how far we drove. We helped others unload items for awhile until it slowed down.”

Dickerson and Butler then asked if there was anything else they could do to help. They were told of an area close by that had been devastated by the tornado and specifically a lady who hadn’t received any help all week.

“They wanted us to not to clean debris but to try and recover any valuables such as rifles, family photos, checkbooks, jewelry – anything that is personal and cannot be replaced,” Dickerson said.

The Wright City players and coaches were led to that area and shocked by what they saw.

“When we drove over the top of a hill we looked down and you could see the exact path the tornado took,” said Dickerson.

The area was at the bottom of a hill and approximately a quarter of a mile wide by half a mile long. The trailers and framed houses, which once dotted that valley, were gone.

“To me it looked like a bomb went off because the only thing in the area was debris,” said Dickerson. “You couldn’t even tell where the homes had once stood. Cars and trucks were thrown and crushed.”

Twisted frames or trailer homes were left behind, the trees were stripped of their bark but their remaining branches were filled with debris like clothes and insulation.

“It was pretty breathtaking,” said Devin Ward. “It’s hard to explain, because it’s crazy to think of how a tornado can do that to houses.”

Dalton Darby, a senior outfielder, took a day off work from his construction job to lend a hand.

“The people we helped didn’t have any insurance on their house,” said Darby. “It was just a disaster. It was terrible. Probably one of the worst things I’ve ever seen.”

Darby said they came ready to clean up and stack debris, but were told that looking



Photo provided

**Wright City baseball players look for family mementos amid the destruction caused by a May 19 tornado east of Oklahoma City in the Little Axe area.**

for those family items was more important now.

“Just anything that they could keep,” he said.

“It’s spread for miles,” Darby added. “It’s going to take forever to clean all of that stuff up.”

“We worked for almost three hours not really finding a lot. It was like finding a needle in a haystack,” said Dickerson. “We found family photos, a checkbook, a letter written to a parent, military citation, watches, pieces of sterling silverware set, etc.”

A small creek ran behind the lady’s former home site.

“That creek was just filled with splintered wood and mobile home frames and everything,” said Ward. “I mean it was crazy.”

“Our kids worked hard,” Dickerson added. “I felt like we didn’t do a lot and wanted to do more. As we began to load up, those people who had lost their homes were very appreciative of our efforts. They thanked us over and over. It was a humbling experience.”

The tornado struck Little Axe and Shawnee on Sunday, one day before the mammoth

twister that leveled Moore.

“The residents expressed how they felt left out since the majority of the relief efforts were directed to Moore,” said Dickerson. “One man said, ‘At times it seemed like no one cared. Thank you and your team for spending your time to help.’”

Dickerson also worked volunteer efforts on the deadly tornado that hit Moore on May 3, 1999.

Ward, who is the grandson of former Lumberjax coach Mike Rice, moved to Wright City the summer before his eighth grade year. Before that, he lived in Moore and Norman. He, too, remembers the tornado of 1999.

“It went pretty close to our house,” said Ward. “I’ve been through many, many warnings. I’ve seen a lot of destruction.”

Ward was glad to be able to help this time.


“It was a good experience to get up there and help people like that,” he said. “It was good to be up there with the team.”

“Just keep those people up there in prayers,” said Darby. “They need it. There’s a lot of stuff tore up up there.”

## Another CAB program success!



Congratulations to Rhonda Young, owner of Rhonda’s Flowers! Rhonda recently completed CAB1 and used her CAB funds to open a flower and craft shop in the Idabel Market Center located at 710 NE Lincoln Rd in Idabel OK. Rhonda also sells crafts on consignment and is adding a wedding registry to her business. Rhonda has signed up to participate in CAB2 to help expand her business, and encourages other tribal members to take advantage of the CAB program. “I have been telling all of my family and friends about CAB. It is a wonderful program,” says Rhonda. Rhonda accepts flowers orders 24 hrs a day, 7 days a week. “I won’t turn down any floral orders. Customers can reach me 24/7 at 580-236-9130,” she says. Rhonda can also be reached during regular business hours at 580-286-5551.



### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED


**Looking for a way to be more involved?**

CNHCC is pleased to announce the hospital's new volunteer program. Volunteers will provide an immeasurable service by performing job duties specific to designated areas such as assisting patients and visitors with information.

*Applicants must be 18 years or older and meet certain requirements.*

**For more information:**  
JENNIFER L. GUNTER  
JGUNTER@CNHCC.ORG  
(580) 236-9130

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## Choctaw Nation Health Services Presents

# BOOM in The Valley

8th Annual

July 3, 2013  
Talihina, OK

**Fireworks, Entertainment & 5K Rockel Run**

**5:00pm - 9:00pm**  
Concessions  
Live Music by Straight Shot

**6:00pm - 6:00pm**  
5K Rockel Run Registration

**6:30pm**  
5K Rockel Run Begins

**7:00pm**  
Luksi' (Turtle) Races  
Fireworks begin at Dark

Bring your lawn chair or blanket. Alcoholic beverages are not permitted on hospital grounds. Parking permitted in designated areas only. Shuttles are available for designated off-site parking areas. For more information, please call (800) 340-7025 ext. 7131.



# OBITUARIES

## Patricia Butler

Patricia JoAnn (Nelson) Butler, 79, of Purcell, passed away on April 30, 2013. She was born on Jan. 12, 1934, to Ida (Anderson) Nelson and Simon Nelson in Durant. She attended Sunnyside School and Chilocco Indian School, graduating in 1952. She moved to the Bay area in California, working with Safeway Stores in the accounting department at the main office where she retired. She met and married her husband, Douglas, in October of 1967 in Sonora, Calif. They lived in Alameda, Calif., for 27 years before retiring and moving to Purcell in 1994. She was preceded in death by her parents; three brothers, Sam Jr., Solomon E. and John Henry; and six sisters, Florence, Pauline, Mildred, Margaret, LeyVonne and Wetanah.

She is survived by her husband, Douglas; sisters, Mary Jane with Al Fadely of Sonora, and Joyce with Bob Foraker of Maysville; along with numerous nieces and nephews. She loved them all dearly.



## Thomas Hopkins

Thomas Lee Hopkins Sr., 89, a Durant resident, passed away at his home with family at his side on May 12, 2013. He was born in Caney, on July 12, 1923, to Thomas Otto and Dora (Wade) Hopkins. Thomas married Jo Ann Patterson in Caney on May 1, 1946. They were married for 67 years and Jo Ann preceded him in death on Jan. 8, 2013. Thomas was a man who lovingly committed himself to caring for his family. He was a member of the First Baptist Church in Armstrong, and a World War II veteran. He had a long career of 35 years as a local mechanic. He enjoyed playing dominoes, watching the OU Sooners, Oklahoma City Thunder games and playing Solitaire. But most of all, Thomas loved his family and cherished their time together.

Mr. Hopkins was preceded in death by his wife; parents; five siblings; and great-granddaughter, Nila Polk.

Mr. Hopkins is survived by his children, Pamela Taylor with husband Mark of Denison, Texas, Alice Periman with husband David, Jo McDaniel with husband Shannon, Mark Hopkins with wife Lori, and Tom Hopkins Jr. with wife Judy, all of Durant, Vicky Hammons with husband Robert of Sherman, Texas, and Connie Palmer of Calera; grandchildren, Norma Belvin, Steve Hider with wife Kalyn, Victor Halk Jr. with wife Chantel, Sonya Cork with husband Jon, Wendy Spaugh, Kristi Hammons, David Spaugh, Dakota Hammons, Montana Hammons, Lisa Hoaglen, Misty Hammons, Kent Springer with wife Amanda, Collin McDaniel, Justin McDaniel, Doyle McDaniel, Keith Springer with wife Kellye, Jessica and Cole Palmer, Justin Hopkins with wife Autumn, Jonathan and Jaimison Hopkins, Brittany, Alexis and Christian Hopkins; great-grandchildren, Sadie Halk, Tristan Nichols, Brandon Sons, Eric Sons, Trenton Hider, Arial and Jonathan Cork, Clayton Don Simpson, Cody Hoaglen, Mason and Makila Hammons, Jackson, Lane and Olivia Springer, and Easley Hopkins; and great-great-grandchildren, Kashlynn and Wesley Sons.



## Emerson Willis Sr.

Emerson Benton Willis Sr., 70, of Temple, Texas, formerly of Wright City, passed away on May 27, 2013, at Scott and White Memorial Hospital in Temple. He was born March 24, 1943, in Talihina, the son of Dixon and Melba (Benton) Willis. Emerson graduated high school from Chilocco Indian Agriculture School in 1963 and joined the National Guard with the 45th Infantry during his Junior and Senior years there. He graduated from O.S.U. Tech School in Okmulgee with a Technical Degree in auto mechanics. Emerson was in the Army Reserves with the 95th Army Division and then he was attached to the “Hell On Wheels,” 2nd Armored Division. Later Sgt. Willis became attached to the famed 82nd Air Borne Division and instructed men in jump school training. After over 20 years, he retired with the honor of an E7 Staff Sergeant. Emerson loved the military and would have been serving today if possible. He enjoyed fishing and traveling. He was a member of St. John Presbyterian Church in Rufe.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Dixon James and Melba (Benton) Willis; brother-in-law Virgil Bohanan; sister-in-law Shirley Holt; and many other family members.

Emerson leaves to cherish his memory, wife Helen Willis of Temple; children, Sharolyn Flippo with husband Bob, and Denise Erwin with husband Brad, all of Kyle, Texas, Emerson Willis Jr. and Shelia Willis-Reeves, both of Temple, and Wendy Brown of El Dorado, Ark.; grandchildren, Elizabeth Willis, Aaron Flippo, Josh and Kirsten Watson, TJ Willis, Haven Ramirez, Nathan Trueblood, Josie Vasquez, Christopher Trueblood, Erika Flippo, Natasha Brown, Hope Reeves, Alexis, Willis, Shaden Willis, Ella Erwin, Reese Erwin and Avery Erwin; great-grandchildren, Mikayla Bird, Katilyn Maus and Kyleigh Willis, and Anthony Gonzales; siblings, Carolyn Bohanan of Wright City, Cleland Willis with wife Sue of Idabel, and Linda Harrison with husband Gary of Tulsa; numerous nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews and friends; and special caregivers, Loyce and Joyce Owens.



## Pamela Winship

Pamela Denise Winship passed away on March 3, 2013, in Fremont, Calif. She was born on Jan. 7, 1966, in Lawton. She was one month old when her parents moved to Mountain View, Calif. She was raised in Milpitas, Calif., with her three brothers. She was employed at New United Motors of Fremont for 15 years. She loved skating, dancing, softball, camping and going to the beach.

She was preceded in death by her father, Richard “Dickie” Winship; grandparents, Leroy and Sissie Jefferson Winship, who was an original enrollee from Broken Bow, and Charlie and Virginia Meely of Sulphur.

She is survived by longtime companion, Raymond Gougler of Fremont; four children, Danielle Holmes, Dominic, Bryanna and Anthony Guesness of Mokena, Ill.; mother Ramona “Shirley” Macias of St. Charles, Md.; brothers, Richard of Irving, Texas, Grant of Sunset Hills, Mo., and Charlie of Milpitas; nephew Anthony; and many other family members and friends.



## Jami Jacob

Jami Jacob, 34, of Valliant, formerly of Broken Bow, passed away on May 7, 2013, at the University Arkansas Medical Center in Little Rock, Ark. She was born Oct. 27, 1978, in Fort Smith, Ark., the daughter of Benny C. Davis and Janet Kay Jacob. Jami lived in this area most of her life. She was affiliated with Good News Fellowship in Broken Bow. She worked as a shift-leader for Tommy and Julie Dorries at the Sonic Drive-In in Valliant. She liked to go to the lake, grill food, read mystery books, cook, drive back roads and listen to music. She also enjoyed spending time with family, friends and doing her hair and make-up.

She was preceded in death by grandmothers, Ruth E. Harris Jacob and Joann Jacob; great-grandfather Simon Billy; uncles, Joe Harris, Ferrell (Bubba) Harris; and aunt Connie Harris.

Jami is survived by her father, Benny C. Davis of McAlester; mother Janet Kay Jacob of Broken Bow; son Sebastian R. Thurman of Hugo; daughter Haliagh R. Jacob of Wright City; brothers, Brent Jacob of Broken Bow, B.J. Davis with wife Lori of McAlester; sister Cynthia Jones with husband David of Ringold; maternal grandfather, Isaac Jacob of Valliant; paternal grandmother, Carolyn Davis of McAlester; great-grandmother Margaret Billy; aunts, Hettie Harris, Missy Davis, Cindy and Dave Halter; uncle Carl Jacob; cousins, Doobie, Kimberly, Kristen, Damien, Adrian, Jordan and Rain Water; special friends, Michael Ward, Jane Ward and Dannie Ward; and many friends.



## Billie Andrews

Billie Andrews, 82, a longtime resident of Bennington, passed away on April 24, 2013. He was born in Bennington to William Homer and Marie (Minyard) Andrews on Feb. 20, 1931. Billie married his true love Margie Knight in Bokchito on Feb. 20, 1953, and they were married for over 60 years. Billie was a member of the Pentecostal Church. He lived his life as a true cowboy. Billie was a part of the land he lived on, working his cattle and hunting. He enjoyed dancing and basketball. Billie always made time to attend his children's special events. He was proud of his large family and considered them his greatest blessing.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Bill and Marie Andrews; daughter-in-law Wanda Linn Andrews.

Mr. Andrews is survived by his wife, Margie of the home; sons, Mike Andrews with wife Sally, and Jim Andrews with wife Dannette, all of Bennington; daughter Vicki Andrews with husband Luke Taliaferro of Austin, Texas; grandchildren, Mitchell, Matthew and Macky Andrews all of Bennington, Cody Andrews of Fort Polk, La., Pam Whitten with husband Les of Paris, Texas, Kaci Lahpor with husband Jan Jaap of Plano, Texas, Kendra Clark of North Hollywood, Calif., Kara Browne with husband Brian of Round Rock, Texas, Dusty Coats with husband Chad of Atoka, and Cassandra Baugus with husband Jerry of Calera; great-grandchildren, Ashton, Marcus, Carter, Brady, Camryn, Carson, Hannah, Austin, Kylie, Hunter, Skylar, Trey, Lexi and Autumn; and special aunt, Letha Goad of Durant.



## Betty Bernal

Betty Ann Bernal passed away at 12:41 a.m. on May 20, 2013, at St. Francis Hospital in Tulsa. She was born on July 6, 1950, in Tulsa, to Troy and Patricia (Jones) Smith. Betty spent her working career as a home health care provider. She enjoyed watching movies, shopping and spending time with her family.

She was preceded in death by her brother, Gary Lee Smith. Betty is survived by sons, Michael Bernal with wife Brenda, and Jamie Bernal, all of Tulsa; grandchildren, Monica and Genesis; her parents of Bartlesville; and brother Terry Lynn Smith with wife Deborah of Skiatook.

## Shelley Hulin

Shelley R. Hulin, 52, passed away on May 12, 2013, in Oklahoma City. She was born on Sept. 15, 1960, in Denison, Texas, to Troy Murrel and Bobby June Hulin. She loved her previous jobs of working with kids and their families, playing the drums and keyboard, and teaching music at Rose State College. She composed many pieces of music and was interested in learning to play a variety of instruments. She was very proud of her Choctaw heritage.

She was preceded in death by her parents; maternal grandmother, Finnie R. Enochs and aunt Berniece Enochs.

She is survived by her life partner, Debbie Rogers; sister Niki Hulin Marler (and Camille Palmer); nephews, Michael Marler with wife Michelle of Pflugerville, Texas, and Jeremy Marler with wife Angela of Luther; niece Bobby Wiggins with husband Jason of Oklahoma City; two great nieces; three great nephews; many friends; and her “fur kids,” Kit and Madison.

## Dan Spring Sr.

Dan V. Spring Sr. passed away on Feb. 22, 2013, at his home in Jonesboro, La. He was born on May 22, 1924, in Paul's Valley, to Dewey and Roma Griffin Spring. He was a retired journeyman ironworker from Local 263, Arlington, Texas, and a World War II veteran who served as an airplane mechanic in the U.S. Army Air Corp in the European Theater. Throughout his retirement, Dan enjoyed hunting, fishing and gardening. Being the grandson of Joel Samuel and Winnie Gooding Spring of Hugo, the great-great-grandson of Basil LaFlore, and the great-great-great-grandson of Louis LaFleur of French Camp, Miss., he was extremely proud of his Choctaw heritage.

Dan was preceded in death by his wife, Nell Moore Spring; sons, Donald W. Spring and Ronald V. Spring; brothers, Albert L. Spring of Lewisville, Texas, and Joe D. Spring of Arlington, Texas; sister Melba Spring Parmenter of Amarillo, Texas; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Dan is survived by his daughter, Marsha Spring Kappus of Ball, La.; son Dan V. Spring Jr.; wife Rebekah of Alexandria, La.; daughter-in-law Kay Spring of Clay, La.; four grandchildren, Robert Kappus with wife Debbie of Bossier City, La., Jennifer Spring and Toby Spring of Shreveport, La., and Susan Bohanon with husband Jeff of North Richland Hills, Texas; three great-grandchildren, Robert W. Kappus and Daniel S. Kappus of Hillsborough, N.J., and Brooke Bohanon of North Richland Hills.



## Charles Folsom

Dr. Charles Tandy Folsom, MD passed away on May 1, 2013, at his home in San Benito, Texas. He was born in 1937, in Ringling to Rudolph Stanton and Helen Fischer Folsom. He was the grandson of Peter Ward and Diddie Aulds Folsom and the great grandson of Edward Washington and Elizabeth G. Mickle Folsom.

Dr. Folsom was a graduate of Southeastern State University in Durant and the University of Oklahoma School of Medicine in Oklahoma City. He began his medical career in 1970 in Harlingen, Texas, as a pathologist at Valley Baptist Hospital. He relocated to Gainesville, Texas, from 1978 – 1985, returning to Harlingen in 1986 as a general practice physician.

He was raised in Love County, where he won numerous 4H awards and rode bulls and broncos in local rodeos. He enjoyed fishing in the Red River and hunting in the woods of Love County with his grandfather, who also taught him the customs of his Choctaw ancestors. Dr. Folsom took great pride in his Choctaw heritage. One of his passions was playing guitar and making music along with his brothers and many cousins. After moving to Harlingen, he enjoyed fishing in the bay and spending time on South Padre Island. He enjoyed country, bluegrass, western swing, and big band music. After retiring from his medical practice, his main past time was playing guitar at the Harlingen Elks Lodge.

He was preceded in death by his parents and brothers, Terry and Jim Folsom.

He is survived by his wife, Olga Folsom of San Benito; son Haskell Folsom with wife Anna Cabrera Folsom of San Antonio, Texas; daughters, Diana Folsom Heath with husband David Heath of Austin, Texas, and Lisa Folsom Delacy with husband Ron Delacy of Columbia, Calif.; grandsons, Cyrus and Ott Smithson; granddaughters, Cristina, Pamela, Ashley, Tandy Lee Folsom, Ella Heath, Lily Delacy; sisters, Mona Bland and Peg Folsom of Lewisville, Texas, and Beverly Thomas of Krum, Texas; along with numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.

## Mary Marshall

Mary Lee Marshall, 85, an Atoka resident, passed away on May 19, 2013, in Atoka. She was born on Jan. 20, 1928, to Colbert and Emma (Jones) Lasley, in Seminole. She graduated from Limestone Gap High School in 1947, and became a teacher's aide at Harmony School District for many years. She married Gerald Dean Marshall on April 19, 1950, in DeQueen, Ark. Mary most recently attended New Zion Methodist Church and prior to that she attended Southside Baptist Church. She enjoyed Indian crafts. She was a very good artist and enjoyed painting scenery and southwest arts. Mary also loved going to the Choctaw Community Center every Wednesday.

She was preceded in death by her parents and her husband. She is survived by her sons, Gary Marshall with wife Cathy of Gordonville, Texas; and Larry Marshall with wife Debbie of Atoka; daughter Gayla Waller with husband Joe of Atoka; grandchildren, Stephanie Stephens, Mandi Marshall, Chris Waller and Waylon Wilson, all of Atoka, Morgan Marshall of Durant, Paige Taber with husband Russell of Stonewall, La., Corey Marshall of Gainesville, Texas, Eric Waller with wife Brittany of Krebs; great-granddaughters, Taylor Stephens, Tori Stephens, Tannah Stephens, Michelle Hampton and Addison Waller; great-grandsons, Marcus Hampton, Tyrus Stricklen, Mikey Marshall, Whitt Wilson, Lathan Tabor, Landon Tabor and Lawson Tabor; and great-great-granddaughters, Ava Stephens and Hadlee Pruett.



## Imogene Shoemate

Imogene Matilda Shoemate, 88, passed from this life to her heavenly reward on April 27, 2013, in Tulsa. She was a faithful servant of God, student of the Bible, sympathetic and giving to others in need, and beloved mother and confidant to her children. Imogene was born June 27, 1924, in Sardis, to Silas Perry and Vina Bell. Orphaned as a toddler, she and her sister and brother were taken and cared for by Elsie (Aunt Elsie) Anderson Norris Lavendar, who acted as mother and caretaker. Imogene received her high school degree from Goodland Indian School in Hugo. She gained employment at the Indian Health Clinic in Talihina for a time, later moving to Oklahoma City where she worked as a telephone operator. On June 19, 1946, she was united in marriage to Earnest Clyde Shoemate of Tusahoma. Initially the couple resided in Oklahoma City, welcoming their son Earnest, and daughter Verlyn into the family. Shortly after Verlyn's birth, the couple moved to Drumright, and resided there for about 18 years before moving to Seminole, where Earnest passed away in 1969. Imogene moved back to Drumright shortly afterward where she worked tirelessly in support of her children, seeing that they remained in school. During this time Imogene was employed at the McLellan Store. In 1971, Imogene was united in marriage to Dewey Horton in Drumright. They later settled near Terlton. During this time, Imogene worked as a manager of an E-Z Out Convenience store finally retiring in her late 60s after the stressful job. Imogene and Dewey later divorced, Imogene again taking the name Shoemate, but remained close friends helping one another from time to time throughout the rest of her life.

She pursued creative hobbies throughout her life such as dioramas, working with beads, paints and natural materials. She was an expert seamstress, often turning out objects of astonishing beauty and interest. A natural writer and expert in scriptures, she maintained many notebooks reflecting upon the scripture she read every night before bed and also left works detailing her thoughts and life history to be treasured. She loved worshiping, gospel and country music, and most of all she loved to laugh and smile and encourage her many friends.

Imogene was preceded in death by her parents early in life; husband Earnest Clyde Shoemate; infant son, Robert Wayne Shoemate in 1961; brother George W. Bell; and aunt Elsie Norris Lavender.

Imogene is survived by her children, Earnest Shoemate with wife Debra of Mannford, and Verlyn Griffin with husband Leon Griffin of Fort Worth, Texas; sister Edith Virla Bell Poe of Buena Vista, Ark.; four grandchildren, Matthew Wayne Shoemate with wife Shanna of Houston, Texas, Robert Earnest Shoemate with wife Christina of Austin, Texas, D.L. Griffin with wife Molly, and Aaron Griffin with wife Kelly of Fort Worth, Texas; six great-grandchildren, Ryan Shoemate, Madalyn Shoemate, Ashlyn Shoemate, Elizabeth Griffin, Cooper Griffin and Allie Griffin; close friend Dewey Horton of Terlton; and a host of other relatives and friends.







Brothers, 4-year-old Tomi King and Raben, 6, are having a blast at Outreach at the Beach at Sardis Lake.

# Outreach at the BEACH

May 24, 2013 ~ Sardis Lake



Cousins Raynie Tom, 6, and Audrina Tom, 2, have fun in the lake.



Whitney Grizzle and her mother, Terry, have fun at the playground.



Photos by LARISSA COPELAND | Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma



Ruthie Cannon watches as her nephew, 16-month-old Owen Gordon, steps out for a dip.



Elias Ramirez, 2, rides on the shoulders of his aunt, Catherine Sam.



Tommy Hames from the Voices for Survivors program in McAlester gives a towel to one of the children attending Outreach at the Beach.



Executive Director of Outreach Services Randy Hammons.



Right, the Mathis family – Tony, Rachel and 9-year-old Wicahpe – visit Oklahoma from Wagner, South Dakota.



Tomi Ludlow is excited about the giveaways at Outreach at the Beach, including those given to him by Lori Wells from the Making a Difference program.



Alex Rocha, 4, of Wilburton, climbs across the bridge on the playground.



Mika, 11, Teona, 9, and Kalin, 10, hit the beach at Sardis Lake.



Virginia Hammons has a great day at Sardis Lake.



Jason Campbell with the Choctaw STAR program hands out flashlights and information on the program to the kids.



Jason Wade and Paul Roberts help to make the day a success.

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Choctaw Outreach employees Crystal Beller, left, and Anna Hamilton work at the slushy machine at Outreach at the Beach.



Left, performers of the anti-drugs, pills and driving skit are, back row, Madelynn Dancer, 14, Seirra Herring, 13, Austin Zimmerman, 11, and Grace Womack, 7, and in front, Alissa Boren, 7, and Jordan Diaz, 7.



# Chahta Amptoba

## Choctaw Traditional Pottery (Part 1)

Culture is fluid by its very nature. It changes and adapts and is shared from one group of people to another. For many generations now, Choctaw people have found ourselves interacting with a much larger American society all around us. Traditional knowledge, language, history, and traditional culture are what allow Choctaw people to maintain a unique identity even while being a part of the larger non-Choctaw society. As the years go by, Choctaw elders pass away, and the parts of their knowledge that they have not passed down to the next generation, fade with them. This knowledge is often replaced by things borrowed from the dominant society around us. There is nothing wrong with living as other people do, however when all Choctaw knowledge is lost, the choice to live in a Choctaw way will be gone, too, and Choctaw identity itself will die. With the passing of elder after elder, it sometimes seems as though a total loss of all that is Choctaw might eventually become a reality. If it does, Choctaw descendants will lose a heritage, and the world will lose a unique way of living and being that is very important.

Fortunately, because of culture’s fluid nature, this doesn’t have to be a one-way street. Choctaw traditional culture is not something that can only be lost; it can also be revitalized, strengthened and created anew for the world we live in today. All of these are active processes that require effort. However, many Choctaw people actively work every day to support these things by passing on Choctaw language, wisdom, or whatever else they have to offer to the next generation.

For the next four months, Iti Fabvssa will focus on just one positive and current story about Choctaw people who are working and succeeding to revitalize an important part of Choctaw culture that was once nearly lost: traditional pottery. This month, will present a little bit about the importance of pottery in Choctaw culture. Next month will describe the materials and processes used to make the pottery. The following month will describe the firing process. The last month will showcase



Iti Fabussa



Figure 1: Bvnaha Bread cooking on the fire in a Choctaw clay pot.

today’s Choctaw traditional potters who are reviving this ancient art and helping Choctaw traditional culture to grow into the 21st century.

Traditional pottery is complex. The following is an account from oral history, as told by Dr. Kenneth York, of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, that explains how Choctaw people first learned the process for making it:

*A Choctaw basket weaver was experimenting one day in an attempt to make the baskets water proof. The artisan placed some wet clay inside one of the baskets and set it to dry. Another artisan came by and saw the mud in the basket and threw the basket with the wet clay into the hot fire. Obviously, the basket burned and turned into ashes, but the clay that apparently had taken the shape of a bowl had been fired by the hot coal and ashes. That is how the Choctaws learned how to make and fire pottery and pots (York 2012:108).*

Archaeological research tells us that in the

Choctaw homeland, an area that encompasses present day Mississippi, western Alabama, and northwestern Florida, the advent of pottery dates back 3,000 years. This means that Choctaw pottery has been shaped and developed by the hands of more than 100 generations of potters. Each of these generations contributed something new, changing and developing the tradition through time.

Choctaw traditional pottery is both a survival skill and an artform, but it has an inherent depth of meaning that goes beyond either of these by themselves. The basic raw material in the pottery is clay, or earth, which is considered a sacred entity in the traditional way of thinking. The potter shapes this earth with his or her own knowledge and skill to make a finished pottery vessel. This vessel then supports people’s lives life by cooking food, or whatever other tasks it has been made for. Of the many connections that traditional Choctaw people have with the land, pottery is perhaps the most direct.

Because of its malleability and adaptability, traditional pottery is an ideal medium for artistic expression. Many ancestral Choctaw potters went far beyond the bare essentials needed to make a utilitarian pot, creating a variety styles, forms, decorative designs, and colors. Some functional pots were made to look like animals or people; some had rattles built into them so that the pottery made noise when it was moved, and some were burnished so smooth that they looked like glass. Choctaw traditional pottery is a functional art.

One-thousand years ago, Choctaw people were using pottery for cooking, storing, and eating food, preparing medicines, dyes, and



Figure 2: A Choctaw human effigy bottle in the fire.

textiles; they used pottery as musical instruments and weapons, and for everything in between. Pottery was something that many of our ancestors literally talked over, laughed over, and tripped over nearly every day of their lives. It was used for so many things over such a long period of time that it became intertwined with nearly all aspects of Choctaw traditional culture.

From the perspective of today’s Choctaw potter, traditional pottery is an embodiment of sacred materials, traditional knowledge, traditional culture, Tribal history, community, identity, and artistic expression. It involves connections with family past, present, and future. Finished vessels are functional and often beautiful pieces, but they also represent all of the many other aspects of Choctaw traditional life, with which pottery intertwines. When Choctaw people revitalize pottery, they are strengthening all of these other aspect of Choctaw culture.



Figure 3: Grape dumplings in a Choctaw Trail of Tears-style eating bowl.

## Chahta Anumpa Aiikhvna

◆◆◆ Lesson of the Month ◆◆◆

### Aiitatoba ish ia chi ho?

*Pronounced:*  
Ah-it-ta-toh-ba ish e-yah chi(n) ho

Will you be going to the store?

*Word Meaning:*  
aiitatoba – store      ish – you  
ia – go, to go      a chi – future tense  
ho – question marker

### Chih kasha.

*Pronounced:*  
Chi(nh) ka(n) - sha  
Probably will.  
*Word Meaning:*  
chi – future tense, shortened from achi.  
kasha – probably, likely to happen

*The full meaning of this expression is:*  
Yohma chih kasha! – It will probably be so, in that manner.

#### Dialogue and Responses

### Tvmaha ish ia chi ho?

*Pronounced:*  
Tah-ma-ha ish e-ya che(n) ho(n)

Will you go to town?  
Are you going to town?

*Word Meaning:*  
ish - you      ia – go, to go  
(a) chi – future tense  
ho - question marker    tvmaha - town

### Keyuh kasha.

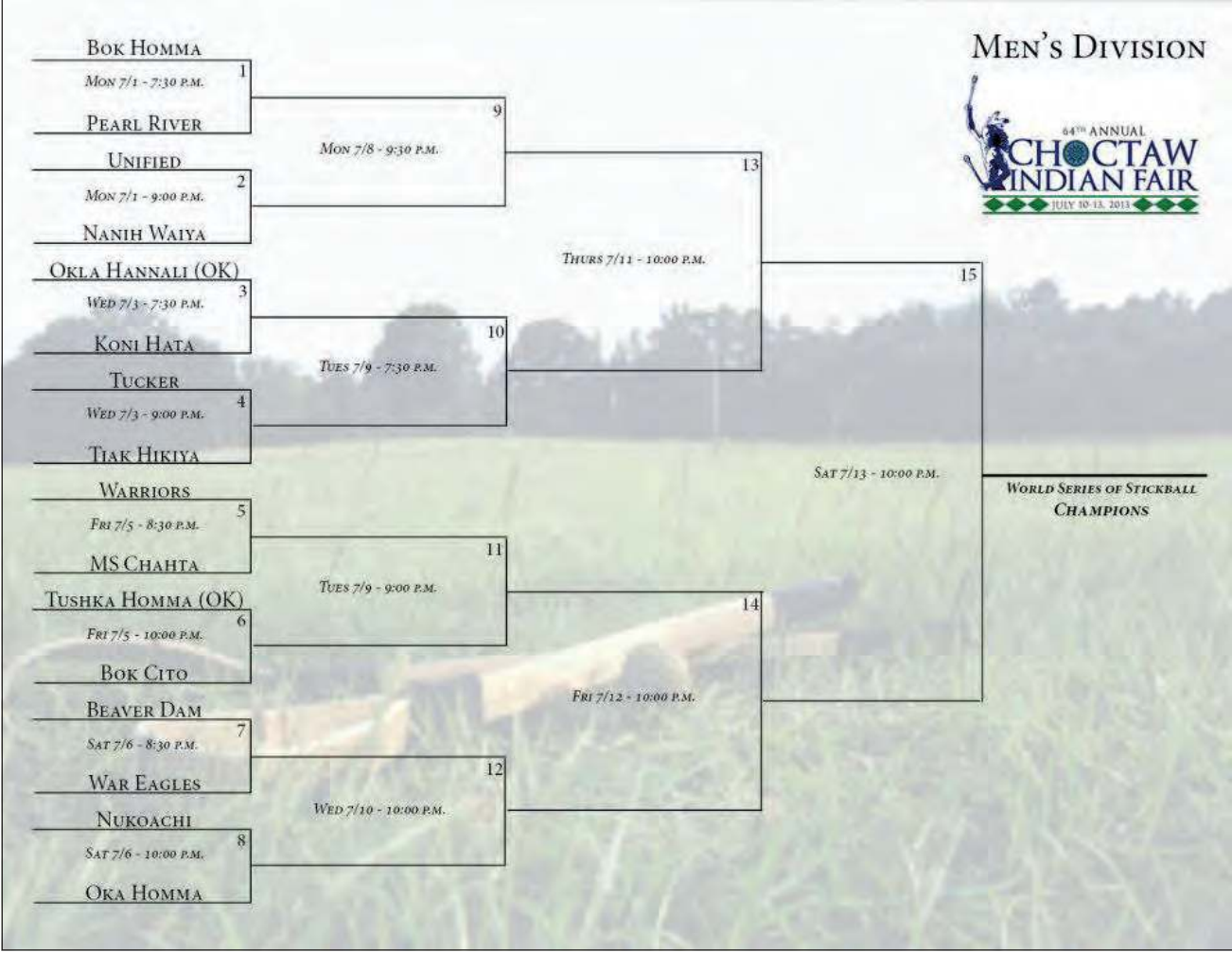
*Pronounced:*  
key-yoh ka(n) – sha  
Probably not.  
*Word meaning:*  
keyuh – not, no  
kasha – probably, likely to happen

## Pyle honored at IHCRC fundraiser

The Honorary Chair of the 2013 Dance of the Two Moons is Gregory E. Pyle, Chief of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Under Chief Pyle’s leadership, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma has become a leader in providing health, education and employment opportunities to its community. They have a strong commitment to our community and to the success of well-being of our children.

As with every year, the proceeds from the Dance of the Two Moons will help fund Indian Health Care’s pediatric services.

The monies raised at the Dance of the Two Moons will provide vital funding for IHCRC to continue to provide numerous pediatric services including: medical, dental, optometry, behavioral health, health education and wellness, x-ray and pharmacy. This past fiscal year, over 3,000 children made more than 10,100 health care visits to IHCRC’s pediatric health providers. Without the culturally appropriate health care provided by IHCRC, many of these children would not have a medical home.



## Preparing for stickball action

Team Tvshka Homma is preparing for World Series Stickball action in July. Tvshka Homma brought home the championship trophy from the Kullihoma Tournament May 18 and hasn’t slowed down since. They meet every weekend for team practices, carpooing to fields in Tvshka Homma, Wheelock, Broken Bow or Durant. Tvshka Homma’s men’s team is preparing to meet Bok Cito at 10 p.m. on July 5 in the 2013 World Series Stickball tournament in Choctaw, Miss. Hannali, another Oklahoma team, is scheduled to face Koni Hata at 7:30 p.m. on July 3.

For more information about the tournament or tournament brackets, log onto choctawindian-fair.com.



Photo provided

Tvshka Homma’s co-ed stickball team holds their championship trophy high. The players recently won first place in the annual Chikasha Stickball Tournament in Kullihoma. The team also placed second April 27 in the UKB Intertribal Stickball Tournament in Tahlequah.





Choctaw Nation: LARISSA COPELAND

# Adult Education Program honors its 2013 graduates

The Choctaw Nation Adult Education Department held a graduation ceremony on May 17 at Eastern Oklahoma State College in Wilburton to honor 106 graduates of the program. Oklahoma District 42 Representative Lisa Billy of District 42 delivered the keynote address and The Johnsons provided special music entertainment both before and during the ceremony.

The 2013 graduates are: Anthony Adams, Colton Alverson, Alisha Armenta, Jaqueline Armenta, Krista Baken, Destiny Baker, Michael Barcus, Blaine Batchelor, Samuel

Branscum, Khadjah Brook, Michael Burgess, Cherie Byington, Justin Carterby, Emily Clark, Tiffany Collins, Cheyenne Coon, John Cummins, Esther Dale, Waurika Day, Shannon Derryberry, Jeremiah Donathan, Ray Doyah, Josephine Drennon, Eliazbeth Duke, Robert Edwards, Caitlyn Ellis, Joshua Fowler, Levi Frazier, Noel Gardner, April Gilley, Regina Gauthier, Nishzoni Hammerick, Sara Hanebrink, Kenneth Haskins, Jacy Hawk, Chance Hensley, Brittany Hernandez, Brandon Herndon, Lisa Herrington, Adrian Hicks, Miranda Hicks, Sarah Hollan,

Stephanie Holt, Jeff Houston, Rynelle Hovis, Sondra Hutchinson, Courtney Ives, Danielle Jeney, Garry Johnson, Tryston Johnson, Kimberly Kelley, John Kelly, Krystal Kimbrough, Kristofer Kirksey, Anna Lafferty, Christa Lampkin, Kenneth Lewis, Dana Love, Tyler Lowery, Lyndon Lowman, Shyla Ludlow, Misty Manning, Kalan Maxwell, Tyler McKibben, Royalleen McKillip, Todd Merrifield, Tyler Miller, Holden Mitchell, Aaron Mize, Rhonda Montgomery, Charlie Morrison, Olivia Noahubi, Melody Patton, Alisha Picone, Paris Phippen, Tayler Ply,

Jamie Pugh-Gill, Jaqueline Reynolds, Cody Robinson, Devin Rongey, Teresa Ross, Virginia Savage, Alexander Scott, Kelsey Smith, Melissa Smith, Rhonda Smith, Amanda Smith, Cody Sockey, Conner Sparks, Desiree Stewart, Ryan Stillwell, Derek Stonebarger, James Stonebarger, Christopher Stricklin, Chrystal Terrazas, Jonathan Tucker, Shawn Vihreski, Kianah Vivier, Dylan Watson, Brittany Welch, Victoria White, Chris Wickson, Edward Wickson, Brandon Willeyby, Heather Williamson, Rachael Wilson, Matthew Wood, and Nathan Woodall.

## Choctaw Nation hosts fifth annual Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Tribes Summit of Southeastern Language Conference

By **CHRISSY SHEPARD**  
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

On May 22-23, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma hosted the fifth annual Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Tribes Summit of Southeastern Languages Conference, with approximately 70 representatives from nine different tribes in attendance.

Andrea Ramon served as this year's featured speaker. Ramon is from Sells, Ariz., and a member of the Tohono O'odham tribe. Her program she presented was entitled, "To Inspire, Empower and Expand through Language and Culture."

This is the second time the Choctaw Nation has hosted the event, the first time being in 2011.

The conference began Wednesday morning with the Choctaw Nation Color Guard posting the colors followed by Choctaw member Brad Joe singing the National Anthem in the Choctaw language. Rachel Wedlow of the Chickasaw Nation, president of the Inter-Tribal Language Committee, greeted attendees.

The 2013 Choctaw Nation princesses performed the Lord's Prayer in sign language, and Choctaw member Eveline Steele said a prayer in the Choctaw language.

Joy Culbreath, executive director of Education for the Choctaw Nation, expressed her gratefulness for the School of the Choctaw Language as well as the audience's presence at the Inter-Tribal Language Conference. "We are honored by your presence at the Nation today," she exclaimed, "thank you for coming."



Choctaw Nation: CHRISSY SHEPARD

**Executive Director of Education Joy Culbreath addresses the crowd and shares news of the Choctaw Nation at the language conference on May 22.**

Culbreath then mentioned Jim Parrish, director of the School of the Choctaw Language, and how he has helped shaped the program into what it is today. "Jim has

done so much to develop this program," she said.

Culbreath explained Jim's coming to the Choctaw Nation, telling the audience about how he served as superintendent for some schools in the Nation's area, therefore fully aware of the work in public schools.

"He is now helping us on a state level," she continued, "working with the State Department, on different committees, so that we may gain the footage that we need in that area, so we appreciate Jim and all that he does for the language program."

Culbreath then expressed to the attendees how important a language program is to a tribe. She said that when Chief Pyle was elected into office in 1997, one of the first things he told her was, "Let's build a language program. It's the most important thing we can do."

Culbreath said, "You know as well as I do, many tribes are losing their language. When you lose your language, you actually lose your tribe," because without

language, the tribe has nothing setting them apart from society, she explained.

"We need to preserve our stories... and we need them in the Choctaw language and in your language for you."

She continued talking about the recent

history of the Nation. "Many things have happened and many things have been developed, and there's still progress to be made," Culbreath stated. "During that time, we have worked diligently so that we may be able to teach in the public schools for credit, and that has happened."

Culbreath spoke of Choctaw language classes now being taught in public schools, universities, community classes and worldwide through online

courses. "We've worked with the State Department, all of our teachers are fully certified to teach in public schools, and they're certified to teach the Choctaw language; we're very proud of that."

She explained the significance of language for all people, not just designated for Choctaw members or Native Americans. "You don't have to be Choctaw, you don't have to be Native American, many people just have a love for language," Culbreath said.

"We want to share with you, and we hope you'll share with us," she said to the audience.

Culbreath also shared with attendees exciting news from the School of the Choctaw Language that is sure to expand the program: a new facility.

Constructed with funds from a grant, Culbreath said, the new building for the language program is designed with all new equipment that will help language instructors further educate their students to the best of their ability.

It includes 17 studios that will serve as the teachers' classrooms. "Up until now, most teachers had to sit down to teach distant learning, they can see their students, their students can see them, they can communicate," explained Culbreath. "Now, with this new equipment, they will be able to get up and move around in their classroom, and that will help the teacher."

Another benefit of the new facility, according to Culbreath, is all the instructors will be in one building together. "We've been scattered, and that's been difficult, but now they will be able to work in the same area together."

According to Parrish, the employees of the language program should be moved out of the previous facility and into the new building by the week of June 3. The instructors will be utilizing



Choctaw Nation: CHRISSY SHEPARD

**Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma royalty performs the Lord's Prayer in sign language for the audience at the conference.**

the new building in August when school starts.

The new facility is located at 3588 Tom Smith Rd. in Durant.

After Culbreath's warm welcome, Wedlow invited participants to sing hymns in their native language and share their culture with their fellow attendees.

Following several hymns being sung in various tribal languages, the crowd separated into group sessions followed by breakout sessions to learn about languages and cultures.

Sessions were led by groups such as the Sauk Language Program, Muscogee Nation, Cherokee Nation and the Coshatta Language Program and covered topics like the Euchee/Yuchi Language Project, classroom settings, incorporating culture, early childhood curriculum development, technology and immersion camp.

According to Parrish, this year's event was educational and successful. "The summit went really well," he said. "All of the breakout sessions were very informative."

If you'd like to learn more about the School of the Choctaw Language, visit [choctawschool.com](http://choctawschool.com).



**Councilman Ted Dosh congratulates the winners of the District 9 Choctaw Nation Princess Pageant, Junior Miss Kaleigh Powell and Little Miss Isabelle Cox. The young ladies will compete with princesses from the other 11 districts for reigning Junior Miss and Little Miss Choctaw Nation during a pageant Aug. 29 at the annual Labor Day Festival in Tvshka Homma.**



**Congratulations to the new District 10 Choctaw Nation royalty, Little Miss Maci Waggoner and Senior Miss K'Anna Billy, who are pictured with Councilman Anthony Dillard.**



**Pictured are the District 11 Choctaw Nation Princess Pageant winners with Councilman Bob Pate. Left to right are Little Miss Lauren Gale Nichols, Senior Miss Cherish Ann Wilkerson and Junior Miss Adrianna Byington.**



**Congratulations to the winners of the District 2 Choctaw Nation Princess Pageant: Little Miss Kylie Himes, Junior Miss Calen Brown and Senior Miss Gennavie Tom.**



# Inter-Tribal Council holds quarterly meeting

By **LISA REED**  
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

The Cherokee Nation hosted the quarterly meeting of the Inter-Tribal Council (ITC) of the Five Civilized Tribes, May 7-8, at the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Catoosa.

The Inter-Tribal Council is an organization that unites the tribal governments of the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Muscogee-Creek, and Seminole Nations. It represents more than 500,000 Indian people throughout the United States.

The first day was devoted to work group meetings during which representatives from all five tribes discussed current practices, issues, and changes, especially with the federal sequestration and how best to compensate for the budget cuts on several federal programs. Committees covered environmental protection, social services, child welfare, education, health, aging and elderly services, and housing.

Also on the agenda were meetings by membership, employment and training professionals, historic preservation, public relations,

communications, transportation and economic development experts.

The General Session began at 9 a.m. on May 8 in the hotel's convention center, with Cherokee Nation Chief Bill John Baker, ITC president, welcoming tribal leaders, program directors and managers, and tribal citizens.

"It is heartwarming to see so many who care so much and are so passionate about Indian country and helping their people. You have embraced this Inter-Tribal Council to come together to share ideas, bring things to the table and take things back with you," said Chief Baker.

Resolutions were approved during the session to:

- Establish a Standing Indian Child Welfare Committee
- Provide support for including the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex as eligible areas for the HUD-184 Home Mortgage Program
- Establish a standing Transportation Committee
- Establish a standing Environmental Protection Committee and naming officers
- Establish a standing



Choctaw Nation: LISA REED

**Choctaw Chief Gregory E. Pyle speaks at the Inter-Tribal Council on May 8. The Inter-Tribal Council is composed of the leaders of the Five Civilized Tribes of Oklahoma – Chief Leonard M. Harjo, Seminole Nation; Chief George Tiger, Muscogee-Creek Nation; Chief Bill John Baker, Cherokee Nation; Gov. Bill Anoatubby, Chickasaw Nation; and Chief Pyle, Choctaw Nation.**

Re-entry Committee

- Establish a standing Aging and Elder Services Committee
- Support reauthorization of

the Native American Housing and Self Determination Act (NAHASDA)

- Oppose language changes

to HR 1066 amending the Indian Arts and Crafts Act

- Establish a standing Tourism Committee.

The next Inter-Tribal meeting will be hosted by the Chickasaw Nation.

## Chahta Foundation awards scholarships

By **CORDELL ZALENSKI**  
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

The Choctaw Nation Chahta Foundation has selected 14 outstanding applicants to receive scholarships totaling \$136,000 for the 2013-14 school year. The scholarships are valued from \$2,000 up to \$20,000 and range from graduating high school seniors to doctoral students.

These Chahta scholars were acknowledged for this honor during a luncheon on May 15. Recipients were able to accept their awards and speak their thoughts to leaders of the Choctaw Nation, family and friends.

Recipients for the Apela Ima award are Jace Caldwell, Caitlin Roebuck and Taylor Wright; bachelor's recipients are

Hilary Price and Alexandria "Bailey" Lafitte; master's include Jennifer Russell and Rebeka Perkins-Ulm; and doctorate recipients are Nathan Sweeney, Carmen Jones, Madeline Anna, Amanda Janitz, Randi Hardin, Seth Boydstun and Chase Woodley.

The Chahta Foundation was established in 1999 and has been dedicated to "Empowering Choctaw Life" in the state of Oklahoma and across the United States. Chahta Foundation Scholarship recipients are chosen not only for their scholarly achievements, but also for their ties to their heritage and commitment to broadening horizons of Choctaw people for generations to come. For more information, visit chahtafoundation.com.



Choctaw Nation: BRET MOSS

**Accompanied by Assistant Chief Gary Batton, those who earned scholarships are recognized for their accomplishments.**

## Choctaw champion Joe Standifer shines in AEFL

By **BRET MOSS**  
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Joe Standifer is a champion, an American Eight-Man Football League (AEFL) champion to be specific. The Sachse Stallions, the team where Joe assumed the roll of number 44 defensive linemen, recently clinched an undefeated season of 10-0 as they earned the title of champion in the AEFL Bowl XII.

The Sachse Stallion boasted a 32-17 win over the Texas Takeover on April 28 to complete their perfect season, an accomplishment that Joe had been seeking since he joined the league. "It has been one big huge roller coaster ride," he remarked.

Last season, when Joe joined the Stallions, the group saw a mediocre inaugural season. They made it to the first round of the playoffs, but "that wasn't enough," remarked Joe. He and his team were hungry for success. "We knew the talent that we had and we knew what we were capable of," he declared as he spoke of his team.

Every Sunday, each season began, Joe and his teammate Keith Vines, who had introduced Joe to the AEFL, would drive to Sachse, Texas, for practices with Coach Pete Espinosa. Joe and his teammates would perform drills, exercises and scrimmages. These weekly practices would run from August through Superbowl Sunday, with the season beginning the following week.

The league hosted their games at Pennington Field in Euless, Texas. The games were not taken lightly, but were played with every bit of effort each team could rally. You had to give it 110 percent, because you knew the guy on the other side of the ball was. They weren't just going to give it to you declared Joe as he explained the intensity of the action.

Once the season commenced, every Sunday was a new game and a new time to shine for the Stallions. For Joe, a graduate of Tishomingo High School whose team went to the state championship in '98, every game was a way to demonstrate that those talents of the past had not faded.

When Joe joined the AEFL three years prior to the championship title, playing for the Denton Dragons, he was 29 years old and had not played football in a considerable amount of time. He was anxious before his first practice, but, "After that first initial hit, it was like everything that was familiar about it came back," he said.

The league served as a way for not only Joe,

but also all the players to stay in shape, experience the bonds of a team and experience the fulfillment that accompanies such feats as winning championships.

"Every Sunday you look forward to trying to knock somebody's head off, but after the game, you shake hands and everybody is friends," said Joe. "There was like a mutual respect throughout the league for each individual person and each team."

After a year with the Dragons, Keith got a call from Coach Espinosa asking him to play with the newly formed Stallions. Both Joe and Keith decided to join the new squad based in Sachse.

During his time within the league, it was not only Joe committing his efforts, his now 7-year-old son Adrian was happy to serve as water boy while seeing his father in action.

Joe has been pleased with Adrian's support and commitment, stating that he was there with him through the good times and the bad, sporting a Stallion jersey. Sharing the championship with his son in a memory that both Joe and Adrian will hold dear for many years to come.

Through his success, Joe hopes to be a role model to his son and other members of his family, stating that even though the road was long and rough, it was possible to earn the goal through perseverance.

Adding to the complexity of his goal of being a champion, Joe not only was busy training, raising a son and working, but has also been enrolled at Southeastern Oklahoma State University. He is scheduled to graduate with a degree in math in May of 2014.

This past season will be Joe's last as a player. "It does take a toll on your body," stated the now 32-year-old athlete.

He continued by stating even though he could push himself for more seasons, it is worth more to him to preserve himself for an enjoyable future playing with his son.

Joe will be leaving the league a champion, and "What better way to walk out than that?" he exclaimed. He does aspire to contribute to the Stallions in other ways such as coaching, stating that his attitude off the field will be the same as it was on the field, "Use me however you want, I just want to do my part."



Photo provided

**JOE STANDIFER**



Since the Success Through Academic Recognition (STAR) Program began in 2007, more than 60,000 awards for all A's, all A's and/or B's and perfect attendance have been given to tribal members in the second through 12th grade in amounts totaling more than \$1.1 million. The STAR Program would like to remind all parents that the deadline for submission of documents for Spring 2013 is approaching.

The final deadline for students to be awarded is October 1, but awards are processed as soon as all documents are received. The incentives given are all A's (\$25 gift card), all A's and/or B's (\$10 gift card), and perfect attendance (\$25 gift card). All students receiving an incentive will also receive a Choctaw STAR Student vehicle decal or certificate. Students must be tribal members and required STAR documents are available online and listed here: STAR application (one-time application), grade and attendance verification form (to be complete by a school official and returned once per semester), and copy of the semester report card. All of these documents may be submitted via mail, email, or fax.

The STAR Program is proud of all its students, especially high school seniors. We would love to hear about your graduating senior's accomplishments and plans. Please feel free to contact the STAR Program at 800-522-6170 or facebook.com/choctawnationstar. For more information about the STAR Program, you may also visit star.choctawnation.com. The STAR Program welcomes any questions you have and looks forward to awarding young Choctaws!

### Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma GED Classes Bryan County Area

#### BEGINNING DATE AND TIME

July 2, 2013  
Tuesdays and Thursdays  
6 p.m. - 9 p.m.

#### PLACE

Choctaw Nation Tribal Complex  
16th and Locust  
(South building, downstairs)  
Durant, OK

The class will meet twice a week for approximately three months. Books, supplies and testing fees are provided. In addition, a \$10 (per day) transportation stipend is paid to those who attend classes on a regular basis and attempt the GED test. If you have turned in an application with our Adult Education Program for GED classes and wish to attend the upcoming class, please contact our office. If you have not applied and wish to attend these or future classes, please contact Neal Hawkins or Kathy Springfield at the Durant office, call 800-522-6170 or 580-924-8280 ext. 2319 or 2122. Also, you may register the first day of class. **A certificate of Indian blood (CDIB) is required.**



### EXCITING NEW OPPORTUNITY!

Choctaw Casino Resort has partnered with Taps Public Transit in Grayson County. If you are currently employed or seeking employment with Choctaw Casino Resort we may have a solution for you!

For additional information please contact:

Taps Public Transit - Tammy Johnson: (903) 868-9189  
or  
Choctaw Casino Human Resources: (580) 920-0160

Choctaw Casino and Resort accepts applications on-line at:  
<http://careers.choctawnation.com>

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





# Spring pow wows held across the Choctaw Nation



Photo provided  
At the Broken Bow pow wow, AILYC Educator of the Year, Coach John Jones, pictured with him are AILYC President, Dusty Bohanan, Jones and Choctaw Social Dance, Chanter, Mahli Billy.



Photo provided  
AILYC Alumni of the Year, Hiyadeja Jones Moore is presented with a Pendleton blanket at the Broken Bow pow wow by club president Dusty Bohanan, as her son Jakob Moore looks on.



Head Elders at the Arrowhead Pow Wow are Marvin Ginn, 90; Solomon Hancock, 89; Walter Amos, 87; and Lucille Jamison, 91.



A game of stickball at the Talihina pow wow.

Photos by LISA REED | Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma



Ten-month-old Tiny Tot Kinley Ludlow.



Photo provided  
A.I.L.Y.C. students perform the Choctaw Two-Step social dance in Broken Bow.



Harry James dances in Talihina.



Head Lady Dancer Everlyn Kasworn, Pow Wow Emcee Archie Mason, District 11 Sr. Princess Cherish Wilkerson, Pow Wow Honoree District 11 Councilman Bob Pate, Suzanne Heard, and Head Man Dancer Thorpe Sine.



Anna Rowland, Arrowhead Pow Wow Princess Olivia Rowland, District 11 Senior Miss Cherish Wilkerson, Iti Tuklo Hikiah, Little Miss Alexis Futisha and Rainey Southard.

## Choctaw Casino hotel hosts tribal blessing

Choctaw Casino Hotel in Pocola celebrated the opening of the new hotel, event center and parking garage with a tribal blessing on May 17.

Chief Gregory E. Pyle, Assistant Chief Gary Batton and the Tribal Council of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, along with Choctaw Casino Hotel employees and friends celebrated this important milestone.

Choctaw Casino Hotel, located at 3400 Choctaw Road in Pocola, is one of eight casinos operated by the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. It offers over 2,100 slot machines, including progressives, high-stakes and penny slots, as well as table games including Craps, Blackjack, Three Card Poker, Ultimate Texas Hold'em and Roulette. Choctaw Casino Hotel also houses on-site bars and restaurants. For more information visit [www.choctawcasinos.com](http://www.choctawcasinos.com)



Choctaw Nation: LISA REED  
Miss Choctaw Nation Cheyenne Murray, Tammi Gwin, Christy Chaser, Chief Gregory E. Pyle, Gaming Executive Director Janie Dillard, Assistant Chief Gary Batton, Councilman Thomas Williston, Councilman Anthony Dillard, Council Speaker Delton Cox and Cary Wickersham.



Brock Eubanks, Chief Gregory E. Pyle, Lenard Raycheck, Gaming Executive Director Janie Dillard, James Lacaze, Bob Jack, Assistant Chief Gary Batton and Randy Anatubee.

## Urban Inter-Tribal Center of Texas relocates to Dallas Medical District

The Urban Inter-Tribal Center of Texas (UITCT) has announced its move to the Medical District of Dallas. The Center, a non-profit corporation, serves Native Americans throughout the Dallas-Ft.Worth metroplex. They provide primary medical and dental care, pharmacy, counseling, job training and education services to an often forgotten demographic of our first Americans. After 42 years in the Oak Cliff community Chief Executive Officer Dr. Rodney Stapp (Comanche) said it was the perfect time to move as they had outgrown their previous facility and suffered a partial roof collapse last August during a Texas sized downpour. "This gives us a great opportunity to better serve our Native community with a bigger, modern facility that is more centrally located to our expanding base of patients and clients" Stapp said. The mission of the Center is simple, "To improve the health and socio-economic status of the DFW American Indians"

said Board of Trustees Chair Dr. Jim Edmonson, "and I think this move is another big step in the right direction". UITCT has a long history of collaborating with Parkland Health System and is excited about being neighbors. We're also looking forward to forming partnerships with UTSW Medical Center. It will be very convenient having UTSW's new hospital just a few blocks down the street on Record Crossing Road and Parkland's new hospital just around the corner. Children's Hospital is nearby as well so we feel fortunate to be surrounded by world class facilities. The Center is primarily funded by federal, state and private grants and donations with their largest grantor being the Indian Health Services, a federal agency. Tribal partners such as the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw Nation, Comanche Nation and Creek Nation contribute to the Centers cause as well. The American

Indian Chamber of Commerce of Texas also helps with extracurricular sponsorships. All eligible patients and clients are seen regardless of their ability to pay or insurance status. "We strive to offer the best medical care possible on a shoestring budget because that's what they deserve" says Administrative Director Angela Young (Choctaw). In addition to their medical and dental services the Center's job training and education department headed by director Kathy McDonald offers everything from GED preparation to college tuition assistance and job development training to help clients get back on their feet and into the job market, thus fulfilling their mission. For more information about the Urban Inter-Tribal Center of Texas or to make a donation please contact: Urban Inter-Tribal Center of Texas 1283 Record Crossing Rd. Dallas, TX 75235, 214-941-1050 ext: 203, or becky.goza@uitct.com.



Cavin's piece, "Legacy," has been heavily used to advertise Oklahoma City's 2013 Annual Red Earth Festival.

## CAVIN

### The artwork of J. Dylan Cavin to be featured at Choctaw Days in Washington, D.C.

Continued from Page 1

products. He would draw the concept art, digitize and color it for the printer, and then do that packaging and catalog artwork for the final physical copy. Though he felt this was a rewarding job, he would have anywhere from five to ten of these projects occurring simultaneously, which became stressful.

Becoming burnt out with his current occupation, Cavin decided to join the Army. He was honorably discharged shortly after enlistment due to fracturing his femur. After his discharge, he had some time to explore creative aspects past graphic design. "It was the first time in awhile where my time was really my own," he mentioned.

He began to take pictures, invested time in watercolor and even learned the art of tattooing. "I really love the looseness of watercolor and the expression you can achieve with just the right single brushstroke," he noted. As he produced paintings, he began to receive recognition for his skill.

Friends who own galleries took notice and invited him to display his work. The positive reception he received boosted his confidence and led him further into the mediums of watercolor and portraits. "I had never thought doing that would get me anywhere. I'm still amazed and honored when people purchase a work from me," said Cavin.



"C. A. Burris (aka Ahshaw-latab) Choctaw/Chickasaw" is a portrait that Cavin holds in high regard, mentioning, "I love it because, in my eyes, I nailed the style of my favorite comic book artist."

Currently, Cavin shows at a gallery in Norman called Tribes Gallery, where he feels fortunate to display his work along with artists with which he is proud to associate himself.

Among his abundance of artistic creations, there is one he holds in high esteem. It is a portrait of C.A. Burris (aka Ahshawlatab). "I love it because, in my eyes, I nailed the style of my favorite comic book artist," exclaimed Cavin.

Along with this item, his portfolio also boasts an array of award-winning pieces. His accolades include the Heritage Award in 2010, Best in Show at the 2012 Annual Choctaw Art Show and First Place in the Graphics Category at the 2012 Red Earth Festival. His works have also been on the cover of the Oklahoma Today Magazine.

To accredit his artistic talents further, additional honors consist of First Place in the Graphics Category at the 2012 SEASAM (Southeastern Art Show And Market), featured in the 2013 Native American Art Calendar, and participation in the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian 2012 Art Market in New York.

Cavin now spends much time in the studio, creating, learning and expanding his artistic prowess. When he is not in the studio, he is with his wife, Lindsay, or reading comic books, the medium that sparked his interest in art many years ago. He is an avid collector of comic books and comic art to this day. "I haven't found a way yet, but if I could trade my art for comic books and comic art I would," he jested.

With plans to grow his capabilities, Cavin is grateful for the success he has seen thus far. His art reflects heavily on his native heritage, and he plans to dive deeper into that characteristic of art. "I always feel like I need to push myself harder, learn more not only about other techniques in art, but my culture in general to be a better steward for the [Choctaw] Nation," Cavin explained.

Cavin is one of many of the talented Choctaw members on the Choctaw Nation Artist Registry. "I am just a kid from Chickasha who worked hard at what he loved and got pretty lucky along the way," Cavin concluded and he thought back over his journey though the world of art.

View many of Cavin's creations and keep up with his progress in the studio at [www.theartofdylan-cavin.com](http://www.theartofdylan-cavin.com).



# Wilburton catfish dinner



Councilman Joe Coley joins his senior singing group as they perform a couple of songs for the evening. This group of seniors recently took first place in the singing contest at Choctaw Nation's annual Senior Day. They shared the honor of first place with the Broken Bow seniors.



Assistant Chief Patton greets Tommy and Oleta Fazekas as they arrive at the community center.



Daniel and Marco Coley are excited to get the event started in Wilburton.



Chief Pyle joins Heather, Mary and Diane Coley as they prepare to serve the meal at the Wilburton catfish dinner.



Councilman Joe Coley greets Andrew and Melissa Sam. Melissa was recently named salutatorian for her graduating class.



Jackie and Larry Durant join Debra and Stanley Ingle for dinner at the Wilburton community center.

Photos by BRET MOSS | Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma



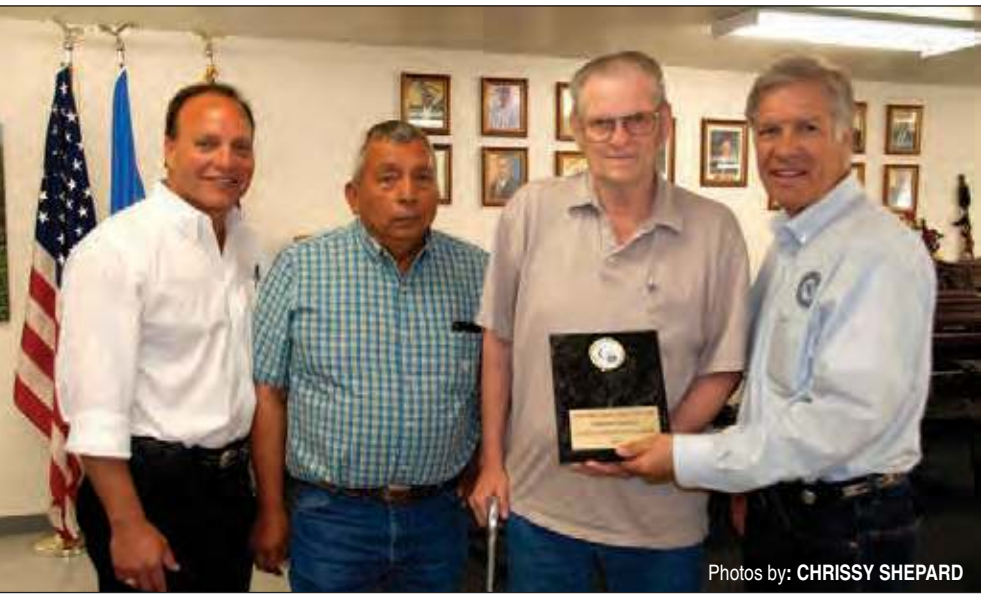
Sadey Parker graces the Wilburton center accompanied by her mother, Brandy Isabel, grandmother Sheri Isabel and great-grandmother Geraldine Isabel.



Wanda McRorey joins her friend, Chief Pyle, for a quick picture.



Dwayne and Laura Mackey join Melvin and Corene Palmer, along with other friends, to share a meal.



At the Wild Onion Dinner in Hugo on May 14, Ernest Oakes presents Assistant Chief Gary Patton, District 8 Councilman Perry Thompson and Chief Greg Pyle with an award from Relay For Life for the Choctaw Nation being a Diamond Sponsor, the highest award in Choctaw County.

## Wild onion dinner held in Hugo



Evelyn James, who helped pick some wild onions for the dinner, says hello to Councilman Thompson.



Bobby Weston visits with Chief Pyle at the Hugo Wild Onion Dinner on May 14.



Katherine Battiest and daughter Deborah Battiest visit with Assistant Chief Patton at the Hugo Wild Onion Dinner.



Executive Director of Tribal Management Shannon McDaniel says hello to the crowd.

## Choctaw Nation reveals Windows 8 application

By **CHRISSY SHEPARD**  
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma is continually finding new ways to connect its tribal members, whether through social networking and the Internet or face-to-face with community meetings across the United States.

Now, the Choctaw Nation has found its way into your mobile phones and tablets.

With the help of Planet Technologies, a leading Microsoft consulting and services company, two Choctaw Nation Office of Technology (IT) department employees have developed and created a Choctaw Nation application.

Software programmer David Coxsey and IT director Dustin Stark, along with web director Vonna Shults, Ryan Spring in Historical Preservation and J.T. Wallace in the Choctaw Language department, provided their input to Planet Technology in designing the app.

The development of the app was made possible through a program from Microsoft called the Microsoft Application Acceleration Program (MAAP), which funded its creation.

It took only about one month, from initial concept to the application store, for the final product to be available for download, said Coxsey.

After just two weeks in the Windows Marketplace, the Choctaw Nation app has been downloaded 134 times.

"This program was designed to help clients get started on building applications for Microsoft's newest operating system, Windows 8," explained Don Lionetti, Choctaw Nation's account manager at Microsoft.



The Choctaw Nation application home screen.

"Microsoft is thrilled that Choctaw Nation is the first tribal Nation with a Windows 8 app live on the Microsoft Windows 8 Application Store."

According to Coxsey, the new app provides new ways to connect tribal members and employees. "The purpose of the application is to provide connections to the Choctaw Nation's news, Twitter and Facebook feeds, YouTube channel, along with historical and cultural information," he stated. "The intended audience for the application is tribal members and the public."

The Choctaw Nation is a leader among tribal governments in the use of technology, said Lionetti.

"This latest example of a Windows 8 application for the citizens and the public to keep informed of the excellent work being done by various groups within the Choctaw Nation exemplifies staying on the leading edge of technology adoption," he continued. "Moreover, this development of a Windows 8 application gives the Choctaw Nation yet one more medium for communicating the positive message of the Choctaw people and also provides a platform for disseminating tribal government news about its pro-

grams and people."

If you were to explore the app, you would be able to do such things as catch up on current news by reading articles from the Choctaw Nation, see the Nation's live Twitter and Facebook feeds to see what is happening with the Nation at a moment's basis, watch videos from the Nation's YouTube channel to learn more about the departments and activities of the tribe, or even research Choctaw history and learn more about the tribe's culture.

Coxsey said currently the app is only available on devices such as desktop PCs, laptops or tablets running Microsoft's Windows 8 operating system, but the IT department is working to get the app added to the Apple and Android stores so it will be available on all Android tablets and phones, iPhones and iPads.

"We look forward to helping the Choctaw Nation in continuing the use of technology for the betterment of the Nation and its citizens," said Lionetti.

If you have a device that utilizes Windows 8, you may download the application to your device by searching for "Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma" in the Windows 8 application store.

Photo provided



# 2013 OKLA CHAHTA GATHERING

Ryan Spring leads the "yellow" stickball team into the circle.



The youth get involved in a game of stickball.



Councilman Bob Pate, Frankie Ervin, Deloris Cox and Councilman Delton Cox.



Skylar Carmack getting a congratulatory hug from grandma.



Jack Griffith of Modesto, Calif., visits with Councilman Ted Dosh.



Merisha Lemmer displays her art.



Chief Greg Pyle and Assistant Chief Gary Batton with the Okla Chahta Royalty for 2013-14 – Little Miss Skylar Carmack, Junior Miss Sophia Matthias and Miss Okla Chahta Tori Archuleta.



Everyone is eager to get the ball in a fun game of stickball.



Chief Pyle places the crown on Miss Okla Chahta Tori Archuleta.



Four Directions Ceremony is observed by Choctaw Princesses.



Above: The dancers pose for a photo.

Right: The snake Dance is a favorite and can become very entertaining.



Billy Eagle Road and Miss Choctaw Nation Cheyenne Murray lead the Four Step War Dance.



The Rev. Olin Williams officiates the Choctaw wedding ceremony for Orion and Yesenia Bock-over.



Aaron Wilkins gets ready to roll the disc in a game of chunky or "achahpi". The boys prepare to chase it and will try to throw their pole through the hole.

Photos by LISA REED  
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma



The Corn Game is a fun experience enjoyed by Choctaw boys and girls.



Storyteller and magician Tamaka Bailey performs a few magic tricks for the kids.



Choctaw Nation Color Guard posts the colors.



Youth learn to dance with the instruction of Josh Riley.



The Lord's Prayer in sign language.



# Choctaw staff travels to Norman

Cultural meeting continues with extra personnel on hand to assist with disaster information

By LISA REED

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Helping others is as much a part of Choctaw culture as basketweaving or stickball. The Choctaw Nation was quick to act on hearing the news of the devastating, deadly tornadoes in the state of Oklahoma. The tornadoes tore their way through Shawnee on Sunday, May 19, followed the very next day by a horrific storm that spawned an F5 tornado in the Moore area.

“We have departments and employees who immediately began corresponding with Oklahoma emergency officials, offering assistance in whatever way needed,” said Chief Gregory E. Pyle. “Two of our public safety officers were deployed to the command center in Moore on May 21 and there are several who have spent their weekends helping victims pick up their lives, one piece, one step at a time.”

The Choctaw Nation continued its plans for a cultural meeting in Norman on May 23, adding personnel from departments who would be beneficial with the types of assistance needed following the storm damage. Staff from Choctaw Nation Tribal Emergency Services, Children and Family Services, Tribal Health Services, Patient Relations, Behavioral Health, Social Services and Outreach Community Based Social Work set up in a room adjacent to the cultural activities at Norman’s Embassy Suite Hotel in ample time to visit with tribal members who had been affected. FEMA and Small Business Administration Disaster Assistance repre-



**Norma Reyes, Regional Tribal Affairs Liaison for FEMA Region 6, sets up a work station during the meeting in Norman.**

sentatives were also there until after the meeting which ended at 9 p.m.

The Behavioral Health and Patient Relations staff stayed over two more days, meeting with people at the Oklahoma City Indian Clinic. CNO nursing staff brought supplies so they could give tetanus shots to those who needed them.

“We thought about canceling, then decided we would be able to help more if we go ahead with the plans,” Chief Pyle said.

Two of the first to arrive during the afternoon were Brandon Yandell and his

dad, Jim Yandell. Brandon, a University of Oklahoma police officer, said his home was destroyed.

“My wife was at work in Moore,” he said. “I took my 2 ½ -year-old daughter and went to my dad’s house where I left her with my parents and then went back.”

The Yandells’ home was just across the street from the Briarwood Elementary School, in a neighborhood that suddenly resembled a war zone.

Brandon’s eyes, still haunted, drifted as he remembered. “I went back and helped in the neighborhood and at the school until about 12:15 that night.

“That’s what we do. I knew my family was safe so we started getting neighbors and other people out.”

Photos on Brandon’s phone showed what was left of his home. While not one of the houses leveled, its substantial damage was evident – sky where there should have been ceilings, wood and metal projectiles sticking through walls.

“It was six hours before I got in touch with my wife,” he said. “She was ok.

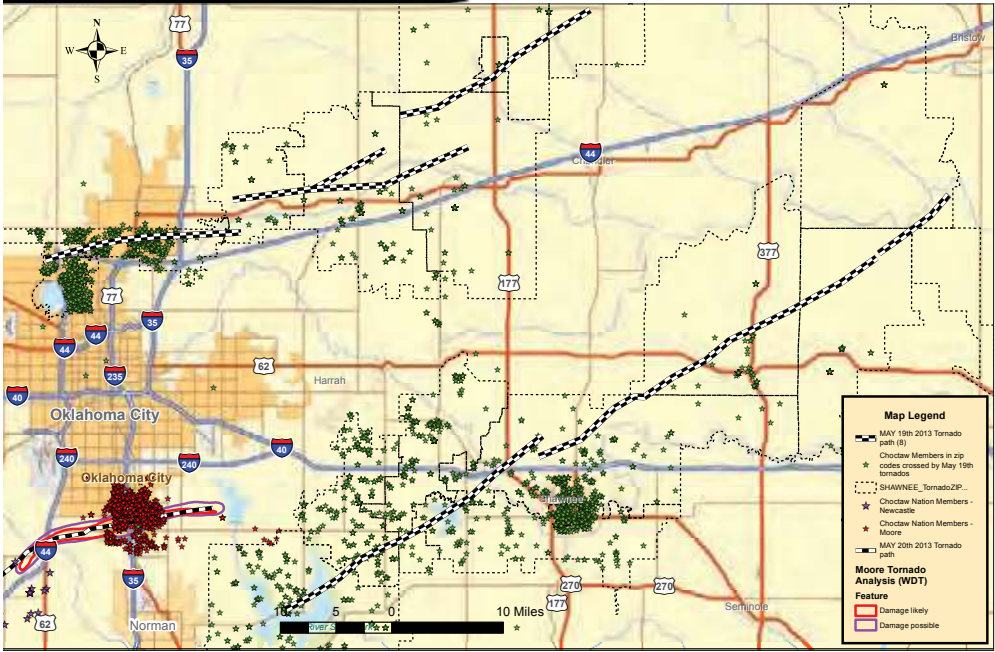
“The house can be replaced, belongings can be replaced, but a human life can’t.”

Brandon and his family are staying with his parents for the time being. He and his dad wanted to attend the Choctaw meeting to visit with emergency services and Brandon filled out paperwork for his daughter’s membership card while there.

At least 20 American Indian families were homeless following the twisters on May 19 and 20. Eleven days later another F5 hit El Reno, a monster storm setting a record as



**The walk dance ends the meeting.**



**A map generated by the Choctaw Nation shows general area of homes of tribal members in the paths of the May 19 and 20 tornadoes.**



**Jim Yandell and son Brandon Yandell sign in as they arrive to visit with FEMA and Choctaw representatives about the loss of Brandon's home during the Moore tornado.**

the largest tornado in the United States. The paths of the storms swept across Oklahoma and into Arkansas and Kansas. Damage is estimated to be in the billions of dollars. The total death toll from the violent May storms in Oklahoma has reached 47.

“The tribal council authorized seven days of net profits from the fuel sales at the Choctaw Nation travel plazas to be donated to the Salvation Army,” said Chief Pyle. “Thanks to everyone who purchased their fuel through Memorial weekend and the following week, we have been able to give \$50,000.”

The Choctaw Nation has also donated water, totes, gloves, shovels, rakes, trash bags and tarps. The Choctaw Nation Safety Department has also delivered items such as chicken feed to the community of Little Axe and mold killer to residents of Haw Creek.

Four staff members of the tribe’s Office of Environmental Health assisted residents of the Haw Creek area near Hodgen in LeFlore County with flooded homes and more assistance is being resourced through CNO entities.

The Housing Authority is also coordinating with the Oklahoma State Agriculture Department on helping remove debris in Moore. A four-man crew has responded to the ag department’s request and several pieces of equipment – a backhoe, dozer, a bobcat, dump trailer and three 1-ton trucks – have been sent to aid the workers.

Among the many employees who have offered to help, Jennifer Henager and Denise

**Contact information to aid Choctaw Nation members**

**To apply for disaster assistance individuals and business owners may call 800-621-FEMA (3362) or go online at www.disasterassistance.gov**

**Choctaw Nation Tribal Emergency Services 800-522-6170 ext 2424**

**Choctaw Nation Children & Family Services 800-522-6170 ext 2331**

**Choctaw Nation Outreach/Community Based Social Work 877-285-6893**

**Choctaw Nation Tribal Health Services 580-924-9704**

**For more information on these and other Choctaw Nation services, log onto choctawnation.com**



**Chief Pyle welcomes Bruce Jacob, a chaplain with the Southern Baptist Convention Disaster Relief team.**



**The Choctaw Wedding Dance is done on stage. The partners hook little fingers to represent the way eagles choose their partner.**



**Emma Davis of Moore tells us she is 3 years old. She is pictured with Choctaw Junior Miss Cheyenne Shomo and Little Miss Josephine Gilmore.**



**Lisa Coonhead and Shaylynn Williams with 1-year-old Bentley Torres during the May 23 meeting at Embassy Suites in Norman..**



**Wanda Boyd, Janet Boyd and Dianna Craun are ready to enjoy the meeting.**



**Shelley Garner of Cultural Events helps Liberty Murphy learn to bead.**



**Barbara Turner of Oklahoma City visits with Assistant Chief Gary Batton.**



**Elizabeth Coombs, 8, of Oklahoma City stands by The Choctaw Seal.**



**Lela Morris, daughter of Rodney Morris II and Gabrielle Morris, and employee Colina Hickman.**



**Donna and Checotah Fulks visit with Chief Pyle at the Norman meeting.**



# Trail of Tears Walk 2013

By **LISA REED**  
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

The Choctaw Nation held its annual Trail of Tears Walk on May 18 in memory of the thousands of Choctaws who traveled from the Mississippi homeland to begin new lives in what is now Oklahoma. Many died during the removal that began in 1831. The survivors built new homes, schools and churches and are the foundation of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

One of the first settlements was Skullyville, the site of this year's walk. Positioned along the Butterfield Stage mail route, Skullyville was a prosperous town in the mid-1800s named after the Choctaw word for money – iskvli. It was "Money Town." Skullyville served as capitol of the Choctaws' Moshulatubbe district.

After the Civil War and routing of the railroads away from the town, Skullyville began to decline. There is only a cemetery left, a memory of people who once populated the bustling community.

Hundreds of walkers met in Skullyville Cemetery in northern LeFlore County for the opening ceremony that included a breakfast snack, bottles of water, and Choctaw Social Dancing.

"Our ancestors persevered. We are proof of that," said Chief Gregory E. Pyle. "We want to honor those who didn't make it on the Trail of Tears and those who

survived. The Choctaw Nation is here today to celebrate life."

Families strolled through the cemetery, stopping in the shade of large trees to read the names on centuries-old tombstones.

Gary and Brenda Camp traveled from Sacramento, Calif., to spend a few days in the Choctaw Nation.

Gary has always dreamed of attending one of the Choctaw Nation's walks, his interest piqued by the stories his father and grandfather told. Both lived near Heaven and went to school at Bokoshe. Gary's sister, Kay Overfield, still lives at Heaven.

"Proud Choctaws assimilated into white culture," Gary said, "but at the same time I am glad culture is being retained. That's important."

Homer Noley of Wilburton says this is his third walk to attend but his first at Skullyville. Noley, 81, read all of the tombstones in the cemetery looking for some of his Fulsom relatives and did find a few.

"I'm glad to have a chance to see the cemetery," Noley said. "I have read and written about it before. Now I'm here."

All ages lined up to follow the Choctaw Nation Color Guard, Chief Gregory E. Pyle and Assistant Chief Gary Batton through the tall white gate of the Skullyville Cemetery to the Choctaw Nation Community Center in Spiro. They retraced steps

their ancestors may have made, knowing that the 4.5 miles they walked in their comfortable shoes did not compare to the misery of the Trail of Tears. Water stations were provided for those wanting to take a break and shuttle buses waited to give anyone a lift who needed it. Emergency and public safety personnel stayed close. The knowledge that help was but a hand away added confidence to their steps. They pushed on.

Carole Ann Ayers was the last to finish the race. Tribal personnel stayed with her the whole way. She stopped periodically to rest on her walker, still with a big smile, saying, "It takes determination." Ayers says she was determined to learn the Choctaw language and she did. She is now a community teacher in the Durant area. "Determination is the key to anything you really want."

As Ayers rounded the last turn, facing south and the final stretch of dirt road, a tribal public safety vehicle pulled up. The driver rolled his window down and Ayers saw him smiling.

"You have some help," he said. A bit confused at first by his words, she began to understand as he said, "Your friends have come to help."

Five of the group of senior citizens from District 9 were getting out of the white SUV.

"It took me 4 hours 20 minutes to walk it," Ayers said. "When my friends came to walk with me, it gave me the lift I needed to finish."

The McKinney Choctaw youth dancers (below) show the crowd how to do the wedding dance before the Trail of Tears Walk begins.



Vickey Miller of Tahlequah walked in the 2013 Trail of Tears Walk in remembrance of her stepfather, Leo "Pete" James White.



Grace Arquelada, 87 years old, and Eldon Udell came from Clovis, Calif., to attend the Walk.



Carole Ann Ayers (above) finished the 4.5 mile-long Walk and said, "It takes determination... Determination is the key to anything you really want."



Homer Noley of Wilburton turned 81 on May 3. Here, he reads the tombstone of one of his Fulsom relatives.



The Johnsons (left) - Bubba, Lena and Moses - sing for the lunch crowd.



Julia and John McKinney, Assistant Chief Batton and Stephanie McKinney (above) are all excited for the Walk to begin.



Con Cusher of Smithville attends the Trail of Tears Walk.



Sue Folsom and Kay Jackson display and demonstrate how to make beautiful Choctaw beaded jewelry.



Leona Samuel and Jan Smith of Smithville visit with Councilman Tony Messenger before the Trail of Tears Walk begins.



Winter and Kannady enjoy watching the Choctaw dancers.



Choctaw Nation staff and volunteers worked tirelessly to help visitors.



Gary and Brenda Camp came all the way from their home in Sacramento, Calif., for the Trail of Tears Walk.

Photos by: **LISA REED, CHRISSY SHEPARD & VONNA SHULTS**