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CHOCTAW NATION

The Official Publication of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

June 2015 Issue

Tribal Council holds regular session

The Choctaw Nation Tribal Council met in regular session May 9 at Tvshka Homma.

The following council bills were unanimously approved:

- Funds and budget for Chahta Vlla Apela Program.
- Funds and budget for Chahta Inchukka Program.
- Funds and budget for the Early Head Start Child Care Partnership Grant.
- Appropriations of matching funds for cash, stock, bond or other monetary donations.
- NAHASDA 2016 Indian Housing Plan (IHP).
- Adopting the Choctaw Nation Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure of the Choctaw Nation.
- Electric Service Line Agreement with PSO in Pushmataha County.
- Grazing Lease No. G-091862 with Larry Winters in Pittsburg County.
- Electric transmission line easement with OG&E in Bryan County.
- Disposal of surplus equipment.
- Authorize Chief to place property in Choctaw County in Trust Status with the United States of America.
- Joint Stipulation of Settlement of All Claims, Except for Plaintiff's Section 16 claims.

For detailed meeting information on these resolutions and council bills, go to <http://www.choctawnation.com/government/tribal-council-bills/2015-council-bills/> The Tribal Council meets at 10 a.m. on the second Saturday of each month in the Council Chambers at Tvshka Homma.

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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/news-room/biskinik-newspaper-archive/>



Choctaw Nation building boom continues



ATOKA: City and tribal officials break ground on a Chili's franchise at the corner of Highways 69/75 and State Highway 3 on May 8. This will create up to 40 jobs and should open later this year.



ANTLERS (at left): Chief Gary Batton, County Commissioner, Mike Brittingham, Tribal Councilman, Jack Austin, Sr., John Winters; Asst. Chief, Jack Austin, Jr.; and Executive Director, Wayne Wylie, stand on Ethel Road near the portion where the overlay work will begin.

SMITHVILLE (below): Tribal leaders and elders break ground on a new independent living center.



HUGO: The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma marked the beginning of construction on a new community center in Hugo with a ground breaking ceremony on June 9. The new 10,000-sq.-ft. facility located just west of the existing center, will provide a larger area for Choctaw senior citizens to gather for meals, hold meetings and classes, office space and parking. "This is a great thing for our seniors. It's where our seniors get together for fellowship," said Chief Gary Batton. "The new center is an investment in them and I'm so proud of what they represent."

Choctaw Nation assists Memorial Day storm victims

By BRANDON FRYE

Choctaw Nation

The tornado-producing storm, which followed U.S. Highway 69/75 north-east from Texas into Oklahoma on May 25, swept through the countryside near Tushka while Choctaws Patricia and Richard Johnson sought shelter in their storm cellar.

"All I could hear was the sound of wind, and I could smell cedar," Patricia said. The smell Mrs. Johnson recalled was a sign of the damage her land and house were enduring just outside the walls of her shelter. The towering cedar trees her father, original enrollee Fulsom Jacob, planted when he built a home on the land in 1969 were being ripped up, broken over, and falling to the ground.

Patricia said it was around 3 pm when the couple entered their cellar, and approximately 45 minutes later the storm hit. A silence broke in the commotion so she and her husband thought about getting back above ground, but it picked up again.

"We stayed in for a while, but when we came out everything was just gone," Patricia said.

"It was so pretty out here before," Richard recollected, "the cedar trees came all the way down the driveway and wrapped around."

Their home had been moved a few feet, leaving the foundational cinder blocks leaning sideways. Their front patio appeared to have lost support and was



An OEH worker clears tree debris off a home near Tushka. The day after the May 25th storm, workers with the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma headed out into the field to assist tribal members.

toppling forward away from the home. A tree had fallen over onto the south end of the house, cracking the walls inside. The electricity lines were broken, with poles being knocked over. The water line to their home had been busted. The couple had no access to utilities after the storm.

But they were thankful. Patricia expressed appreciation for the 30-minute-early warning before the storm hit. She also thanked the Choctaw Nation and Councilman Anthony Dillard for having recently installed her storm shelter. "I am glad they helped because we might not have survived if they hadn't," Patricia said.

Two days after the storm, Richard and Patricia stood outside on their lawn as workers with the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Office of Environmental Health (OEH) used heavy machinery, chainsaws, and their hands to clean up the debris.

The OEH team, lead by Tim Noahubi, had arrived the day before to begin cleanup and had returned for a second day to help the Johnsons reclaim a safe and clear house and yard.

Normally, OEH works with water, sanitation, and waste water. It is a program which aids CDIB holders within the 10 1/2 counties of the Choctaw Nation with problems involving wells, city water, rural water, septic tanks, and city sewers.

Noahubi said his team has offered this new kind of help for the last few years, cleaning up after heavy storm emergencies. After the Tushka tornado, there was a focus on community assistance, he explained.

"This is why our service is here, to help the Choctaw people," Noahubi said. "We turn into a tree and debris removal crew for the tribe, and if it is needed it is what we do. When storms like this come through, hopefully we can be here for people who need emergency help."

Choctaws who are experiencing emergencies similar to what the Johnsons did are welcome to call the Choctaw Nation and see if assistance is available. An office has been organized to handle relief for those affected by the recent storms and flooding. To inquire about assistance this storm season call (800) 522-6170 ext. 2183 or 2496.



Richard and Patricia Johnson wait on their front lawn while OEH makes sure their home and land are safe and accessible.

FAITH, FAMILY AND CULTURE



Choctaw way of helping

Storms and flooding during the month of May required quick action and the Choctaw Nation’s Emergency Management team was ready. It is the Choctaw way to reach out to ensure the safety of our tribal members, to help our neighbors, and assist the efforts of other disaster teams. The response team reacted swiftly and professionally, coordinating with staff, volunteers, and city and county officials to help provide the most-needed resources.

More than a dozen tornadoes were reported in southeastern Oklahoma as well as high winds, hail, and torrential rain and flooding in a three-week span. Homes were damaged or destroyed in several counties and I am very proud of the group of men and women who donated their time to help.

Trucks were loaded with bottled water to deliver while the water supply in the Choctaw and McCurtain County areas was shut down or under a boil ban. The water was available at Choctaw Community Centers in Hugo, Broken Bow, Bethel, and Wright City. Some volunteers filled their pickups with cases of water and delivered to residents who were unable to drive to a center.

Huge trees were uprooted, twisted or split, falling across homes. Our employees removed the trees and spread tarps to prevent more damage from the relentless rain. Two Choctaw Nation Health Services teams were sent to provide tetanus shots to responders and affected residents in Atoka County where approximately 35 homes sustained major damage.

Just reaching the hardest-hit areas took two and sometimes three times longer because of trees or water covering the roads. Routes were closed because the roads literally became part of the nearby lake or river.

The Choctaw Nation hospital in Talihina had to close a small portion of the facility because of the flooding. It would have taken longer to reopen if it hadn’t been for the 40 volunteers who helped fill sandbags to divert water. There were approximately 3,500 sandbags filled that day!

I’ve heard several of our elderly tribal members say they were thankful for their storm shelter. This spring in Oklahoma was a good time to have one! Since June last year, the Choctaw Nation has provided storm shelters for tribal members age 55 and over in Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, Missouri and Kansas. I’m thankful they had a safe haven from the storms. And, I’m thankful there are so many people with the heart to respond immediately to people in need. Chahta sia hoke!



Traditions unite tribe

They’ll know we are Choctaw. Those words have a lot of meaning. The traits we exhibit are what define our Nation.

Faith, love, compassion, and wisdom are values to strive for—faith in God, to love and not hate as He teaches us, to have compassion for others, and the wisdom to make the right choices. Respect is also important, for each other and especially our elders.

The Choctaw people are bound by rich traditions, a history of servant leadership, of striving for the good and wellbeing of all people. It is in our hearts to reach out and positively affect change throughout the communities we live and serve. It’s in our hearts to respond to those in need, to be the first there and the last to leave. It’s in our hearts to share our traditions of art, dance, and storytelling.

A post on the Choctaw Nation’s Facebook page wished 82-year-old Melissa Bohanon a happy birthday. She received best wishes from around the world. It was amazing! Mrs. Bohanon has a large family and is a much-loved matriarch with close to 140 grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren. Almost 74,000 people saw her through social media. They’ll know she is Choctaw.

Tommy Wesley of Rattan recently returned from the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference. He is a pastor and retired Army veteran. He lives by faith and encourages others to do the same. It’s always a blessing to talk with him.

Sara-Jane Smallwood comes from a long line of farmers and ranchers who make their living from the land. She was raised near Sardis Lake and the Choctaw Capitol in Tvshka Homma. Those experiences taught her the importance of the Choctaw Nation’s culture, natural resources, and leadership. Sara-Jane received her Master of Public Affairs in 2012. She decided this month to pursue her doctorate.

Kisha Makerney grew up in Fort Towson. She joined the Army National Guard and made her first tour to Iraq at the age of 18. She lost her left leg because of a motorcycle accident, an accident not duty-related. Kisha pushed through physical therapy with a determination hard to match. She returned to Iraq as the first female amputee soldier in a combat zone. She has climbed many mountains in her career, including Mount Kilimanjaro.

These are only a few of our people. There are thousands more. There are Choctaw people throughout the United States and around the world, miles and miles apart, united by strength and resilience passed down through generations. The stories are different, yet all a reflection of who we are—Choctaws.

Polling Places for 2015 Elections

Election Day is here! Do your part and vote.
July 11 • 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.
See below for a current list of polling places.

In order to be a registered voter, a Choctaw citizen must be registered with the Choctaw Nation Tribal Membership office. Additionally, one must be at least 18 years of age by election day to vote. No enrolled member of another tribe or person who votes as a citizen or member of another tribe will be eligible to vote in Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma elections. To register to vote, or to update voter information, interested Choctaw members can contact the Tribal Membership office at 1 (800) 522-6170 or (580) 924-8280 ext. 4030. Applications for registration are processed during the open registration period which ends 12 days prior to the election. See the following voting guidelines for more details:

- Ensure you are eligible and registered to vote. If you are over 18, registered to vote with the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, and are not a registered voter for another tribe, you are eligible. If you are living within the 10 1/2 counties of the Choctaw Nation, verify you are registered for the right district. If you are living outside of the 10 1/2 counties, verify you are registered as an “absentee” voter (you can still be affiliated with your district of choice, or may choose to be unaffiliated).
- If enrolled as an absentee voter, anticipate a voting ballot to be mailed to your address.
- Fill out the voting ballot. Alternatively, if enrolled as an absentee voter, fill out the ballot when it arrives in the mail and return it by mail using the included pre-addressed and pre-paid return envelope.

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| District 1 (Southern McCurtain County): Idabel - Choctaw Nation Community Center, 2408 E. Lincoln Road Valliant - John Paul Scroggins Conf. Room at Valliant High School 604 E. Lucas St. | Wilburton - Choctaw Community Center, 515 Center Point Road |
| District 2 (Northern McCurtain County): Bethel - Choctaw Community Center, 3 miles north on Post Road (Hwy. 144 North) Broken Bow - Choctaw Community Center, 210 Chahta Road | District 7 (Pushmataha County): Antlers - Choctaw Community Center, 402 SW O Street Tuskahoma - Choctaw Council House on the Tvshka Homma Grounds Rattan - Senior Citizens Building, 400 1/2 SW O Street Wright City - Choctaw Community Center, 5718 Rodeo Grounds Road |
| District 3 (Southern LeFlore County): Burkhart - Old Burkhart School Building Heavener - Methodist Church, 201 E. Avenue B Smithville - Choctaw Community Center, Hwy. 259 HC 15 Talihina - Choctaw Community Center, 100 Railroad St. (at Dallas St./Hwy. 1 crossing) | District 8 (Choctaw County): Boswell - Boswell High School, 604 N. 7th St. Hugo - Choctaw Community Center, 408 N. M Street Fort Towson - Ft. Towson City Hall, 112 Valliant Avenue |
| District 4 (Northern LeFlore County): Heavener - Methodist Church, 201 E. Avenue B Poteau - Choctaw Community Center, 205 B Street Spiro - Choctaw Community Center, AES Road at US 271 Summerfield - Old Summerfield School, 34635 Reichert Summerfield Road | District 9 (Bryan County): Bennington - Town Hall, 102 E. Woodcraft Road Calera - Methodist Church, 111 S. McKinley Durant - Choctaw Community Center, 2750 Big Lots Pkwy. |
| District 5 (Haskell County): Keota - County Barn, 308 North Broadway Kinta - Leo Reasoner Building, 302 West Broadway Spiro - Choctaw Community Center, AES Road at US 271 Stigler - Choctaw Community Center, 2208 E. Main St. | District 10 (Atoka County): Atoka - Choctaw Community Center, 1203 Liberty Caddo - Presbyterian Church, 208 Buffalo St. Kiowa - Kiowa Community Center, 104 S. Harrison St. Lane - (Vote at Atoka) Stringtown - (Vote at Atoka) |
| District 6 (Latimer County): Buffalo Valley - Buffalo Valley School, 4384 SE Hwy. 63 Quinton - Senior Citizens Building, 1020 Main St. Red Oak - Red Oak High School, 404 N. Main St. | District 11 (Pittsburg County): Hartshorne - City Hall, 1101 Pennsylvania Ave. McAlester - Choctaw Community Center, 1636 S. George Nigh Kiowa - Kiowa Community Center, 104 S. Harrison St. |
| | District 12 (Coal and Hughes counties): Arpelar - Nazarene Church Atwood - Nazarene Church 4092 HWY 48 Coalgate - Choctaw Community Center, 103 E. California Crowder - Choctaw Community Center, 707 Bond St. Tupelo - (Vote at Coalgate) |

Visit www.ChoctawNation.com for election updates. For more information, contact the election board at (800) 522-6170 or (580) 924-8280 exts. 2199 and 2536.

Chaplain’s Corner

The Christian Home



Rev. Bertram Bobb
Tribal Chaplain

The Word of God has much to say about the home.

The home is very important in the sight of God. It is important because it is His divine institution. When the home begins to lose its hold on our lives and begins to break up, then our society is on the way out.

We cannot warn our people and our country enough that the deterioration of the homes are the greatest problem we are facing today.

The greatest problem is the disloyalty and division in the home.

The very root, the very foundation, the heart and soul of our society is the home. This is the reason Satan’s aim is to destroy the home. If Satan can destroy the homes of our communities, if he can cause moral deterioration in our country, he will have done to us what he did to other nations which led to their downfall, which led to their destruction.

As we think on these things, we wonder and ask, what is the answer to this terrible situation?

There is only one answer, only one thing that can stop the destruction of the home life, and this is to make the home a Christian institution. For we must turn to the Word of God.

When I say turn to the Word of God, I mean to take the Bible as the Word of God literally, and to believe it, and to obey it.

I warn you, do not accept the teaching of those who deny the Bible as the inspired Word of God. Do not accept or listen to those who deny or don’t believe in the virgin birth, the blood atonement of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ shed His precious blood on the cross for the remission of sin. There are liberal teaching all around you who do not believe all of what the Bible teaches.

There are cults who do not believe that Jesus is God, even liberal teachers deny that Jesus is God. They teach that He was a good man who left us examples to follow. True, He left us examples, but His purpose and ministry was to die on the cross for our sins. He does provide us power to do what He wants us to do as we trust Him by faith.

There are many who do not believe that Jesus Christ is coming back.

According to the prophetic

scriptures, the next event is His personal return for His church. Christians should learn and believe this very important truth. The church at Corinth was a very young church, five or six years old, when Paul the apostle taught them these truths, and later wrote to them in 1 Corinthians 1:7 “So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Here’s what Peter says concerning those who deny the personal return of our Lord Jesus Christ in 2 Peter 3:3-5a “Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

For this they willingly are ignorant of, . . .”

This unbelief is the result of liberalism. Many preachers today have fallen for the line that the church is going to bring in the kingdom and in order for this to happen they must carry out a program. They say, “Promote this program or we’ll cut your salary off.” And what happens?

They promote and carry out a program. Because they are walking after their own lusts, they will not take a stand for God and his Word. Only Jesus Christ is going to bring in the kingdom. When He comes back He will set up His kingdom I would also warn you and encourage you. Whenever you take a stand for the Word of God, the Bible, you will not be popular. People who are not truly born again and those who are not growing spiritually will be easily offended and will turn away from you. They will ignore you, they think you are a fanatic, they will even think you are way off.

The religious leaders are the ones that will attack you, they will say “Don’t believe him, he’s deceived.” Notice that it is the religious leaders that does the persecution. There is a great difference between being religious and being born again. During the days Jesus was on earth it was the religious people who persecuted Him and crucified Him.

Today though, I share with you, the greatest joy and peace you can have and this is to know Jesus Christ as your personal saviour and believe God’s word the Bible. As you do this, you will gain assurance that you are on the winning side. Though you may think at times you are all by yourself, standing alone, a minority. You are actually on the majority side, for one with God is a majority. This is the blessing of peace and joy you will have, as you trust Jesus and Him alone for salvation and as you study and learn more about Him.

A nation is only strong as her homes. The greatest men of our day were not fashioned on battlefields but in the cradle and in the growing up in a Christian home.

We read this portion in God’s word in Colossians 3:18-20: “Wives, submit yourselves unto

your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.

Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.”

The responsibility of the wife is to obey the husband. From other passages of scripture we learn that wives should “Submit to,” “Be subject to,” “Be in subjection to,” “Be obedient to” and even “Reverence” their husbands. Just think, if women knew and cared about what God expects their attitude to be toward their husbands, they would be much more careful in accepting a husband, and marriage would last longer and be more happier.

What does God expect of the head of the family? God wants strong men, not weaklings, for head of families. God’s standards are high. In the same verse where He commanded women to be subject to their husbands in everything, He commanded the husband to love his wife, even as Christ loved the church. Notice the following verses in the 5th chapter of Ephesians, verses 25, 28 and 33: (v25) “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;” (28) “So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.” (v33) “Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.”

How great is the honor of a husband and father and how important are his responsibilities.

Now what does the scripture say to the children? Colossians 3:20

“Children, obey your parents in all things.” How many things? All things?

“For this is well pleasing unto the Lord.”

Do you know what the Devil’s philosophy is today? “Do as you please.”

Modern psychology is going along with the present program and psychologists are saying, “Don’t spank your children, you will warp their personality.” I tell you if spanking will give you a warped personality, I am to be one with a warped personality because I got my share of spankings.

Perhaps there are fathers reading this message who are not Christians, how can you have the kind of home that the Lord wants you to have? How can you teach your children right until you first of all love the Lord and serve Him? Why not say with Joshua, “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” Trust Jesus Christ for forgiveness of your sins today, call on God for strength to be a real man, and have the Holy Spirit to guide you in your duties in the home today.

You can trust Jesus as your personal savior even right now, by faith, will you do this?

Pray for America and its leaders. Pray for our servicemen and women.

Respect, preservation go hand-in-hand during cemetery clean-up

By **ZACH MAXWELL**
Choctaw Nation

(Editor's note: Out of respect for the beliefs of some Choctaws concerning the deceased, the names of the deceased have been removed from this article and photos of individual graves were not used.)

Like many cultures, Choctaws maintain a sacred connection with their departed ancestors.

According to legend, ancient Choctaws carried baskets full of bones of their ancestors. This gave way to mound building, where these bones were kept, and the “bone-pickers.”

As Europeans intermingled with the Choctaws, these customs changed over time. In recent years, hybridized burial practices included small shelters built over graves. Some of these can still be found in isolated spots around the Choctaw Nation.

Nowadays, our collective cultures have grown together, making Choctaw Country funeral customs virtually indistinguishable.

But Choctaws still feel that special connection to the departed, which is a major purpose behind a cemetery restoration program operated by Choctaw Nation Historic Preservation.

Gary Batton, Chief of the Choctaw Nation, recently approved an expansion of this program to include more crews. More than 180 cemeteries have been cleared of brush and fenced—but dozens more are waiting their turn.

“These are an important part of our history,” Batton said. “It’s about preservation of our culture and that history. Hopefully, people will start coming back and showing that respect for our loved ones who have gone away.”

Skyler Robinson has been Cemetery Restoration Coordinator for nearly a decade. His office has looked over courthouse records and received calls from tribal members near and far about Choctaw cemeteries.

Many are on private land, much of it kept in ranching, making the small cemetery plots subject to damage from livestock.

“When we find them, you don’t even know it’s there,” Robinson said. “They are overgrown with trees and vines, or the livestock have knocked the headstones down.”

It’s a natural process: At Carney Cemetery near McAlester, the grave of a woman who died in 1915 at age 80 sits aside



King Cemetery, in Haskell County, is shown (above) before improvements and after (at right). Photos provided by Choctaw Nation Historic Preservation.

a cluster of cedars just inches from her tombstone, knocking it off kilter.

Robinson’s crews don’t see much intentional damage, aside from the occasional tell-tale mound of dirt caused by long-ago grave robbers. Nature takes more of a toll in the rugged back-country of the Choctaw Nation.

This is where many Choctaws lived and died before larger cemeteries were organized around towns and churches. Families have scattered, leaving small plots of a few dozen graves without anyone to tend to them. Robinson said some burials are singular while other locations, such as Armstrong Academy, contain five acres of graves.

For example, the Johnico Cemetery in LeFlore County sits in the middle of ranch land and may contain around two dozen graves, many of them Original Enrollees. The Choctaw Nation crew was able to work with the landowner to obtain access, clear trees and brush and erect a modest fence around the site.

In many locations, most graves are marked with a slab of local sandstone. When those stones erode or are buried

by time and vegetation, it will end all physical traces of that person’s existence and memorialization.

Like many of the small family cemeteries, there are veterans interred at Carney and Johnico. Among them are two relatives buried side-by-side: An Army corporal and Purple Heart recipient from World War II, and another Army veteran of World War II, Korea and Vietnam.

These are among the new generations of Choc-




taws who served not only fellow tribal members but the whole country in helping fight tyranny overseas.

But there are also the infants who died of flu epidemics, or the elders who carved home places out of the untilled soil after the Trail of Tears. Their stories all contribute to the unique legacy of the Choctaws.

“We need to identify these locations, so it will be a long-living history for these families,” Batton said. He described this effort to care for the departed as “a very emotional and spiritual feeling.”

Chief Batton’s goal is to perpetuate these ancestral legacies by preserving the final resting places of so many forgotten Choctaws. It will serve as a prime example for the current generation as well.



Choctaw Nation Health Services Presents

BOOM In The Valley

10th Annual

July 2, 2015
Talihina, OK

Fireworks, Entertainment & 5K Rocket Run

4:00pm - 5:45pm
5K Rocket Run Registration

5:00pm
Concessions & Inflatables Open
Live Music by Terri and The Executives

6:30pm
5k Rocket 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) 349-7026 ext. 7131.

Southeastern Oklahoma Indian Credit Association and Choctaw Revolving Loan Fund

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.

Micro-loans are available for emergency home improvements and small businesses. The loans are available up to \$2,500 and are to be repaid within 24 months. To be eligible to apply you must be Choctaw, possess a CDIB and you must reside within the 10 1/2 county area of the Choctaw Nation.

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:

Stigler Community Center • June 26, 2015
and
Idabel Community Center • July 10, 2015
at
9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Choctaw Nation Household Hazardous Waste Collection

Upcoming Events:

Poteau: June 27, 10 - 2, 109 Kerr Avenue & Idabel: July 11, 2408 E. Lincoln Road

Bring all unwanted electronics, tires, clothing, shoes, purses, light bulbs, and general recyclables. Also accepting household hazardous waste such as cleaning fluids, pool chemicals, and pesticides. Tribal police will be accepting unwanted medication and ammunition.

» 2015 Bow Shoot Schedule «

Tvshka Homma Capitol Grounds

July 11 • Aug. 8 • Oct. 10

Registration, 10:30 Competition, 11:00

Long Bow » Recurve Bow » Selfbows » Handmade Bows » No compound bows

Age groups: 5 & under co-ed; 6-8 co-ed; 9-13 co-ed; 14-16 boys & girls; 17-19 boys & girls; 20 & over men & women

Special Events: Sept. 6, Labor Day Festival, 8 a.m. & Turkey Shoot, Nov. 14

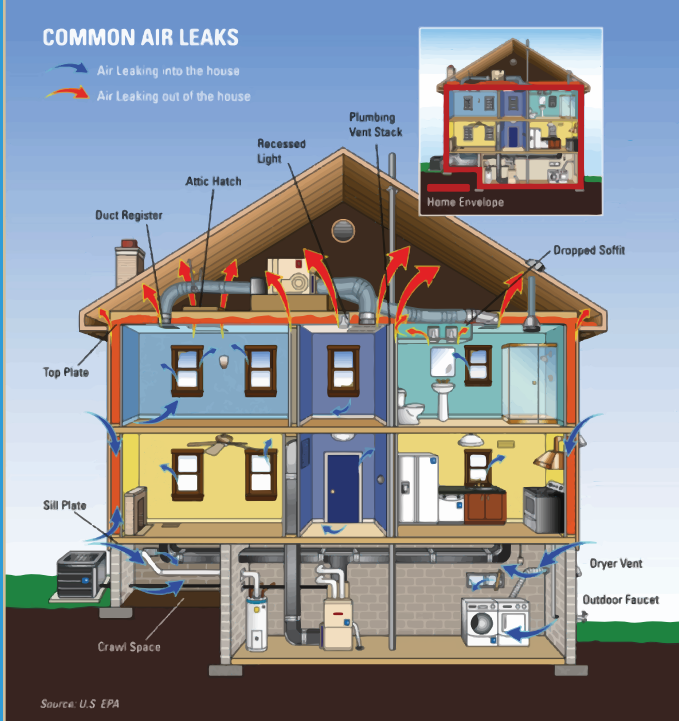
Prizes for each age group at end of each shoot. Final prize awarded at end of year for overall points.

Information, please call

Sue Folsom (800) 522-6170x2134 or Pam Waugh (580) 775-7862.

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Homeowners Energy Management Services



COMMON AIR LEAKS

- Air Leaking into the house
- Air Leaking out of the house

Labels in diagram: Plumbing Vent Stack, Recessed Light, Attic Hatch, Duct Register, Top Plate, Sill Plate, Crawl Space, Dryer Vent, Outdoor Faucet, Home Envelope, Drooped Soffit.

Source: U.S. EPA

Offering Free Home Energy Audits

Learn:

- What your home does right
- Where energy is lost
- How to make your home more comfortable
- The cheapest way to be more energy efficient

- LOWER ENERGY BILLS
- INCREASE SAVINGS
- INCREASE HOME RESALE VALUE
- UNCOVER HIDDEN PROBLEMS
- PROTECT ENVIRONMENT

Serving Choctaw Tribal members in all 10 1/2 counties!

The Yvppvlli Project: ‘A shining moment of opportunity and hope’

By ZACH MAXWELL

Choctaw Nation

Yvppvlli: to walk slowly and softly, not with a hard tread

Each one of us will face a set of challenges as we walk through life. It’s how we approach the walk that will determine if we come out better on the other side.

Choctaws have a word for this walk, Yvppvlli. A group of doctors and researchers have joined Choctaw tribal leaders in developing a program for healing and wellness that has the concept of “yvppvlli” at its core.

And the inspiration for this comes from an often mentioned, but easily overlooked source: Choctaw ancestors who endured the forced removal from Mississippi homelands.

Today, we call it the Trail of Tears. And a group of clinical researchers and Choctaw health officials have joined forces to craft a health and wellness program based on this experience.

Dr. Karina Walters of the Indigenous Wellness Research Institute at the University of Washington in Seattle and Dr. Michelle Johnson-Jennings, co-director of the Research for Indigenous Community Health, part of the University of Minnesota in Duluth, are both Choctaw tribal members.

They teamed up to use their collective expertise—as well as their perspectives as Choctaws—in helping to develop a course of action toward Yvppvlli.

“It’s been extremely fruitful. We were able to focus on Choctaw meaning, as opposed to having to sit back and explain it,” Walters said. “There is a shared understanding as we move forward.

“For me it was an honor to come back home and help our people,” said Walters, who has interacted with numerous cultures across the world in her field.

It is anticipated that one in three Choctaw children will have type 2 diabetes by 2050. Seventy percent of tribal members could be obese by that time, leading to a startling outcome: Parents could outlive their children in large numbers, for the first time in recorded history.

“(Self-Governance Executive Director Mickey Peercy) said to me, they needed help curbing the diabetes and obesity problem, even though the Choctaw Nation has been responding to it the way all the empirical work says we should be,” Walters said.

Most research into the medical issues facing native communities is performed by non-native researchers. This time, the National Institute for Health agreed to allow the lead doctors, both Choctaws, to partner with members of their own tribe for a new approach.

This leads in to their Yvppvlli approach: An indigenized approach to healing, as a supplemental effort in conjunction with the tools and concepts available in western medicine today. A connection between healthy lifestyle concepts and Choctaw culture was evolving.

“I went and I prayed. And the answer came to me at that moment and it was very apparent,” Walters said. “It’s not about the trauma of the Trail of Tears, but getting connected with the vision of love and life that our ancestors had.”

The idea emerged to follow the actual course of the 19th century Trail of Tears, as part of a journey toward healing. Johnson-Jennings said this approach links the experience of Choctaw ancestors to their descendants today.

“This is fulfilling one of those life-long goals, connecting with one another,” Johnson-Jennings said. “Learning how we can heal as a nation has been very exciting. We have amazing strengths and resources, in what our ancestors brought with them. I think the trail is particularly poignant in most people’s minds. It was almost an obsession for me as a child, to read the old documents and narratives from the trail.”

Health and history merged along the way. Walters said they began re-searching historical records to find the actual surviving trail, not just the modern highways along the route. Most of the routes are in Arkansas and they found places that were preserved portions of the trail from the era of the forced removals.

In 2012, Yvppvlli took its first pilot walk with 18 volunteers, mostly Choctaw women. Actual clients, from Idabel, Broken Bow, and Hugo communities, went on the first true Yvppvlli journey in May of this year.

“Our model is health promotions in that our women are trained to be health leaders,” Johnson-Jennings said. The goal is to build a team of health leaders in each of the 12 districts of the Choctaw Nation.

Tribal leaders urged the research team to start with women. This goes back to several Choctaw concepts, including the “Beloved Woman” social status and the matrilineal kinship system.

These leaders would be trained to respond to a crisis within the community, such as a suicide, using Choctaw-driven methods as an addendum to clinical efforts.

They would also have a responsibility within their communities to share the knowledge gained from Yvppvlli. A series of post-walk community presentations are planned, starting in McCurtain and Choctaw counties this summer.

The groups participate in six to eight weeks of training sessions before the 10-day walk, a mixture of camping, prayer circles, and hiking portions of the trail route from destination points like Arkansas Post and Lake Chicot, Arkansas.

The group hikes up to 10 miles each day and shares experiences from their own lives and the day’s events each evening. This year, the group found remnant Trail of Tears sites at Village Creek State Park in Arkansas, and ended their journey with a walk from Horatio, Arkansas, to Broken Bow.

“There’s something about physically being on the trail. Our people laughed, lived and loved on the trail. It’s almost like a vow-making ceremony,” Walters said of the commitment made by participants. “The guiding questions are: What kind of ancestor would my own ancestors want me to be; what kind do I want to be; and what kind of ancestors will future generations be? It’s stepping into our roles as leaders.”

The goal is to involve 150 women in Yvppvlli—30 per year over the next five years. A similar program could be in place



Photo provided by the Yvppvlli Project

Left to right: Melissa Lewis (Yvppvlli volunteer - Cherokee), Michelle Johnson-Jennings (Yvppvlli Investigator - Choctaw), and Karina Walters (Yvppvlli Investigator - Choctaw) on a portion of the original Trail of Tears in Arkansas.

for Choctaw men in the coming years. Anticipated outcomes include a reduction in addictions to drugs, alcohol, tobacco and even certain foods.

“It’s not about intervention. It’s really about becoming healthier,” said Johnson-Jennings. “It’s wellness in the community. It could be anything, new ideas such as communal gardens.”

“It starts with a couple of people who want to move forward, then the whole community is involved. We’re creating a support network,” said Walters. “It’s about improving activity levels and resources.”

“It’s amazing what mobilizing others can do. It’s shifting the culture of trauma and our thoughts and beliefs about wellness,” Johnson-Jennings said.

As Choctaws tend to do, the experience of Yvppvlli is meant to take a dark time in our tribal history and turn it into a shining moment of opportunity and hope.

For more information about Yvppvlli and Choctaw Nation Behavioral Health programs, please visit www.cnhsa.com or call (800) 349-7026.



Chief Gary Batton and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. at the Red Earth Festival parade.

Chahta at Red Earth

The Choctaw Nation was well-represented this year at the 29th Annual Red Earth Festival June 5-7. More than 1,000 American Indian artists, dancers, and singers participated in the Oklahoma City tradition.

Choctaw artists Kelly Byars and Carolyn Bernard Young took home honors in the categories of their respective arts.

This is only the second year at Red Earth for Carolyn, who is from Weatherford, Texas. She received the third place ribbon in the contemporary pottery category for her piece called Flight. “I research Native American totems or spirit animals, as some people call them. I’ve always been drawn to them and I draw them on my pots,” she said. “I’m working on more story-oriented pottery that tells a story of the Choctaw pony and of the buffalo. I try to instill some meaning and movement into each pot.”

Albuquerque-based Kelly Byars placed third in the sculpture division for his work, She Walks in Beauty. “My cultural aspects were taken from many different tribes,” according to Kelly, “because I was raised in boarding schools. So I didn’t have just one set of cultural influences as a Choctaw/Chickasaw but I was able to borrow from all other nations being a student in the schools. So I began to use the influences from my friends who are also artists and started to make my own way as an artist.”

Other Choctaw artists in attendance included Carole Ayers, Dylan Cavin, Paul Hacker, Joe C. King Linda Kukuk, Patta LT, C. Gale Self, and Ronald Wil-lison.

The festival kicked off with the grand parade with Chief Gary Batton, Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr., Choctaw Princesses, and a float carrying the Choctaw Tribal Alliance all participating.



Choctaw Princesses Summer Moffitt and Nikki Amos join the grand entry that kicked off the pow wow.

Parenting Classes



June 9 - July 14
Tuesdays
6pm - 8pm

Classes are open to the public.
Classes will be at the Choctaw RV Park
3650 Enterprise Drive
Durant, OK 74701

Food and child care will be provided each week.
Certificates of completion will be given on July 14.

Contact: Hayley McIntyre
Phone: 580.924.8280 x2551
Cell: 580.775.5523
Email: hmcintyre@choctawnation.com
Website: Choctawfamilyservices.com



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

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

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

June Events Calendar:
(Please contact CSBDS for more details and to register)
June 4th-Durant – Social Media Marketing Workshop
June 9th-McAlester- 8(a) Training
June 18th-Durant-Etsy Training
June 23rd -Idabel- Comprehensive QuickBooks
June 30th-July 1st-Durant- Choctaw Small Business Academy

Contact Small Business Development Services today!

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

NOTES TO THE NATION



Choctaw member to open clinic in Broken Bow

Rebecca Stover is celebrating two milestones this year. She will be a graduate nurse practitioner in Decmeber and has just broken ground for a clinic in the Broken Bow area. She hopes to open the family practice clinic and start seeing patients by February. Stover will be the owner and provider. The new clinic will have four exam rooms at a facility on Highway 3 west of Broken Bow. “I am very proud to be a Choctaw member,” says Rebecca. “My husband and I have five children, adopting three of them through the Choctaw Nation. Choctaw Nation has helped me through school along with about \$50,000 in debt in student loans. I would like to thank the Nation for everything they have helped me do up to this point. It is a blessing to be part of such a great tribe that supports its members!”

Fire Department thanks

The Cloudy Volunteer Fire Department would like to say “Thank You” to the Choctaw Nation for the donation to the fire department. It was greatly appreciated . Thank you for your help.

Cloudy Volunteer Fire Dept.

Nation helps tornado victims

I wanted to thank you, Chief Batton, and your Assistant Chief Austin for coming to my in-laws’ place in Blue that was a total loss due to the tornado that hit on Monday (May 25). Myself, my wife, and her parents, Alvin and Syble Franklin are so thankful that you showed you care about their situation. They are wonderful people who have worked hard all their lives and have lived in that home for 60 years, the loss was and is devastating. We are so thankful that they, their grandchildren and great-grandchildren were safe in the storm shelter. Thank you and Assistant Chief for showing you care, and may God bless you as you continue to lead the Choctaw Nation.

Mark Lawrenson

Youth of the Nation

Kadan Gravitt, YAB member, Soper Chapter

I believe community service and volunteerism are very important. The best thing an individual can donate is his or her time to help others in need. I have a passion for helping others in my community and beyond. I have taken an active role in community service throughout my high school career. I have been involved with the Choctaw Nation Youth Advisory Board for four years and have clocked 600 community service hours. This organization has provided me with a solid foundation for perspectives regarding life, enhanced my leadership skills, and has taught me important life values. Taking part and volunteering through the Youth Advisory Board has taught me compassion and understanding. This organization has positively affected my future and perspectives regarding life by showing me that nursing the right career choice for me and most importantly it has clarified the kind of person I want to become. As I move through life, I think I will always be involved in community service. Not just because I think it’s important, but because it’s something I enjoy. I absolutely love bringing joy and helping others, and through community service, I feel I can accomplish that.

Gary Batton
Chief

Jack Austin Jr.
Assistant Chief

The Official
Monthly Publication
of the
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Judy Allen, Senior Executive Officer
Lisa Reed, Executive Director
Vonna Shults, Media Director
Ronni Pierce, Editor
Zach Maxwell, Reporter/Photographer
Brandon Frye, Reporter/Photographer
Payton Guthrie, Social Media Coordinator

P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702
(580) 924-8280 • (800) 522-6170
Fax (580) 924-4148
www.choctawnation.com
e-mail: biskinik@choctawnation.com

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UNCLAIMED FUNDS

The Accounting Department of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma is trying to contact the individuals listed below. Choctaw Nation is in possession of unclaimed funds (uncashed payroll checks) that may be due to these individuals. If you are an employee or former employee of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and your name is listed below, please contact:

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702
Attn: Angie Ansiel, Payroll and Employee Services
Accountant or by phone, 580.924.8280 x2467.

Taylor Johnson
Nicole Ellis
Jamie Jeans
Ravidkumar Patel
Darren Watts

Yakoke from Holdenville

I would like to say a big thank you to the tribe and the emergency assistance department for the help to get me through hard times recently. Medical issues and injuries can slow a working man and woman down but knowing your tribe can help you is priceless. Yakoke!

Floyd Johnson

To the Choctaw Nation from Pauls Valley

Just a few moments to say thank you and bless you for our storm cellar. It was intalled May 6 and we were using it May 8. Can’t say thank you enough for your help. I will keep you in my prayers for God to continue to bless the Choctaws’ wisdom and leadership. Thanks again.

Karen Farrell

Choctaw tag refund

The license plate refund came at a good time. I am going to have some work done on my vehicle. I wish to thank you and the Choctaw Nation for the Choctaw tag program . I live in Muskogee. I have seen the Choctaw tag on vehicles in Muskogee. I had one person ask me how to get a Choctaw tag. Again, thanks.

Ted Williams

Meeting educational dreams

I would like to thank the Choctaw Nation for helping me achieve my goal of completing my education. Without the help of the Career Development program and the Higher Education program my dream of receiving my college diploma would not be possible. I have a Bachelors of Science in Occupational Safety and Health and was very lucky to have a job waiting for me when I graduated in December of 2014. I am proud to be a member of the Choctaw tribe and encourage all to fulfill their dreams.

Gina Hamilton

A thank you to Chief Batton

My daughter and I got to meet you in Lubbock at the Over-ton last year before she graduated from high school in Texas. We both really enjoyed the event. I wanted to send you a quick “mom-brag” that I thought you might enjoy. I know we don’t often have opportunities to share with others outside our immediate service areas in Oklahoma, the wonderful things about our tribe. I thought you might be interested to know that the Choctaw tribe is proudly being represented at Abilene Christian University by one Madi Rain Moody. My daughter applied for a diversity scholarship to A.C.U. for not only the monetary aid to help her attend there, but also to have the opportunity to share the things about a heritage she is very proud to say flows through her veins. She was one of 20 out of hundreds that applied that received this scholarship for the next four years. Part of the scholarship requirement is of course grade point but another is service related. She has to log hundreds of service hours, attend a cultural diversity meeting once a week and plan events and share about her heritage. She is currently an education major and plans on graduating with her Masters in 2018-19. I hope this email finds you well and that you enjoy hearing about wonderful things going on in the lives of your tribal members. Thank you for the job you do.

Tania Moody

Appreciative thoughts

I would like to thank the Choctaw Nation for bringing food to our church for us after my wife passed. I just want to make sure the Choctaws know I appreciate the food and thoughts they extended us. It was a good gesture, and I appreciated it. My name is Larry Durant, and her name is Jackie Durant. We live in District 6, Joe Coley’s district. I would also like to thank him for helping. Our sons Waylon and Justin, and grandsons Hunter, Westin, and Denver, as well as the rest of the family are also appreciative.

Larry Durant

Peace of mind after safe room installed

I want to thank you for my grant allowing me to have a safe room. You don’t have any idea how much my mind is at peace now. You see, I was born paralyzed and I am in a wheelchair. Before your gift of my safe room, there were very few places I could go to seek shelter because of stairs and no access for me (places were usually in basements and public elevators were useless because power was shut off during storms or tornadoes). Now my safe room is 20 feet from my door! No more sleepless nights for me, thanks to the Choctaw Nation. You all are doing great things for our tribe.

Cameron L. Hill

EVENTS

Single Mom’s Day Out

July 18
1pm - 5pm
(not accepting clients after 4pm)
Totally Cosmo in Broken Bow
For single moms living in McCurtain County.

First Come First Serve

Free haircut & style, manicure, pedicure, & facial.
Mary Kay consultant will be present to offer makeup tips.
Free of charge!

Sponsored by the women of
“Chahta Ohoyo Tikba Hikia” a division of
Choctaw Nation Outreach Services

In honor of Erica Martinez

Special thanks to Totally Cosmo, Sarah Hodge Mary Kay Consultant, Choctaw Nation Outreach Services

Contact Melissa Cress for more information,
800 . 522 . 6170

You are cordially invited to attend . . .

The Choctaw Nation
of
Oklahoma’s Legal Assistance Events

Samantha Guinn, a licensed attorney, will be available to provide assistance with simple legal documents. This service is **free** to all Choctaw members. Examples of matters she may be able to assist with are:

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

Community Center Schedule

| | |
|--------------|-----------------|
| June | July |
| 6/25 Antlers | 7/9 Hugo |
| 6/26 Idabel | 7/16 Crowder |
| 6/30 Spiro | 7/23 Broken Bow |
| | 7/30 Smithville |

9 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. - 3 p.m.

Please contact the community center to confirm she will be there before traveling. Currently we are not providing representation in court or assisting in criminal matters.

Inter-Tribal
Arts and Crafts
Beading
Class

EVERY Thursday
6 - 9 p.m.
Choctaw Community
Center
1203 W. Liberty Rd.
Atoka OK

Public is welcome to
come learn
tribal beadwork.

Beads and thread avail-
able for purchase.

| Choctaw Nation Vocational Rehabilitation | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-----|--------------------------------------------------|-----|
| July 2015 | | | | | | |
| Durant - Mon., Wed. and Fri. Broken Bow - Mon., Wed. and Fri.; Idabel by appt. Phone: 580-326-8304; Fax: 580-326-0115 Email: ddavenport@choctawnation.com | | | | | | |
| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
| | | | 1 Broken Bow 8:00-4:30 Idabel by appt. | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 Durant 8:00-4:30 | 7 Talihina 10:00-2:00 | 8 Antlers by appt. | 9 | 10 Wright City by appt. | 11 |
| 12 | 13 Durant 8:00-4:30 | 14 Poteau 11:30-1:00 | 15 | 16 | 17 Broken Bow 8:00-4:30 Idabel by appt. | 18 |
| 19 | 20 Durant 8:00-4:30 | 21 Wilburton by appt. | 22 McAlester 10:00-2:00 Stigler by appt. | 23 | 24 Atoka by appt. Coalgate by appt. | 25 |
| 26 | 27 Crowder by appt. | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | |

HEALTH



Photo Provided

Valerie Robinson, Chunwen Tang, and Deborah Hefner pose for a photograph May 15 during an event meant to honor their graduating out of the new residency program through the Choctaw Nation.

First students graduate from Choctaw Nation Health Care Center residency

By BRANDON FRYE

Choctaw Nation

The first students to graduate from the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Health Service Authority (CNHSA) Talihina Residency Program were honored May 15 at the Choctaw Casino and Resort Conference Center.

Deborah Hefner, Valerie Robinson, and Chunwen Tang, now officially graduated into being Doctors of Osteopathy, spent three years working at the Choctaw Nation HealthCare Center in Talihina caring for patients in family practice, intensive care, the emergency room, and attending lectures given by staff physicians.

The residency program got its start three years ago thanks to a grant provided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, particularly the Health Resources and Services Administration.

To get the program started, it took 18 months of preparation, according to Dr. Jason Hill, Medical Director for CNHS

and Residency Program Director. For the Choctaw Nation, this preparation resulted in the development of one of only a handful of Native hospitals to have an accredited residency program.

“It started in conjunction with Oklahoma State University, and with our need to expand rural residencies here in the state,” Hill said. “We had been approached in the past to consider the Choctaw Nation as a training site for rural family physicians and internal medicine physicians. This seemed like a good opportunity to recruit local people to work in our system.”

Teresa Jackson, Senior Executive Officer of Health Services for Choctaw Nation, said the residency program has helped with recruitment and retention for family practice doctors in southeast Oklahoma.

One of the three residency graduates has signed on with CNHS and will be working in the Stigler clinic, and others have expressed interest in staying once their residency program ends, accord-

ing to Jackson.

One benefit for tribal members who have recently visited a CNHS location is they may already be familiar with these resident physicians, and as the residents become full-fledged doctors their patients will be able to continue to see them.

Additionally, according to Hall, an important benefit of the program is it has invigorated CNHS medical staff, engaged the physicians on staff by tasking them with teaching the residents, which means better quality health care for tribal members who come into Choctaw Nation healthcare locations.

“I also use it as a recruiting tool, because when a doctor hears we have a residency program, it is a mark of quality,” Hall said. “If you think of the best hospitals in the country, almost all of them are teaching hospitals. I think by adding the residency program, it increased our quality because it keeps our physicians current and draws in more physicians.”

NURSERY NEWS

Cortana Renae Newton

Michael Newton and Amanda Triplett of Altus proudly announce the birth of their baby, Cortana Renae Newton.

The little girl was born Jan. 16, 2015, at 2:14 a.m. at Jackson County Memorial Hospital. Cortana was 7 pounds 10.6 ounces and 22 inches long.

Her family includes Izabella Faye Newton (sister) age 4 years; maternal grandparents Larry and Robin Triplett of Hollis and the late Joann (Ishcomer) Triplett; maternal great-grandparents Retta Triplett of Eldorado, the late Edward Triplett, and Nathan and Patty Ishcomer of Quannah, Texas; paternal grandparents Paul Horton and Dorothy Chavez of Sentinel and Steve and Stephanie Cantrell of Vernon, Texas; and paternal great-grandparents the late Hubert and Geneva Saegent.



Michael Nolan Beaver

Michael was born May 14 in Dallas, Texas, to Daniel Beaver Jr. and Alexandra Minter Beaver. He weighed 9 pounds, 3 ounces and measured 21-1/2 inches.

His maternal grandparents are Angela Huffman Minter of Madill and Michael Minter of Helotes, Texas. His paternal grandparents are the late Danny Beaver and Brenda Tonubbee Beaver of Mesquite, Texas. His maternal great-grandparents are Leonard and Audeen Graves Huffman, Nick and Oteka LeFlore Beasley, and the late Joseph Minter, all of Madill. His paternal great-grandparents are Bob and Barbara Johnson Shelton of Mesquite, Frances Beaver Burton of Mesquite, and the late Francis Murphy Tonubbee of Dallas. Michael is welcomed by his big brother, three-year old Daniel Richard Beaver III (aka DB3).



Recipe of the Month

Grilled Salmon & Zucchini with Red Pepper Sauce

Recipe by EatingWell.com

Ingredients:

- 1/3 cup sliced almonds, toasted (see Tip)
- 1/4 cup chopped jarred roasted red peppers
- 1/4 cup halved grape tomatoes , or cherry tomatoes
- 1 small clove garlic
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon sherry vinegar , or red-wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon paprika, preferably smoked
- 3/4 teaspoon salt, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper, divided
- 1 1/4 pounds wild-caught salmon fillet , (see Note), skinned and cut crosswise into 4 portions
- 2 medium zucchini , or summer squash (or 1 of each), halved lengthwise
- Canola or olive oil cooking spray
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley , for garnish

Directions:

1. Preheat grill to medium.
2. Process almonds, peppers, tomatoes, garlic, oil, vinegar, paprika, 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper in a food processor or blender until smooth; set aside.
3. Coat salmon and zucchini (and/or summer squash) on both sides with cooking spray, then sprinkle with the remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Grill, turning once, until the salmon is just cooked through and the squash is soft and browned, about 3 minutes per side.
4. Transfer the squash to a clean cutting board. When cool enough to handle, slice into 1/2-inch pieces. Toss in a bowl with half of the reserved sauce. Divide the squash among 4 plates along with a piece of salmon topped with some of the remaining sauce. Garnish with parsley, if desired.

Note: Wild-caught salmon from the Pacific (Alaska and Washington) and Pacific cod are more sustainably fished and have a larger, more stable population. For more information, visit Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch (mbayaq.org/cr/seafoodwatch.asp).

Tips: To toast chopped or sliced nuts, stir constantly in a small dry skillet over medium-low heat until fragrant and lightly browned, 2 to 4 minutes. To skin a salmon fillet, place on a clean cutting board, skin side down. Starting at the tail end, slip the blade of a long, sharp knife between the fish flesh and the skin, holding the skin down firmly with your other hand. Gently push the blade along at a 30° angle, separating the fillet from the skin without cutting through either.

Nutrition Facts:

Per serving: 280 calories; 13 g fat (2 g sat, 7 g mono);66 mg cholesterol; 8 g carbohydrates; 32 g protein; 2 g fiber; 601 mg sodium; 871 mg potassium. I hope you all enjoy this recipe! For further information you may contact Erin Adams, RD, LD Choctaw Nation Diabetes Wellness Center (800) 349-7026 ext. 6959.

Choctaw Nation Breastfeeding Classes

Come join us for a breastfeeding class in your area! Many mothers want to learn more about breastfeeding so that they can feel more confident in their decision to breastfeed. This breastfeeding class will address the following topics:

- Latch
- Frequency of feedings
- Breastfeeding resources
- Positioning
- Growth spurts

| Durant | Poteau | McAlester |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| August 12 • October 14 | September 2 • November 4 | September 9 • November 18 |
| 1pm - 3 pm | 9am - 11am | 1pm - 3pm |
| Choctaw Nation WIC Office | Family Investment Center | Choctaw Nation Health Clinic |
| Talihina | Idabel | Downstairs Conference Room |
| August 5 • October 7 | August 19 • October 21 | |
| 9am - 11am | 9am - 11am | |
| Choctaw Nation DWC | Choctaw Nation Clinic Education Rm. | |

Sponsored by Choctaw Nation WIC

For more information or for breastfeeding help, please call Erin James, IBCLC 1-800-522-6170 ext. 2507.

Choctaw Nation WIC WOMEN, INFANTS and CHILDREN



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

CHOCTAW NATION FOOD DISTRIBUTION

WAREHOUSES & MARKETS

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

FOOD DISTRIBUTION SITES

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

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*** HOURS ***

Open 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday,
Wednesday, and Friday;
10:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Thursday

ANTLERS

Market open weekdays July 1-31, except for:
July 1: Idabel 9-11:30 a.m.; Broken Bow 1-3:30 p.m. (market open)
July 8: Bethel 9-10:30; Smithville 12-2 (market open)
Closed: July 3 for holiday; July 30-31 for inventory
Cooking with Carmen: July 16, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

DURANT

Market open weekdays July 1-31, except for:
Closed: July 3 for holiday; July 30-31 for inventory
Cooking with Carmen: July 1, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

McALESTER

Market open weekdays July 1-31, except for:
Closed: July 3 for holiday; July 30-31 for inventory
Cooking with Carmen: July 7, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

POTEAU

Market open weekdays July 1-31, except for:
Closed: July 3 for holiday; July 30-31 for inventory
Cooking with Carmen: July 9, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

PEOPLE YOU KNOW

SSG Woods graduates from Civil Affairs Qualification course

Staff Sergeant Matthew J. Woods was born on April 22, 1984 in Fresno, Calif. He enlisted in the Army as an Infantryman and attended basic and advanced individual training Feb. 19, 2004 at Ft. Benning, Ga.

"I have been serving for over 11 years now in the U.S Army. I first served 10 years as a Paratrooper and an Infantryman," Woods said.

In January 2014 SSG Woods attended Civil Affairs Assessment Selection where he was successfully selected to attend the Civil Affairs Qualification Course. He graduated the Civil Affairs Qualification Course on April 2, 2015 and became a new member of the Army special operation community.

"The training was nearly a year long with both very mental and physical barriers to include language training," Woods said.

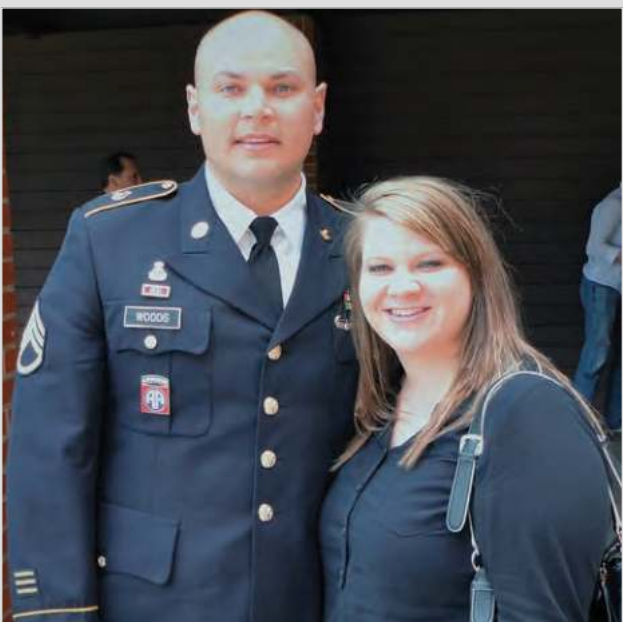
SSG Woods' assignments include tours with 3-325th AIR, Ft. Bragg, N.C.; 2-508th PIR, Ft. Bragg, N.C.; 2-16th IN, Ft. Riley, KS; Kansas City

Recruiting Battalion, Mo.; 2-34th AR, Ft. Riley, Kan.; and most recently 3rd BN, 1st Special Warfare Training Group, Ft. Bragg, N.C.; SSG Woods' combat tours include: two tours in Iraq (OIF II-III and OIF V-VI).

SSG Woods has served in many leadership positions to include Team Leader, Section Leader, Squad Leader, and Army Recruiter.

SSG Woods' military education includes Warrior Leader Course, Basic NCO Course, Advance NCO Course, Airborne School, Air Assault School, and Army Recruiter Course, Civil Affairs Qualification Course.

SSG Woods' awards and decorations include ARCOM (x5) AAM (x3) Good Conduct Medal (x3), National Defense Service Medal, ICM-CS, GWOT-EM,



GWOT-SM, NCOPD (x2), Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Ribbon, Combat Infantry Badge, Parachutist Badge, Air Assault Badge, Army Recruiter Badge (Gold). He also holds BS/BA from Post University in Waterbury, Conn.

SSG Woods is married to the former Jamie Fox of St. James, Mo. The two are expecting their first child in October.

Councilman Bryant visits Heavener



Councilman Kenny Bryant visited Heavener residents Dave Heavener, Ray Heavener, and Ray's son, Joe Heavener, on April 27. He delivered veterans caps and jackets from the Choctaw Nation to the brothers, 98-year-old Dave and 83-year-old Ray. Dave is a Navy veteran of World War II and Ray is an Army veteran who served during the Korean conflict. Both are still

active on their farms - Dave tends his garden and Ray raises cows, horses and goats.

Ratterman receives two scholarships



Chelsea Ratterman, senior at the University of Central Oklahoma, received two awards, one from the university and another from the state.

From the university, she recieved the Don and Susanne Betz Endowed Scholarship for Study Abroad which is a \$1,000 award for use in the 2015-2016 school year.

From the state, Ratterman was one of 11 students to receive the Brad Henry International Scholars award, which is a \$12,000 scholarship to study abroad at Swansea University in Swansea, Wales, UK in the fall.

McCloughry teaches heritage and more



Emily McCloughry, middle school student from Portland, Ore. shared her Choctaw family history at Stoller Middle School's family history night April 23.

As part of her presentation she included handwritten letters translated from Choctaw into English which her great-grandfather wrote to his sons.

McCloughry also received a Black Belt in Tae Kwon Do on April 25 after three years of training.

Her family said they are very proud of all her hard work.

Pruitt graduates from basic training



Air Force Airman 1st Class Chance Pruitt has graduated from basic military training at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland.

Pruitt completed an intensive, eight-week program including training in military discipline and studies, Air Force core values, physical fitness, and basic warfare principles and skills.

Airmen like Pruitt, who complete basic training, earn four credits toward an associate's

degree in applied science through the Community College of the Air Force.

Pruitt earned distinction as an honor graduate.

He is the son of Michael Pruitt, Durant, Lisa Pruitt, Ardmore, and step-son of Katy Pruitt of Durant. He is also the grandson of Dorothy and Kenneth Pruitt of Ardmore.

The airman graduated in 2009 from Dickson High School and earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Oklahoma in 2014.



McNeely on path to being game warden

Hunter McNeely graduated from Webbers Falls on May 22, and received his state FFA degree on April 29, at the state convention.

After graduation McNeely plans to continue his education at Connors State, with the intention of becoming a game warden.

Taylor celebrates 50th birthday



Happy 50th birthday William Dwayne Taylor.

Wife Brenda, mother Theda, sisters Barbara, Sharon, Pam and Rhonda, his children Channon Taylor, Ashley Heady, Cody Taylor, Tahasha Steed, Rachel Sam and all his grandchildren all wish him the best birthday ever.

Shaw places second at science fair, earns two scholarships



Randa Shaw, 8th grader at The Villages Charter Middle School, earned second place in the Junior Engineering category at the Florida State Science Fair.

Shaw qualified for state competition after earning first place titles at the regional and local levels, receiving a United States Naval Research Award, and an invitation to compete at Broadcom Masters in Washington D.C.

Her hard work also earned her two scholarships to attend academic camps at Embry-Riddle University and the National Flight Academy this summer.

Partridge takes first at STAR event



Karis Partridge, 14-year-old eighth grader from Wright City, won first place at district and regional Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCCLA) Students Taking Action with Recognition (STAR) competitive events, qualifying her to compete in the state competition.

The state competition was held in Stillwater on March 27, and Partridge won first place in the Children's Literature category.

McMillan competes in World Food Prize Arkansas Youth Institute



Karen McMillan, a sophomore of Ashdown High School in Ashdown, Ark. was one of eight outstanding Arkansas FFA members to participate in the World Food Prize Arkansas Youth Institute on April 16 in Fayetteville, Ark.

There were 64 essay submissions and eight were selected to compete on the state level. McMillan was awarded the Borlaug Scholar and an internship with the USDA. Her essay on world hunger in Cambodia has now been sent to compete at the national level.

Karen is the daughter of Eric and Heather McMillan of Ashdown, Ark.

Burroughs graduates from grade 5



Maria Burroughs graduated from the fifth grade while overcoming many struggles, including Asperger's Syndrome and a speech deficiency.

Her father, David Marks, said she has taught others it is okay to be different. He also said she has a passion for animals and people, and paints pictures.

Smith Twins celebrate birthdays

Choctaw twins Maeson and McKinlee Smith, from Durant, celebrated their second mutual birthdays on May 16.

"Wishing a very Yukpa Aiattatok Nitak to Maeson and McKinlee!" parents H. Smith and Jennifer Brackett-Smith of Durant, said.

Their grandparents are Mary and the late Davey Brackett of Bokchito, Roger and Linda Hamill of Bennington, and great grandmother Bonnie Rowland of Durant.

"Happy 2nd birthday babies!! Chi hullo li," said their parents.

McCain celebrates 60th birthday



Paula McCain will be 60 years old on June 21. She is a resident of Durant. Paula is a granddaughter of Original Enrollee Watson Kaniatobe.

Anderson to attend D.C. internship



Kyle Anderson, of Broken Bow, a member of the Tsvhka Homma stickball team, will be representing the Choctaw Nation in Washington D.C. this summer during the Washington Internships for Native American Students program.

The opportunity grants an eight week internship with classes from American University in D.C. Anderson will be interning with Compliance Evaluation and Enforcement Branch USDA-APHIS-Biotechnology Regulatory Services.

Additionally, Anderson finished his previous year in college with a 4.0 GPA, on the Dean's List, the President's List, and with perfect attendance. He will be graduating in the fall with a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice from Bacone College.



Bryant places 11th at OK Youth Expo

Isaac Bryant of Talihina 4-H placed 11th overall Commercial Gilt at the Oklahoma Youth Expo in Oklahoma City. Isaac is a proud member of the Choctaw Nation. He is pictured with his dad Aaron, Russell Pedret of Ottenwalter Showpigs, and his grandparents District 3 Councilman Kenny and Sarah Bryant.

Barnard gives cultural presentation



Courtney Barnard, an eighth-grader from Huntsville Middle School in Huntsville, Ark. recently gave a presentation on her Choctaw heritage, showing facts from history.

Her mother said she received a 100 on her presentation and it was one of the favorites amongst her fellow students.

Courtney is the daughter of Lindsey Phillips and Thomas Barnard.

OBITUARIES

Betty Ann Brewer

Betty Ann Brewer of Bokoshe was born on Jan. 24, 1935, in Rose Hill to James and Mattie (Belt) Ritter and passed away on April 2, 2015, in Bokoshe at the age of 80 years.



Betty is survived by her husband of 59 years, Andrew Jackson “Jack” Brewer; two daughters, Anita Fuller and husband, Allen Ray of Bokoshe, Linda Carol Marshall and husband, James Ronald of Broken Bow; one son, Allen Andrew Brewer and wife, Susan of Bokoshe; six grandchildren, LaDonna Nelke and husband, Donald, James R. Marshall, Jr. and wife, Tiffany, Jacky L. Marshall, Allen A. “A.J.” Brewer, Jr. and wife, Marcia, Jessica Strang and husband, Montana and Crystina Fielder and husband, Tracy; 10 great-grandchildren, Betty and Jerry Nelke, Kailyn, Skylar and Chase Marshall, Taylor, Troy and Tray Fielder, Montana Strang, Jr. and Jasper Brewer; one sister, Yvonne Forester; one brother, James Dean Ritter.

Betty was preceded in death by her parents; two sisters, Evonne and Wanda; and three brothers, Son, Roy and Charles. She loved farming.

Burial was at Old Bokoshe Cemetery. Arrangements have been entrusted to and are under the direction of Mallory Martin Funeral Home of Spiro.

Alvie Carney

Alvie Carney, 92, of Tannehill, died at his home in Tannehill on Feb. 21, 2015.



Alvie Carney was born on Feb. 1, 1923 in Tannehill to Walton and Mary (Pickens) Carney. He grew up there and has lived in Tannehill virtually all his life. He and Wanda “Johnnie” Roberts were married on Jan. 11, 1944 in McAlester and celebrated their 70th anniversary just six months before Wanda’s passing.

Soon after his marriage he joined the U.S. Marines and was assigned to the Asiatic/Pacific theater. He was involved in action against the Japanese during the battle for Iwo Jima and the occupation of Japan. Among several medals and citations he received, he was awarded the Silver Star for “conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity” during intense combat action.

Upon returning to McAlester he furthered his education, receiving his bachelor’s degree from Oklahoma A&M (Oklahoma State University). He worked for a short time at the old Stringtown Juvenile Detention center, then began a long career with the Oklahoma State Employment Service where he helped many people in this area find jobs. He also maintained a ranch at Tannehill all his life.

Alvie was always involved in community and Choctaw tribal activities. He was a recipient of “Parent of the Year” award from the Oklahoma Council for Indian Education. He loved helping kids and coached recreational softball and baseball for several years. He was also an avid bowler for many years. He was a 50-year member of the Masonic Lodge as well as being an active Shriner for many years. He was a long time member of the McAlester Elks Lodge and was a life member of the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Disabled American Veterans. He was a long time member of the First Presbyterian Church of McAlester.

Surviving relatives: one daughter and son-in-law, Paulette and Don Groves of Yukon; one son and daughter-in-law, Richard and Susanne Carney of McAlester; four grandchildren, Rocky Groves and wife Melissa, Mitzi Doster, Joshua Carney, Caleb Carney; three great-grandchildren, Isaiah Doster, Kylie Groves, Lily Groves; three sisters, Happy Carney of Tannehill, Betty Mathews of Tulsa, Hazel Going of Tannehill; brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, Nathaniel Thomas of Blanchard, Charles and Gail Russell of Quinton, Sue Anderson of Quinton; several nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents; his wife, Wanda on July 24, 2014; a daughter, Mary Ann Carney Harry; and two brothers, Joe and Tommy Carney.

Military honors were provided by the United States Marine Corps and the Choctaw Nation Honor Guard. Interment was in Zion Cemetery. Funeral arrangements under the direction of Brumley-Mills Funeral Home of McAlester.

The family requests donations be made to the Therapeutic Equestrian Association of McAlester at P. O. Box 3056, McAlester, Okla. 74502.

Gwen Swift

Gwen Swift of Spiro, was born on Jan. 21, 1954 in Fort Smith, Ark. to Martha Sue (Stout) Phillips and Bobby Joe Schuster and passed away on April 5, 2015 in Fort Smith, Ark. at the age of 61 years.



Gwen is survived by her husband Manuel of the Home; one daughter Heather Richison and husband, Shawn of Spiro; five grandchildren, Ryan, Raegan, Kaysen, Reed and Jana; one sister, Jackie Knobelsdorff and husband, Jim of Spiro; her mother, Susie (Stout) Phillips of Spiro; numerous other family and friends.

Gwen was preceded in death by her father.

She was a member of First Baptist Church of Spiro. She loved her family and she also enjoyed plants, flowers and antiques.

Burial was at New Hope Cemetery. Arrangements have been entrusted to and are under the direction of Mallory-Martin Funeral Home of Spiro.

Terry Wayne Thompson

Terry Wayne Thompson, 48, passed away on April 22, 2015.



Terry was born on Aug. 25, 1966 in Ardmore to Nathan Thompson, Jr. and Shirley (Sampson) Thompson. He attended and graduated with the class of 1986 from Ardmore High School. Beginning his career with Blue Bonnet Feed, he worked as a supervisor. In 2011, he had to end his employment after 25 years, due to his health. Terry loved playing softball with the Ardmore Buc’s. He will be remembered for his passion for cooking. Family was important and he enjoyed attending his nephew’s sporting events. He loved being with family and friends, where his laugh and smile will be missed.

He is preceded in death by his mother, Shirley Thompson; and niece Alyson Sampson.

Terry is survived by his father, Nathan Thompson, Jr.; one son, Jayden Sampson, of the home; one daughter, Cherissa Johnson; three brothers, Darrell Sampson, Kendall Thompson and wife, Darla Christie, Warren Sampson, and his fiancé, Shan-nan Spain; sister, Vicki Harris and husband, Joel; special aunts, Shirley Dean Sampson, of the home, and Joy Ann McMillan; special uncles, Ronald Sampson and Edwin Thompson; numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and a host of friends.

Graveside services were held at Durwood Cemetery, Marshall County, with Rev. Wayne Harjo officiating.

Robert Joel Nelson

Robert Joel Nelson, 72, of Carmi, Ill., passed away on April 14, 2015. He was born Aug. 21, 1942, the son of David R. and Tessie E. (Thomas) Nelson.



Robert married the love of his life, Leah Rae Ziegler on July 15, 1961 and celebrated nearly 52 years of marriage before she passed away in 2013. Robert and Leah had two children, Tony Nelson and Debbie Nelson.

Robert was an avid traveler and enjoyed many trips, which included visiting several national parks with his children and grandchildren. He last attended Emmanuel United Methodist of Carmi, Ill. Robert attended Carmi schools and then worked for his family’s business, Nelson Midwest Contractors, before founding Nelson Pipe & Supply Inc. and serving as its president.

Robert is survived by a daughter, Debbie Nelson and a son, Tony and his wife, Sarah (Pereboom) Nelson of Carmi, Ill.; also grandchildren, Tessie Nelson of Evansville, Ind., Todd and his wife, Catherine (Ong) Nelson of Las Vegas, Nevada, Andrew Nelson and his fiancé, Molly Lott of Louisville, Ky.; and companion, Kathy Brooks of Carmi, Ill. He is also survived by sisters Joe Ann Beeson and her husband, Jack of Edmond, nephew David; June Walker and her husband, Richard of Antlers, niece Barbara and nephew Bobby; a brother, Elwood Nelson and his wife, Ruth of Antlers, nieces Peggy, Jimmie, and Suzie and nephew Butch; a niece, Jody Witzel of Oklahoma City, a niece, Lea Ann Richmond and nephews, Jeff Nelson and Steve Nelson. Surviving sisters-in-law include Donna Abshier of Findlay, Ohio, niece Liz and nephew Mike; and Rita Wilson and her husband, Tom of Upper Tract, W.V., nephews Scott and Jace; and Betty Nelson of Carmi, Ill.

Those preceding him in death are his parents David R. and Tessie E. Nelson; brothers Pat Nelson of Carmi and David Nelson and nephew, Tom Nelson, both of Antlers; a nephew, Bill Bingman of Rock Springs, Wyo.; sisters-in-law, Benny Nelson of Antlers, and Grace Nelson of Oklahoma City; and a brother-in-law, Joe Abshier of Findlay, Ohio.

Graveside funeral and burial services for Robert J. Nelson were held on April 18, 2015 Maple Ridge Cemetery in Carmi, Ill., with Rev. Steve Nelson officiating.

Eulema ‘Jerry’ Merle Welton Moore Bossier

Eulema “Jerry” Merle Welton Moore Bossier, 88, departed this life at her home on April 8, 2015, in Baton Rouge for the long awaited reunion with her Heavenly family.



Jerry was born in Hodgen on Sept. 30, 1926, of her parents, both deceased, Scotch-Irish/Cherokee father, John Vendor Welton, and mother Elizabeth Mertzel Harris Welton, Choctaw (-Chickasaw) and original Choctaw enrollee.

She grew up with three brothers, John Vendor, Jr., Truman Tate, and William Henry - all deceased, and five sisters, Eva Deaver, Melva Guinn, Cosma Godfrey - deceased, surviving: Marcella Widmar of Poteau, and Cordella Harrison and husband Robert of Blacksburg, Va.

Having been raised in Oklahoma during the Great Depression, working on the family farm, she cultivated her industrious spirit and instilled a selfless and unrelenting love of family. Jerry’s affection for her family and her ardent inquisitiveness motivated her through nursing school after World War II to become an exclusive, retained, private practice RN. Shortly after her graduation, she met and married her first husband, William ‘Bill’ Parke Moore, Jr. of Fort Smith, Ark. The small family moved to Baton Rouge, La. in 1952 to raise their four sons, William Parke, III of Weyanoke, La., Richard Allen of Baton Rouge, La., Donald Wayne and wife Kim Guidry of Baton Rouge, La., and Welton Lee and wife Chris White of Adrian, Mich. Together, they made their home and eventually opened four Carolina Fabrics stores. Jerry’s matriarchal nature was put into practice raising the four boys, attending the local schools, and worshipping at First Lutheran Church and then joining the new and growing ministry at Trinity Lutheran Church. Jerry was widowed in 1989.

In March 1995, she married Harding William Bossier of Baton Rouge. The two spent the first years of their marriage travelling the world, enjoying the splendour of God’s Earth, and most especially, the love He bestowed to them, which overflowed to both of their families.

Her Moore grandchildren: William Parke, IV, Kelli Christine, Christian Ian, Tracy Anne, Donald Wayne, Jr., London Elise, Kelsey Christine, Madison Leigh, Sydney Katherine, and numerous step-grandchildren. Jerry was also blessed with eight great-grandchildren.

Daughter, sister, wife, mother, grandmother, and GiGi, Jerry set an example for our family; she was the most selfless of all whom we knew. We miss her dearly and, because of her, we are enduringly grateful for having such a revenant, loving, and wholesome role model. Surviving Jerry are step-children: Julia and Bob Simmons of Kiowah, S.C., William and Lorraine Bossier, of Baton Rouge, La., Ann and Greg Eggart of Broussard, La., and James and Erica Bossier, of Baton Rouge, La.

Interment was at Green Oaks Cemetery in Baton Rouge, La. Contributions, in lieu of flowers, may be made in her name to Baton Rouge Lutheran School, 10925 Florida Blvd, Baton Rouge, La.

Anna Jo Hutchinson

Anna Jo Hutchinson passed from this life at her home in Calera on April 19, 2015 at the age of 58. She was born on March 14, 1957 in Dallas, Texas to Harvey and Norma Jean (Phillips) Smith. Anna married Dwayne Hutchinson in Dension, Texas on Aug. 17, 1993.



Mrs. Hutchinson is survived by her husband, Dwayne Hutchinson of Calera; children, Melissa Smith of Durant, Angel Mayfield of Durant, Brian Hutchinson of Durant and Justin Hutchinson of Calera; mother, Norma Smith of Durant; brothers, Danny Smith of Durant, Benny Smith of Durant, Corbin Smith of Durant, Sammy Taylor of Durant; sister, JoQuita Smith of Durant; grandchildren, Whitney Delozier of Durant, Jimmy Don Delozier of Durant, Joshua Delozier of Durant, Anna Mayfield of Durant, Norma Mayfield of Durant, Jackson Lacey of Mead, Mysti Hutchinson of Mead, Madison Hutchinson of Mineral Springs, Ark., Serena Hutchinson of Calera, Karely Hutchinson of Colbert and Jenea Hutchinson.

Mrs. Hutchinson was preceded in death by her father, Harvey C. Smith; grandson, Roy Lee Mayfield; grandparents, Herman (LT) and Mildred Smith and Joseph and Jane Phillips; and numerous aunts, uncles, and a special grandson, Michael Smith.

Interment was at Highland Cemetery in Durant. Services under the direction of Holmes-Coffey-Murray Funeral Home, Durant.

Kitty Moss Smith Pitson

Kitty Moss Smith Pitson, 94, passed away on April 18, 2015 surrounded by her beloved family. Kitty bravely fought with a strong faith, everlasting hopefulness, and astounding grace. She lived a wonderful life of happiness with a loving spirit that will live on in memory.



Kitty was born in Russett, on April 1, 1921. Kitty was one of 14 brothers and sisters. She took pride in her Native American heritage and was an enrolled member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. She met and married her devoted, loving husband Charles Pitson in 1939. Together Charles and Kitty had two children, Gary Joe and Linda Sue “Suzie.”

Kitty is preceded in death by her husband Charlie Pitson; father, Joel Hinton Smith and mother, Dora Mae Moss Smith; sister, Francis Louise Downs, sister, Dixie Mae Smith, brother, Vernon Joel “Dan” Smith, sister, Imogene “Jean” Key, brother, Barney Fulson “Nate” Smith, brother, Victor Dick “Poe” Smith, brother, Maurice June Smith, brother, Charles Clinton Smith, and sister Rebecca Ann Smith Dunston; daughter-in-law, Lila Pitson; and longtime friend Alex Sandefur.

Kitty is survived by son, Gary Joe Pitson of Tecumseh; daughter, Linda Sue “Suzie” Roschal of Houston; grandsons, John Roschal of Houston, and Bill Tinsley of Spring, Texas; grand-daughters, Christy Nguyen of Houston and Renda Roschal of Spring, Texas; great-grandsons, Gary Gene Pitson of Seminole, Billy Ryan Tinsley of Oklahoma City, Zac Nguyen of Houston, Zane Nguyen of Houston and Spencer Villarreal of Houston; great-granddaughters, Anna Nguyen of Houston, Amy Nguyen of Houston and Marizza Villarreal of Houston; great-great-grandson, Brayden Tinsley of Oklahoma City; great-great-granddaughter, Kaylea Tinsley of Oklahoma City; sister, Marge Farris of Marlow; brother, George Smith of Iowa Park, Texas; sister, Flo Stewart of Lebanon, Okla., sister, Delnia Crum of Canton, Texas; and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.

In lieu of flowers, please send donations to the preservation of Kitty’s hometown community-operated cemetery, The Lebanon Cemetery, PO Box 202 Lebanon, OK 73440.

Milo ‘Mack’ MacArthur Ott

Milo “Mack” MacArthur Ott, 72, passed away April 16, 2015.



Mack was born July 28, 1942 in McAlester to Sam and Alpha Ott. He proudly served in the United States Army. Mack enjoyed working in the yard and was an excellent mechanic. Nothing brought more joy to his life than being with his family.

He is preceded in death by his parents; wife, Darelle Wynette Ott; brother, J.T. Ott; and sister, Rose Munholland.

Survivors include son, Michael Ott and wife Cheryl of Billings, Montana; daughter, Leah Dell Utter and husband Terry of Fritch, Texas; 11 grandchildren, Mikayla, Hailee, Shanell, Logan and wife Becky, Bailee, Regan, Tiffany, Jamie, Jansyn, Jade, Madison; three great-grandchildren, Nashiah, Chase, Eden; and brother, Henry Ott and wife Alice of Borger, Texas.

Burial was in Highland Park Cemetery under the direction of Minton Chatwell Funeral Directors of Borger, Texas.

Bessie Mae Prewitt

On April 18, 2015 our dear mother, Bessie Mae Prewitt, left this family to be with her Father and family in heaven. She was born on Jan. 15, 1927 to John Wade and Emma Cora Bell. She was a member of Sylvan Hills Church of Christ and retired from Maybelline. She was proud of her American Indian heritage and being a member of the Choctaw Nation.



She was preceded in death by her husband James H. Prewitt Sr.; parents; sisters Thelma Russell, Onita Whalen and Dorthy Davis; and brother William Bell.

She leaves behind to cherish her memories children Patricia “Corky” Gibbs and her husband Wayne, James H. “Bo” Prewitt, Jr., and Mary Onita Prewitt; grandchildren Jason Wayne Gibbs and wife Nikki, Teffany Ann Sadler and husband Aaron, Carol Zimmerman and husband Matt, Jason Bagwell and wife Lindsey; great-grandchildren Coletton Marshall Gibbs, Emily Grace Zimmerman, Ridge Wade Sadler; brothers Cecil Bell and wife Mary, Walter Bell and wife Glenda, Bobby Bell and wife Delia; and a host of nieces and nephews.

Graveside services were held at Grissard Cemetery in El Paso, Ark.

Phyllis (Bully) Knight

Phyllis (Bully) Knight, a beloved and longtime resident of Bennington, passed away in Oklahoma City on April 13, 2015 at the age of 75.



She was born in Bennington on Oct. 22, 1939 to George and Minerva (Billey) Bully. Phyllis Bully was married to George Bully who preceded her in death. Phyllis loved her Durant Community family. She enjoyed taking trips with her senior citizens group. Phyllis loved to sew for herself and others, going to gospel singings and planting and caring for the grounds around her home.

Mrs. Knight is survived by her grandsons, Brian Hammond of Bokchito, and Michael Hammond of Bennington; sisters, Verna Peters of Pampa, Texas, Eleanore Palmer of Durant, Bernice Williams of Bennington, and Lou Fobb of White Oak, Texas; brother, James Pamplin of Fort Worth, Texas and numerous nieces and nephews.

Mrs. Knight was preceded in death by her parents, George and Minerva Bully; sons, Larry and Mike Hammond; sister, Joann Frank; brothers, Claude Bully and Arnold Bully.

Interment was at the Bennington Cemetery. Services are under the direction of Holmes-Coffey-Murray Funeral Home, Durant.

Obituary Policy

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

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

OBITUARIES

Kenneth Mark Monette

Kenneth Mark Monette, 76, died Jan. 1, 2015 in the ICU of Lovelace Hospital in downtown Albuquerque.

He was born Feb. 7, 1938 in Bennington. His formative years through the 8th grade were in Muskogee, where he attended Sacred Heart Catholic School. He was a paperboy, Boy Scout and an altar boy. His high school years were spent at St. Paul's High School in Marty, South Dakota on the Yankton Sioux Reservation. There he excelled in in both academics (especially geometry and algebra) and sports. He was frequently on the Honor Roll. He graduated in 1956 and was awarded a scholarship to Xavier University. In 1955 he was named Most Valuable Player at the Yankton Quarter-Back Club Banquet. While away at school during his junior year in 1955, the family moved to Albuquerque, becoming one of the original 800 families of Princess Jeanne Park.

He began his Army career Aug. 17, 1956. He retired as Sgt. 1st Class on Nov. 30, 1979 at Fort Bliss, Texas. His Army adventures included being a paratrooper and a Military Police Officer. He completed two tours in Korea and three in Vietnam and received numerous accolades including medals for his service. After retiring from the military he spent the rest of his life as a security guard.

While stationed in Germany he met and married his wife, Irmela "Amy" Sydor.

Preceding Ken in death were four children: Ralph, Sandra, Anthony, and Sharon; parents, Walter and Emma Monette; and brothers, Michael and David. The latter four are buried at the National Cemetery in Santa Fe, N.M.

Surviving Ken is his wife of 55 years, "Amy;" his daughter, Audrey Bailey and husband Vernon; five sisters Donna Monette, Patricia "Patty" Riordan and husband Mike, Martha "Marty" Monette, Anne "Bebe" Monette, Carol Monette; and two brothers, John and Neil. He is also survived by four grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; and numerous nephews and nieces.

Burial was at the National Cemetery in Santa Fe, N.M.

Linda J. Wilson

Linda J. Wilson, 63, passed away on Feb. 13, 2015 in Carmichael, Calif.

Linda J. Wilson was born Sept. 13, 1951 in Talihina. She is survived by a brother, Calvin Coolidge ("Chiefy") Wilson and wife Barbara; brother Anthony Ray ("Tony") Wilson and wife Melvis; eight nieces and three nephews; ten great-nephews and four great-nieces; uncle Benny Ray Austin and wife Quannie; aunt Betty Austin; and many cousins.

Her love and generosity for family and friends had no limit. She would help you with her last dollar. She loved her Choctaw Nation heritage and all other native inter-tribal cultures. She enjoyed her western movies and programs and let's not forget "Elvis." Linda will be greatly missed.

A memorial service was held Feb. 13, 2015 at East Lawn Mortuary Chapel in Sacramento, Calif.

Anthony (Tony) Freeman

Tony Freeman, 50, the son of Shirley Hankins and Frankie Freeman, passed away in Saginaw, Texas on March 28, 2015. Tony was employed with Southwest Freight. Tony attended Irving High School.

Survivors include, his mother Shirley Hankins and father Frankie Freeman of Italy, Texas; sister Linda Calhoun of Grand Prairie, Texas; nephew Larry Goletto of Grand Prairie, Texas; niece Crystal Freeman of Grand Prairie, Texas; great-nephews Josh Freeman and Chris Freeman of Fort Worth, Texas; numerous cousins that were like brothers and sisters; and special friend Carla Hoffman May.

Tony is preceded in death by his brother David Freeman.

Tony was a loving son, brother, uncle and friend to all and whom will be greatly missed. Tony was a successful tissue, bone and cornea donor.

Tony had a love for life and helping other people whenever possible. He loved nothing more than to make people laugh. He loved riding his Harley, loved fishing, and beating on his drums to the annoyance of the neighbors.

Interment was at Oak Grove Memorial Gardens, Irving, Texas.

Pamela Kay Daugherty

Pamela Kay Daugherty, 64, passed away on March 29, 2015, at her home in Levelland, Texas.

She was born to Vernon E. and Edna Marie Garland on March 28, 1951 in Ponca City.

She married Bill Edward Daugherty on Aug. 2, 1968 in Ponca City.

She previously worked at Ann's Furniture and Zane's Specialty in Levelland while pursuing her Associates Degree in medical transcription at South Plains College. Her hobbies included crocheting, fishing, bowling, baking and raising her children and grandchildren. She was a lifetime member of Foursquare Pentecostal Church.

She was preceded in death by her parents, a brother, a sister, and her husband.

She is survived by her daughters, Paula Kay Kane of Levelland, Texas and Esther Mae Layland of Pawhuska; sons William Robert "Billy Bob" Daugherty of San Antonio and Technical Sgt. William Edward "Wes" Daugherty of Okinawa, Japan; brother Ricky Vernon Garland of Levelland, Texas; six grandchildren: Bobby, Megan, Ezra, Julie, Carrie and Amanda; and seven great-grandchildren.

Memorial services for Pamela were held on April 4, 2015, at Bethel Fellowship Church with Minister Tommy Goode of Midland-Odessa officiating.

John Dewayne Stewart

John Dewayne Stewart, 42, of Talihina, passed away May 12, 2015 in Wilburton. He was born on Nov. 18, 1972.

He loved his family and enjoyed spending time with them, being outdoors and fishing.

He is survived by his children: daughter Jessica Stewart of Wilburton, son William Stewart of Bokoshe and Maverick Stewart of Spiro; sister Tina Stewart of Talihina; father Ronald Stewart of Talihina; brother Kelly Van Valkenberg of Talihina; granddaughter Jacqueline Stewart; and a host of family and friends.

Cecil Delane Nicholson

Cecil Delane Nicholson was born on Sept. 17, 1946 in Frederick to Cleo Nicholson and Claretta Murphy.

He is survived by Linda Nicholson, the love of his life for more than 45 years; his son David and daughter-in-law Stephanie of Cypress, Texas, along with two grandsons, Brian Delane II and Stephen Andrew. He was also blessed with multiple siblings: four brothers, Ligene Nicholson (deceased), JB Nicholson, Sam Webster, George Webster, and his baby sister Debbie Fagen; as well as numerous nephews and nieces.

Cecil grew up in eastern Oklahoma and was always proud of his Choctaw heritage and affiliation. He joined the U.S. Navy in 1966, serving as a Corpsman stationed in Danang, Vietnam. He married Linda in 1970. In 1972 he began a 40-year career as inside salesman in the oil industry, retiring from Drilling Controls in 2012.

He loved family get-togethers and was especially famous for his fireworks, homemade ice cream and fried shrimp. After becoming a grandfather in 2002, his grandchildren became the apple of his eye. This past year as he battled illness, his optimism and positive spirit were amazing.

Cecil lost his fight on April 22, 2015 at home in his own bed with wife Linda and son David by his side. Cecil, we will miss you greatly but we celebrate the life of a great human being.

Mary Jo Turner Anderson

Mary Jo Turner Anderson of Shady Point was born on April 11, 1934 to Dwight and Rulie (Smith) Turner in Quinton, and passed away on April 26, 2015 in Fort Smith, Ark. at the age of 81.

Mary Jo is survived by her husband Grady of the home; two sons, Rickey White of Spiro and Frank White of Bakersfield, Calif.; eight grandchildren, Ashley, Whitney, Lance, Jeb, Anthony, Wayne, Steve, and Mike; eight great-grandchildren; one sister, Georgia Turner of Bakersfield, Calif.; two brothers, Jeff Turner of Bakersfield, Calif., and Kenneth Turner of Bakersfield, Calif.; numerous other family and friends.

Mary was preceded in death by her parents; her second husband, A.B. Anderson; and three sons, Greg, Charles and Steven White.

She was a member of Lakeview Baptist Church and the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Mary Jo attended school in the Lamont school district where she loved to play softball and was an avid reader. She enjoyed old western and detective movies. She worked as a laborer in many different fields, and was co-owner of Mom and Pops Drive-In.

She was married to Bennie White for 21 years, raised five boys and was a hard worker all her life. She retired and moved back to Oklahoma in 2004 and reunited with Grady in 2005 and has been married for the last 10 years.

Burial was in Spiro City Cemetery. Arrangements have been entrusted to the care and direction of Mallory-Martin Funeral Home of Spiro.

Billy Fred Richardson

Billy Fred Richardson passed away on May 13, 2015 in Strasburg, Va., where he lived with his wife Margaret Richardson. He was the son of Fred and Ethel Richardson and was born on May 23, 1922 in Hartshorne.

He grew up on a farm in the Sulphur community east of Hartshorne and attended Sulphur Grade School and graduated from Hartshorne High School.

He was a World War II veteran, having served two years in the Navy as an electrician's mate (third class), receiving the Victory Medal, American Campaign Medal, Four-Star Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal and the One-Star Philippine Liberation Campaign Ribbon while serving in the Pacific region on the USS Nantahala.

After the war he worked at the ammunition depot near McAlester, from which he retired after a 30-year service career. During the same time period and after retirement, he was a self-employed electrician, fixing almost anything electrical, wiring and updating his customer's homes in the Pittsburg County region.

He loved being with his family and had many bluegrass music friends whom he played with on many occasions. Many of those occasions were at nursing homes around the McAlester area. He was a member of the Indian Baptist Church in McAlester.

He married Margaret Workman on Sept. 21, 1954 in Wilburton. Together they had two sons, John William and Benny Fred.

He is preceded in death by his son Benny Fred; his parents, Fred and Ethel; and two sisters, Lucile Richardson and Lillian Edge.

He is survived by wife Margaret; son John and his wife Louann; grandson P.J. Richardson and his wife; great-granddaughter Wren; great-grandsons Issic and Syllas; sister-in-law Johnny Fite; brother-in-law P.J. Workman and his wife; many nieces and nephews and many friends in Oklahoma and Virginia.

Wanda Okemah Gray Williams

Wanda Okemah Gray Williams, 91, passed away on May 2, 2015, at her home in Duncan.

She was born on Aug. 28, 1923 to William Riley and Maude Myrtle (Goodwin) Gray, in Graham. Wanda spent the first few years of her life in Oklahoma and then moved with her family to Littlefield, Texas, in 1927 where she grew up. Wanda moved to Duncan in 1955 where she lived for the last 60 years. She married Warren "Dale" Williams on March 3, 1973. They were together for 34 years before he preceded her in death on Feb. 16, 2006. Wanda and Dale loved to travel. She always enjoyed social activities with family as well as church family. Wanda was a strong and determined person who always kept going. She will be greatly missed by her family and friends.

Her husband Dale, her brothers, Preston, Kenneth, and Calvin Gray, and her niece Cindy Gray Parton preceded Wanda in death.

She is survived by her niece and nephews, Preston and wife Anita Gray of Ardmore, Kenneth and wife Zo Gray of Duncan, Marlina and husband Mark Sharp of Norman; great nieces and nephews include Lisa and husband Gordon Wilkinson and their two children, Linda and husband Craig MacDonald and their three children, Will and wife Julia Gray and their two children, Emily and husband Darrell Patterson and their four children, Caleb and wife Tiffany Gray, Michael Parton, James Parton and his son, Nicholas Sharp and Lindsay Sharp; two step-sons Mike Williams and his wife Susan of Wichita, Kansas and Richard Williams and his wife Peggy of Waco, Texas.

Interment was in the Duncan Cemetery.

Willie Mae Thomas

Willie Mae Thomas, 94, of Plainview, passed away on April 22, 2015. Willie Mae was born July 13, 1920, in Spencerville to James and Rachel Pearl (Westfall) Wall.

She married Joe Lee Thomas on Jan. 3, 1935. She was a woman who always placed others before herself. She dedicated her life to Christ and her children. She took pride in her writing, appearance and gardening. She was an accomplished writer who read and studied the Holy Bible for inspiration. Her writings focused on her family and faith. She lived life in such a way to bring honor to her children and grandchildren. She was a member of First Assembly of God Church in Plainview.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Joe Lee Thomas; daughter, Dimple Baird and her son, Vernon Thomas.

Survivors include two sons, Jessie Leo Thomas and Carlos Richard Thomas; six daughters, Helen Lipham, Anna Marie Odell, Lavon Reid, Kathy Phlenger, Connie Gourdon and Judy Rhiner; and 32 grandchildren. She was so proud to be a sixth-generation grandmother and loved all of her great-grandchildren.

Interment was at Plainview Memorial Cemetery under the personal care of Lemons Funeral Home.

Richard Belvin

Richard Belvin, 65, of Boswell, passed away on May 11, 2015 in Hugo.

Richard Mark Belvin was born June 3, 1949 in Talihina, the son of Henry and Sarah Belvin and had lived all of his life in Boswell.

Richard was a roofer working in construction. He was a member of Goodspring Presbyterian Church, Boswell and a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Richard enjoyed fishing.

Survivors include two sons, Richard Mark Belvin, Jr. and wife, Deborah Ann of Shawnee, and Henry Harrison Jonas Belvin and fiancée, Debbie of Indianola; five brothers, Virgil "Buddy" Belvin of Valliant, Dante Belvin of Boswell, John Robert Belvin of Boswell, Solomon James Belvin of Shawnee, and Jerry Paul Belvin of Boswell; two sisters Sarah Virginia Rutledge of Millerton, and Debra Elaine Bacon of Boswell; 12 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; several nieces and nephews along with many other relatives and friends.

His parents preceded him in death. He was also preceded in death by a son, James Watson Belvin; brothers and sisters, Henry Harrison Belvin, Vernon Lee Belvin, Clovis Lavada Duke, Jimmie Lou Hunt and Baby Boy Belvin.

Graveside services were held at Goodspring Cemetery outside of Boswell.

Raymond Earl Hawkins

Raymond Earl Hawkins was born Feb. 24, 1928 in Pomona, Calif., the son of Isaac Daniel and Ida May (Cummings) Hawkins. He passed from this life on May 13, 2015 in Tulsa at the age of 87 years, two months and 19 days.

Raymond was a resident of west Tulsa and had previously lived in Pawnee. He was a World War II Navy veteran and a member of the DAV Chapter 32. Throughout his life Raymond pastored many churches and served in law enforcement. He enjoyed doing yard work and gardening. He was of the Baptist faith. In 1948 he married Thelma Howard and together they raised four children. She preceded him in death on Sept. 30, 2012 after 64 years of marriage. He was also preceded in death by both his parents; two brothers and one sister.

His survivors include daughter, Sherry Comeaux of Arkansas; son, Nick Hawkins and wife, Sheryl of Tulsa; daughter, Jeannie Herer of Nevada and daughter, Leannie Flammer and husband, Doug of Arizona; seven grandchildren and several great-grandchildren.

He was laid to rest alongside his wife, Thelma, in a graveside service in Highland Cemetery in Pawnee. Arrangements are under the direction of Heath-Griffith Funeral Home in Tulsa.

Clifton Wayne Clay

Clifton Wayne Clay was born Feb. 25, 1981 in Talihina, the son of Keno Clay and Linda Sue (Taylor) Clay and had lived in the Choctaw and Pushmataha County area all of his life. He departed this life on May 15, 2015 at the age of 34 years, two months and 20 days.

He was preceded in death by his mother; paternal grandparents, Eugene (Blue) Clay and Mary Frances Clay; and one niece, Taylor Clay.

Clifton enjoyed playing softball and loved spending time with his family and friends, especially his children.

Survivors include his father, Keno and wife, Staci of Hugo; daughter, Jasmine Clay of Wright City; son, Titan Clay of Antlers; maternal grandparents, Edgar and Hazel Taylor of Goodwater; paternal grandmother, Ellen Clay of Daisy; four brothers, Layman Clay and wife, Donna of Antlers, Kerry Clay and wife, Taleesha of Rattan, Robert Williams of Broken Bow and Hank Williams of Rattan; one sister, Lorenda Loftin and husband, T.J. of Pigeon Forge, Tenn.; numerous nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, cousins and a host of other relatives and friends.

Interment was in Goodwater Cemetery in Sobol.

Loeta Barker Hays

Funeral services for Loeta Barker Hays, 94, were held on May 20, 2015 in the Centennial Chapel of Harvey-Douglas Funeral Home conducted by Rev. David Gardner. Interment was at the Lone Grove Cemetery.

The daughter of the late William Sims and Amy (Nix) Sims, Loeta was born on Feb. 17, 1921 in Haskell County; she passed away on May 16, 2015 in a local nursing facility.

Loeta and Edward Tracy "Ed" Barker were married in 1941.

An Ardmore resident most of her life, Loeta was of the Baptist faith. She enjoyed fishing, dancing, gardening, working and cooking. For several years she cooked and did food preparation in the restaurant of the Holiday Inn.

Loeta's greatest love was for her family, especially spending time with them. She truly valued her time with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Survivors include her son, Eddie Barker and loving friend Jeanie Robinson; two granddaughters, Patti Barker Hunt, her husband Stefan, and their children Austin and Preslee Hunt; Kelly Barker Miller, her husband Wesley, and their children Hallee Womack, Landon, Maddison, and Cadence Miller; also numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.

In addition to her parents; a brother, Buddy Sims; sisters, Hester Horton, Eula Griffin, Bula Ward and Bernice Ratcliffe preceded her in death.



EDUCATION

Stanley excels at academics and athletics



Hunter David Stanley, 10th grade student, displayed his skills in sports and academics during competitions throughout his student career with his team members at Coleman High School, often reaching state-level. When he was in ninth grade his academic team competed in the State Academic meet where they finished as state runner-ups. This year, his tenth grade year, they qualified for the state competition and again finished as state runner-ups. Also, in the fall of this year he played first base for his high school baseball team as they competed in the State Play-offs.

Toloso earns bachelor’s degrees



Ron and Jill (Taylor) Toloso of Huntsville, Utah are pleased to announce the graduation of their daughter Gloria Avalon Toloso from Utah State University. She earned a Bachelor’s of Science in Elementary Education and a Bachelor’s of Science in Early Childhood Education with a graduating GPA of 3.7. She is currently interviewing for school districts in Utah. Toloso graduated from Weber High School in 2010 as the English Sterling Scholar, where she was also first chair of the second violin section, edited and wrote for the school newspaper, and won several poetry writing contests.

At Utah State University, she was Historian for the English Honor Society, taught writing as a Writing Fellow, was Assistant to the Director for the Utah History Fair, and completed her student teaching at the Adele and Dale Young Child Development Laboratory, Millville Elementary, and Canyon Elementary. She received grants from the Choctaw Nation for each year she was at Utah State University and is grateful for the opportunity she had to succeed at school with help from the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Toloso is the great-great granddaughter of original Choctaw enrollees Ida and John Self of McAlester.

Yanez-Brokeshoulder ranks first academically for her high school



Sienna Yanez-Brokeshoulder attends Coolidge High School in Coolidge, Ariz. She is in the 10th grade. Her cumulative GPA is 4.25 and current GPA is 4.4. She is ranked 1 out of 160 in her class at Coolidge High School. Yanez-Brokeshoulder takes Honors Chemistry, Honors Algebra 2, Honors English 10, and AP World History. She made the Blue Honor roll during the first semester of this school year with a GPA above 4.0. She is on the Varsity Softball team and plays second base. She is also on the National Honor Society. Yanez-Brokeshoulder plans to go to college and study medicine in order to become a surgeon.

Wilson earns Parsons Scholarship



Cache High School senior Brianne Wilson earned a Parsons Scholarship from the Honors Program at Southeastern Oklahoma State University. This scholarship provides a waiver for all tuition and fees, book allowance, and room and board at Southeastern. The scholarship is renewable for four years, if the student maintains a cumulative 3.00 grade-point-average and completes 30 semester hours per year. Wilson was one of three Parsons Scholarship recipients this year. Wilson, who will also receive a music scholarship, plans to double major in Biology and Chemistry.

Riggin earns master’s degree



Brittany Ingram Riggin earned a master’s degree in counseling psychology with honors from the University of Central Oklahoma this may. Riggin is a descendant of original enrollee Milburn Cisney Ingram. She wishes to thank the Choctaw Nation and everyone in the Higher Education Department for support which enabled her to complete her degree. Riggin plans to continue her education and pursue a PhD in Psychology.



Jones graduates as valedictorian

Ashley Jones graduates in 2015 as valedictorian at Anadarko High School. She is the daughter of Shelby and Deanna Jones and the granddaughter of Arnold and Betty Jones.

Moore earns degree from OU



Kerwin Wayne Moore graduated from the University of Oklahoma (OU) in May of 2015 with a Bachelor of Architecture and a minor in Geography. Kerwin is the son of Stephanie Barboan and Wayne Moore. He is the oldest grandchild of Shirley and the late Daniel Barboan, and of Mary Lou and the

late Billy Paul Baker, former District 2 Councilman. Kerwin is also the oldest sibling of Kira Moore and Jared Pritchett. Kerwin attended school in Wright City and Durant, and graduated from Durant High School in 2009. He attended Southeastern Oklahoma State University his freshman year, then transferred to the OU to pursue architecture. Kerwin plans to stay in Oklahoma for a while and hopes to serve the tribes of Oklahoma with architecture. Kerwin would like to give many thanks to the Choctaw Nation for continued support throughout his college career.

Batton Scholar Spotlight: Twahna Hamill



(Editor’s note: This is the first in a series about the six recipients of the Batton Family Scholarship, offered since 2012 to Choctaw students who are nearing graduation at Southeastern Oklahoma State University.)

Twahna Hamill feels a deep connection to her ancestors. Her family hails from Bennington as well as the Choctaw Reservation in Mississippi. This has helped guide her path toward a Bachelor’s degree and now her pursuit of a Master’s in Native American Leadership. Hamill was one of the first recipients of the Gary & Angie Batton Family Scholarship in 2012. The scholarship opened many doors for her, allowing her to concentrate on classes and participate in a Native Studies course that took her to the Natchez Trace in Mississippi. “I loved it, it was beyond the experience of a lifetime,” she said. “I’ve been able to put that experience into my graduate courses in ethno-history.” She also wrote an essay about her aunt Lorene Blaine, a revered Choctaw elder. Hamill’s academic journey has also allowed her to learn more about her Mississippi family.

“I feel like there is something that can complete you more as a person by knowing the experiences of your ancestors,” she said. “It enriched my life to know they left a great legacy.” Soon after finishing under-graduate studies, Hamill took a job as a retention specialist with the Native American Center for Student Success at SE. “Retaining students has been the best part, because I want to help them reach their goals,” she said. “I want to see them get to know their culture and pursue their passions, whatever it may be.” This opportunity opened another door, and she has now accepted a position as a coordinator with the Choctaw Nation STAR (Student Talent and Retention) program. Hamill is set to graduate in December with the Master’s degree and plans to continue her career in the fields of education and Native American history. “My wife and I have always had a passion for giving back,” said Chief Gary Batton, also a board member of the Southeastern Foundation. “I’m hoping that we can give another opportunity to our Choctaws. I know what it’s like to grow up in small town USA and go to off to school.”

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Needs Choctaw Resource Parents

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma is currently needing Choctaw resource families in Oklahoma. As a Choctaw resource family you will serve as a temporary parent to a Choctaw child or children placed in your home. Not only will you provide for their basic needs, food, shelter, clothing, and safety but also help to preserve the child’s Choctaw Culture and Heritage. Our children are the future of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Please help our children grow by teaching and providing stable, loving homes for them. For more information about the requirements to become a Choctaw resource family, please contact our office at:

Choctaw Children and Family Services
P.O. Box 1210
Durant, Oklahoma 74702
Larry Behrens or Justin McDaniel
(800) 522-6170 or (580) 924-8280
lbehrens@choctawnation.com
jrmcdaniel@choctawnation.com

View our website at: www.choctawfamilyservices.com

Choctaw College Connect

A link to your future

2015

CCC 2015 is the Choctaw Nation Higher Education Program’s annual Choctaw student recruitment event. Students will have the opportunity to meet one-on-one with recruiters from colleges and universities from around the country as well as in your own backyard. Students who attend this year’s event will be entered to win a scholarship for the Fall 2015 semester!

- \$1000 to a graduate student
- \$750 to an undergraduate student
- \$500 to a high school senior

So remember to mark your calendars for Saturday November 7th, 2015 to attend CCC 2015 at the Choctaw Event Center in Durant, OK.

Like the Choctaw Nation Higher Education Program on facebook for up-to-date details!



Join Us At Jones!

Jones Academy is accepting applications for the 2015 Fall Semester. We have openings in specific grades 1-12. Tuition, travel, and services are cost free to families. Tour our elementary school facilities and dormitories.

Come Join Us • Be a Part of the Future

- Take advantage of the residential program benefits:
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 - Voc-Tech Training
 - Summer Youth Work Program
 - Medical and Counseling Services Provided
 - Alternative Education Program
 - Traditional/Cultural Activities
 - Recreational Activities & Educational Trips
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Please call for a tour or an application @ toll free (888) 767-2518 or access www.jonesacademy.org or write to:
Jones Academy
HCR 74 Box 102-5
Hartshorne, OK 74547

EDUCATION



Congratulations! 2015 Jones Academy Seniors



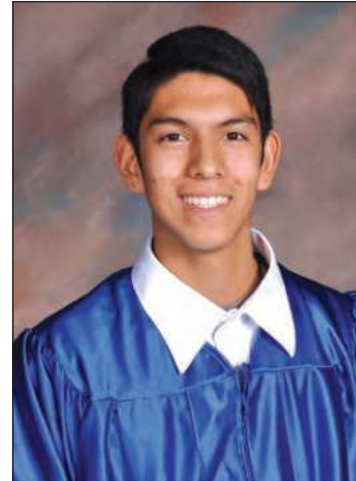
Breanna Dawn Brown, 18, is the daughter of the late William Brown and step-daughter of Tiffany Brown of Muskogee. Breanna is a member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma. While at Jones Academy, she was active in the PACE 5K and 10K running program. She also served as a tutor at the elementary school and was a mentor to younger students. Breanna is registered at the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith where she will prepare for a career as a physical therapist.



Jaycelynn Destiny Sky Charger, is the daughter of Brenda and Markos Fernandez of Pierre, SD. She is a member of the Cheyenne River Sioux of South Dakota. Jaycelynn has attended Hartshorne Public Schools for four years. While at Jones Academy, she was active in the Learn and Serve Program, the PACE runners' club and the BOTBALL robotic team. Jaycelynn has also served as a mentor and tutor for the Jones Academy Elementary School students. At Hartshorne High School, she was on the high school student council. Jaycelynn received the Senior English Pin, which is awarded to the top English student in the class. She is also the recipient of the Alan Lovesee Scholarship which is valued at \$2000. After high school, Jaycelynn plans to attend Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, KS to pursue a career in veterinary medicine.



Eighteen year old **Layra Kri-sann Farmer** is the daughter of Trudy Farmer of Walnut Grove, MS. Layra is a member of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians Tribe. She has attended Hartshorne High School for three years and been active in girls' varsity basketball. She was a member of the runners' PACE program at Jones Academy. Layra also participated in Family, Career and Community Leaders of America at Hartshorne High School. Layra and a partner placed first at the FCCLA State STAR Events competition in March 2015 in Oklahoma City. The team is presently making plans to compete in the national contest in Washington, D.C., in July 2015. Layra plans to attend classes in the fall at Haskell Indian Nations University where she will study Fitness Management.



Christobal Luciano Gallegos is the 18-year-old son of Donna Attention and Joey Gallegos from Ohkay Owingeh, NM. Chris is a member of the Pueblo of San Juan Tribe. He participated in the runners' PACE program at Jones Academy as well as stickball and high school basketball and track. Chris was active in the show hog program and was a member of Future Farmers of America at Jones Academy. He is registered to attend classes at Northern New Mexico University in the fall with plans to major in theater.



Sunshine Britney Hendricks is the daughter of Lorenda Antone and Brenton Hendricks from Sells, AZ. She is an enrolled member of the Tohono O'odham Nation. Sunshine has been a resident of Jones Academy for three years. She participated in Family, Career and Community Leaders of America at Hartshorne High School and Learn and Serve at Jones Academy. Sunshine was also a member of the Oklahoma Honor Society. In the fall, she will attend classes at Tohono O'odham Community College in Sells, AZ, to begin her general studies. Sunshine plans to transfer to Full Sail University and pursue a degree in music management.



Bronson Edward Jim Jr., 18, is the son of Lucinda Willis Smith of Choctaw, MS and Edward Bronson Jim Sr. of Biloxi, MS. Bronson is an enrolled member of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians. He has attended Jones Academy since 2011. Bronson ran 5K's and 10K's with the PACE running club at Jones Academy. He played three years on the Hartshorne High School varsity basketball team. Bronson has expressed an interest in serving his country in the United States Navy.



Eighteen-year-old **Kielind Shawnee Jim** is the son of Jana Jim from Stringtown, OK. He is the grandson of Sally and Lester Jim also of Stringtown. Kielind is a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. He has been active in Family, Career and Community Leaders of America at Hartshorne High School, and Learn and Serve and the PACE runners' program at Jones Academy. Kielind was also instrumental in initiating a stickball team at Jones Academy and is a founding member of a media production class at the school. Kielind plans to attend classes at Southeastern Oklahoma State University and major in sociology.



Saul Tristan Martinez is the grandson of Marshall Moore of Philadelphia, MS and the late Ramona Moore. He is the son of the late Kristalene Ann Moore. Saul is a member of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians. He entered Jones Academy in the fourth grade. Saul has been a member of the Hartshorne High School band since the eighth grade, serving on the band council every year. He was the Outstanding Band Member of the Year at Hartshorne and was on the outstanding trumpet team at the Director's Choice Music Festival in Dallas this past spring. Saul plans to attend culinary arts classes at Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology in Okmulgee and become a chef.



Victor Martinez is the son of Carla and Daniel Enriquez of Norwalk, California. He is a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Victor was active in Learn and Serve and the PACE runners' program at Jones Academy. At Hartshorne High School, Victor received the Yearbook pin award and was on the All A's Team in Spanish Class. He was awarded the 2014-15 American Red Cross Young Minds Change Lives Scholarship. Victor is enrolled at the Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology where he will attend classes in the fall. He will train in the culinary arts with plans to start his own restaurant someday.



Ryan Andrew Myore, 18, is the son of Deanna Black Elk and Lance Myore of Laveen, AZ. He is an enrolled member of the Gila River Indian Community. He has blood quantum in the Pima, Maricopa, Ute, Hualapai and Tohono O'odham Tribes. Ryan has attended Jones Academy for four years. He was active in the PACE running program where he excelled in 5K, 10K and half marathons. Ryan was also active in Family, Career and Community Leaders of America at Hartshorne High School. He and a partner participated in the FCCLA State STAR Events in March 2015 in Oklahoma City and placed first in the state competition. Ryan has qualified to compete in the national contest in Washington D.C. in July 2015. He plans to attend Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, KS, and major in sports medicine.



Isaiah Phillip Osife is the 18-year-old son of Courtney Olivas of Maricopa, AZ. He is the grandson of Geneva Antone also of Maricopa. Isaiah is a member of the Ak-Chin Indian Community. He has been a resident of Jones Academy since 2009. Isaiah was a member of the Hartshorne High School Basketball team where he won all tournament honors at the Tushka and Wilburton Basketball Tournaments. He was also named to the First Team Black Diamond Basketball Conference. Isaiah made the high school honor roll this year. Isaiah has enrolled at Carl Albert State College in Poteau, OK where he will attend classes in the fall. He plans to pursue a career as a physical therapy assistant.



Lane Michael Rust is from Spiro. He is the 17-year-old son of Shannon Baty of Elk City and Rocky Rust of Spiro. He is an enrolled member of the Choctaw Nation. Lane has been a resident of Jones Academy since August of 2012. He is an active member of both the Youth Advisory Board and Learn and Serve. Lane has been selected as representative to attend a YAB conference in New York City in July. Lane will receive vocational training at the Kiamichi Technology Center in Poteau in the fall. He has expressed an interest in welding.



Lexus Aleecia Sewell, age 17, is the daughter of Tandra and Charles Sewell II from Winnebago, NE. She is a member of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma. Lexus has been a member of Family, Career and Community Leaders of America at Hartshorne High and Learn and Serve at Jones Academy. She has also participated in the Future Farmers of America and made the premium sale at the Pittsburg County Livestock Show three times. Lexus found show hogs to be very lucrative. She is a recipient of the 2014-15 American Red Cross Young Minds Change Lives Scholarship. Lexus plans to attend East Central University in Ada and pursue a degree in nursing.



Ke'ana Lynn Watashe is the 18-year-old daughter of Levi and Candi Watashe of Tulsa. She is a member of the Muscogee Creek Nation of Oklahoma. Ke'ana has been a resident of Jones Academy since 2009. She participated in the PACE runners' club at Jones Academy and Future Farmers of America. For several years, she actively showed hogs making the premium sale at the Pittsburg County Livestock Show twice. Ke'ana also served as the varsity softball manager at Hartshorne High School. She is enrolled at Rogers State University for fall classes. Ke'ana plans to major in Biology and apply for veterinary school when she completes her studies at RSU.

Students receive first Choctaw Defense and OSU college opportunity

By **BRANDON FRYE**
Choctaw Nation

Students Tanner Williams and Colby Crosby signed on with Choctaw Defense as interns and scholarship recipients at the Choctaw Defense headquarters in McAlester on May 26.

The two are the first ever to take part in the native-preference internship and scholarship program—a result of collaboration between the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma (CNO), Choctaw Defense, and Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology (OSU-IT). They will receive funding and internships during career-guided studies at OSU-IT, granting them stronger career opportunities after graduation.

“In a couple of years, these two will be joining a class of graduating students who know, on that day of graduation, exactly where they will be going to work,” Bill Path, President of OSU-IT said during the signing event. “Just imagine, starting out their education they know every class they take will be custom designed for their careers.”

Path said many young people graduate from college without the skill set necessary to find the best jobs, and owing student debt. Thanks to this opportunity, Williams and Crosby will be graduating with little to no debt and a guarantee of gainful employment, Path said.

This is because the students signed an Employer Employment and Loan/Scholarship Repayment agreement with Choctaw Defense. While studying at OSU-IT, learning the skills and knowledge necessary to work in the manufacturing field, Williams and Crosby will receive scholarships and aid paying for their education.

In return for this support, the students are promised an internship with hands-on learning at Choctaw Defense before graduating, as well as a job upon successful completion of their education. As a part of the agreement, the two will be required to remain employed with Choctaw Defense for a year, with the option of staying on-board after this period.

Choctaw Nation recycling adds new way to keep environment green

By **BRANDON FRYE**
Choctaw Nation

In the summer of 2009, CNO started their recycling program. Though there was no recycling plant nearby at the time, Choctaws and locals collected materials and the tribe moved them to the nearest recycling facility in Ada.

CNO’s recycling capabilities have been growing ever since. In the winter of 2010, the Durant Choctaw Nation Recycling Center opened its doors, and later a similar center would open in Poteau.

These openings marked the Nation taking a more hands-on approach to recycling. Instead of collecting material and relying on other facilities, the tribe could separate and process the material, then get it in the hands of manufacturers to reuse it all.

Choctaws and Oklahomans living in Southeast Oklahoma could give their recyclable materials over to the tribe and know they were doing their part to lessen landfill refuse.

For six years, CNO recycling centers have kept paper, metal, and plastic in circulation and out of garbage piles. Water bottles, milk jugs, cardboard



Photo by Brandon Frye

Stephen Benefield (middle) leads Colby Crosby (left) and Tanner Williams (right) through signing on as students and interns with Choctaw Defense and OSU Institute of Technology as their families look on.

“We cannot grow without having qualified workers in the pipeline to fill these positions we have at Choctaw Defense,” Stephen Benefield, CEO/President of Choctaw Defense said. “We could easily double our business in the next five years here in southeast Oklahoma if we had qualified folks.”

Tanner Williams, a Cherokee, graduated from Kiowa High School in 2014 where he played basketball. After graduation

he attended Eastern Oklahoma State College, and will soon be transferring to OSU-IT.

Colby Crosby, a Choctaw/Cherokee, is the oldest of three siblings, and enjoys playing baseball, basketball, and a number of musical instruments. He is a 2015 graduate of Wright City High School. He also attended classes at the Kiamichi Technology Center where his interest in manufacturing grew.



Photo by Brandon Frye

Members of the Choctaw Nation recycling team stand in front of a large pile of recyclable materials in the Durant recycling facility. From left to right, they are Jonathan Callaway, Jason Thomas, Tracy Horst, Beth Mitchell, Jeff Winnington, Garrett Langston, and Jason Lilley.

boxes, magazines, phone books, newspapers, styrofoam cups, tin cans, soda cans, and more were accepted.

Recently, plastic bags (like from grocery stores) and trash bags were added to the list of accepted materials, giving environmentally-minded citizens

one more way to do their part in keeping things green.

Today, the Nation collects materials from all 10 ½ counties of the Choctaw Nation, and there are hopes to open new recycling centers in the near future.

Farmers Market Nutrition Program WIC and for Seniors

The WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program and the Farmers Market Nutrition Program for Seniors will both start May 1, 2015. Some areas have received an abundance of rain causing farmers who supply the fresh produce to be late this year on the harvesting. Please feel free to call the farmers in your area from the farmers’ list that was provided to participants to inquire as to when they may have produce available.

For more information, please contact:
Peggy Carlton
FMNP for Seniors Coordinator
800-522-6170 x2303



Photo by Brandon Frye

Sara-Jane Smallwood, Promise Zone Coordinator, listens to a recommendation from Karol Mason, the Assistant Attorney General with the Office of Justice Programs, during a presentation at Jones Academy.

Officials from D.C. meet with Choctaw Nation program representatives

By **BRANDON FRYE**
Choctaw Nation

Federal Government Officials from D.C. met with members of the Executive and Judicial Branches of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma (CNO) at Jones Academy near Hartshorne on June 3 in an effort to further educate the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) on how the CNO serves its Tribal members.

Karol Mason, the Assistant Attorney General with the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), and Beth McGarry, the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney

General, aimed to familiarize themselves with the Justice, Education, Public Safety, and Reintegration programs of the CNO—as well as programs within the Chickasaw and Muscogee (Creek) Nations.

“Our goal is to be partners with you all to help you create safer, healthier communities,” Mason said.

In this case, the DOJ and OJP offer such help, in part, by way of funding and grants, according to Pam Young, Director of Legal Operations and Judicial Liaison with CNO.

“Two of the bureau heads

that were in attendance are instrumental in authoring the grants of which currently provide Federal funding assistance to our Public Safety and the CNO Judicial Branch—a portion of these funds cover the operating expenses of the Courts,” Young said. “We consistently are setting forth efforts to become stronger and more independent, however we must continue to build upon our relations with these Federal Officials as we travel this journey.

It was an honor to have Ms. Mason in Oklahoma Indian Country.”

Free Will Preparation Clinic

at the following
Choctaw Nation Field Offices

July 17, 2015
2750 Big Lots Parkway
Durant, OK

OKLAHOMA INDIAN LEGAL SERVICES, INC.
Call 1-800-658-1497 for details and to make your appointment!
(You must have an appointment to see an attorney).

Oklahoma Indian Legal Services, Inc.
4200 Pioneer Center Drive, Suite 222
Oklahoma City, OK 73115
www.oilsofline.org
405-943-0457
800-658-1497
405-917-7060 (FAX)

THIS PROJECT IS SUPPORTED BY:
NATION OF THE CHOCTAW NATION
SERVICES CORPORATION, WASHINGTON, D.C.

LLSC

You do not have to be a participant to purchase fresh produce from the farmers, the public is welcome to purchase from the farmers also. As soon as produce becomes available, the farmers will be back out at the Choctaw Nation community centers in Durant, McAlester, Hugo, Atoka, Broken Bow, Idabel, Antlers & Stigler.

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

VETERANS ADVOCACY PROGRAM

Mission: To ensure Native American Veterans receive benefits and services on par with other Veterans, make sure they encounter no barriers or impediments in their attempts to access these services, and are treated with respect and dignity by VA service providers.

Eligibility: Any Native American Veteran or family member of a Native American Veteran is eligible for services from the Choctaw Nation Veterans Advocacy Program. Must be a member of a federally recognized tribe.

Assistance with: VA claims, applications, referrals, care packages, cell phones for soldiers, and other services as requested.

Contact: Local (580) 924-8280, Toll Free (800) 522-6170 extensions 2163, 2160, 2735, or 2369.

SPORTS

THE SCORPION STING

Boswell team reaches Oklahoma baseball championship



The Boswell Scorpions made it to the Class B high school baseball championship game this spring for the first time in school history. The Scorps finished 24-3 after a 10-4 loss to Lookeba-Sickles at Chickasaw Bricktown Ballpark in Oklahoma City. Head Coach is Alan Cartwright and many of the players are Choctaw Nation members.



Cameron Roberts is graduating from Boswell High School as Valedictorian of his class. He has maintained a 4.0 GPA through his entire school years. His junior year, he helped lead his baseball team to the state playoffs for the first time in school history. This spring they made it to the state championship game. Cameron is a starting pitcher on the team and when not pitching, he plays shortstop. This year he was also named Homecoming King, Prom King, and Student of the Year. He has also been inducted into the Oklahoma Indian Student Honor Society.



Connor Roberts will be a sophomore at Boswell High School. He maintains a 4.0 GPA, and a member of the Scorpions baseball team. He made it to state playoffs twice as a freshman. This season he pitched the second game at state against the No. 1 team and got the win, sending the Scorpions to the State Championship. Connor played on same team as with his brother, Cameron Roberts.



Dusty Belvin is a junior at Boswell High School and starting catcher for the state runner-up Scorpions baseball team. He has played a big role on a team that has gone to the state tournament four times in recent years. Dusty's great aunt, Jeanie Pierce, reminds us that the starting catcher touches nearly every pitch made in the game and takes the brunt of home plate collisions.



Team Tvshka Homma players who scored goals in the Chickasaw Reunion Tournament in Kullihoma are pictured above.

Tvshka Homma takes trophy at Chickasaw Reunion games

Team Tvshka Homma captured the crown with a pair of victories on May 2 at the three-team Chickasaw reunion round-robin stickball tournament. Tvshka Homma defeated Chickasha Toli and Nighthawks at the annual event, held at the sacred grounds of Kullihoma on the border between Chickasaw and Choctaw nations. In the first game, Tvshka Homma goals were scored by Gennavie Tom, Boomer Factor, Jerry Ludlow, Kerry Willis, Bear Worcester and Casey McKinney. The second game saw scoring plays from Tom, Worcester, Mikey Melton and Clovis Hamilton. Up next for Tvshka Homma: the World Series of Stickball in Mississippi in July. **More stickball coverage on Page 16!**

Youngblood takes state



Photo Courtesy Golf Oklahoma/Rip Stell
Sydney Youngblood of Durant High School has won another state championship in golf, shooting her way to a two-day total of 141 in the state tournament in May at Scissortail Golf Club in Verdigris/Claremore. This is 17 strokes better than her closest opponent. Congratulations, Sydney!

Choctaw to continue baseball career at Hillsdale College



A champion on and off the field

James Woods is a senior at Liberty High School in Frisco, Texas. He plays for the varsity baseball team and helped the Redhawks reach the Class 5A state semifinals. James is an Eagle Scout and a member of National Honor Society. He graduates in June and plans to attend OU to study political science and pre-law.

Spencer Tidwell of Durant will continue his baseball playing days at Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College. Tidwell, a Durant High School graduate, played shortstop for the Lions. He was also a member of the football squad at Durant. He signed a letter of intent to play for the Saints at a ceremony in May at his high school. Parents Tina Vaughn and Shelby Tidwell, as well as little brother Skyler Tidwell, joined coaches and teammates at the ceremony. "It's just a blessing," Tidwell said. "This opportunity to go to the next level is something I've wanted since I was a little kid." Durant had three athletes sign collegiate letters of intent at the ceremony, including cheerleader Brooke Podany (OBU) and soccer player Breanna Cedillo (MSC).



Spencer Tidwell, Durant High School, shows his Hillsdale College cap after signing a letter of intent to play baseball for the Saints.



Josh Hyland at the state powerlifting meet, photographed by teammate Brian McCloure.

Hyland crowned state champion power lifter

Josh Hyland was crowned state champion at the state powerlifting meet in his weight class. Josh is a senior at Hugo High School and he also plays football, soccer and baseball. He is also a member of the National Honor Society and Choctaw Nation Youth Advisory Board. Josh will be attending Oklahoma State University this fall and studying sports medicine. Proud parents are Frank and Janice Hyland of Grant; proud big brother Dustin and little sister Jessica. Proud grandmother is Janet Phillips (Gan-Gan) of Hugo.

Coming soon:
Team Tvshka Homma trading cards



Shelby Brennan

Brennan picked for All-State team

Shelby Brennan is a senior at Quinton (Oklahoma) High School. Shelby and her team made it to the Class 2A state basketball playoffs for the 2014-15 year and Shelby has been named OGBCA All-State for 2014-2015. She is co-historian for her graduating class and is a member of the National Honor Society.

The Choctaw Nation would like to honor students who have excelled in their chosen *sports* or *academic* field.

If your child is a Choctaw Champion, please send a photo and brief description of their accomplishments to:

biskinik@choctawnation.com or upload to our Facebook page!

Biskinik is currently gathering posed and action photos of Choctaw stickball players for an ongoing trading card project. We will start with Team Tvshka Homma, the official team of Choctaw Nation, but this could branch out to other adult and youth teams in the future. To submit photos for this project, email a photo with name and phone number to: biskinik@choctawnation.com

Defense Captain Stanley Shomo

(FRONT)



Iti Fabussa Early Choctaw Games

In the past, Iti Fabussa explored activities Choctaw people used to pass the time, whether for entertainment or for competitive sport, including stickball (July 2010) and chunky (November 2013).

However, there are other games that Choctaws have played. Below are just a few examples of games that were played, and still can be played today!

Hidden Bullet

One Choctaw pastime was Hidden Bullet, Naki Loma in Choctaw.

Naki Loma is a game of guessing and wits, where a small object is hidden and individuals compete in rounds to find it. A cover such as a hat, moccasin, handkerchief, or sock is used to hide an object like a bullet, stone, or nut. The game is played with two or more players who are divided equally into two teams. Each team sits in a row and faces a member of the opposing team. The hider, chosen before the game begins, would lay out the covers (the amount chosen beforehand by the teams, typically four to seven covers were used) and then proceeds to hide the object under one of them. Hiding the object requires immense skill in order to conceal which cover it is under.

The opposing team is allowed to watch as the hider goes from cover to cover in an attempt to conceal the object under one. After the object is hidden the player opposite the hider is allowed to guess where the object may be hidden. The guesser is given three chances to find the object.

If they believe they know where the object is, then they can remove the cover. If they are correct the guesser’s team gets four points. If they

are wrong, the hider’s team gets four points.

There is also the option of lifting the cover in order to eliminate it. Up to two covers can be eliminated before the guesser must remove a cover (or make an official guess), but this yields fewer points. If correct on this attempt, removing the cover will score two points for the guesser’s team. If the guesser lifted the cover with the object or removed the incorrect cover, then the hider’s team would get two points. This ends the round.

If the guesser deduces correctly, they become the hider in the new round. If the guesser deduces incorrectly, then the teammate next to them in line becomes the new guesser for the new round. This means one individual on one team could be the hider for the entire game.

This continues until the players on one team are eliminated. The team with the most points wins the match.

Corn Game

Another game played by Choctaw People was the Corn Game, or Tvynchi Bvsk

in Choctaw. This game is played when two or more players attempt to score the most points by throwing corn kernels, similar to the game of dice. Corn kernels are either charred or painted black on one side, and the number of kernels varies. Older accounts of the game report seven or eight kernels were used.

To score points, the players toss the kernels with their hand onto the ground, like throwing dice. The players receive points based on the number of nonblack kernels shown face up.

The only exception to this rule is when all the kernels cast face up are black then players receive points for all of the kernels when this occurs. In the past, accounts report the game was also played with pieces of river cane, instead of corn kernels.

Sources:
Culin, Stewart. Games of the North American Indians. Courier Corporation, 1975.
Swanton, John. Source Material for the Social and Ceremonial life of the Choctaw Indians. University of Alabama Press., 2001.



June’s Meet the Artist Sarah Elisabeth Sawyer



Sarah Elisabeth Sawyer, 29-year-old Choctaw author and creator of the successful “Touch My Tears” collection of short stories, recently published the first book in a new series.

The “Choctaw Tribune Series” kicks off with “The Executions,” a historical fiction set in 1892 Indian Territory following the story of 18-year-old Ruth Ann.

Sawyer has been writing stories since she was five, but she got her start as a writer of Choctaw-centric stories later in life after seeing story tellers and winning a writing competition.

“It’s been a whirlwind journey since then, but it’s also given me purpose and work to focus on,” she said.

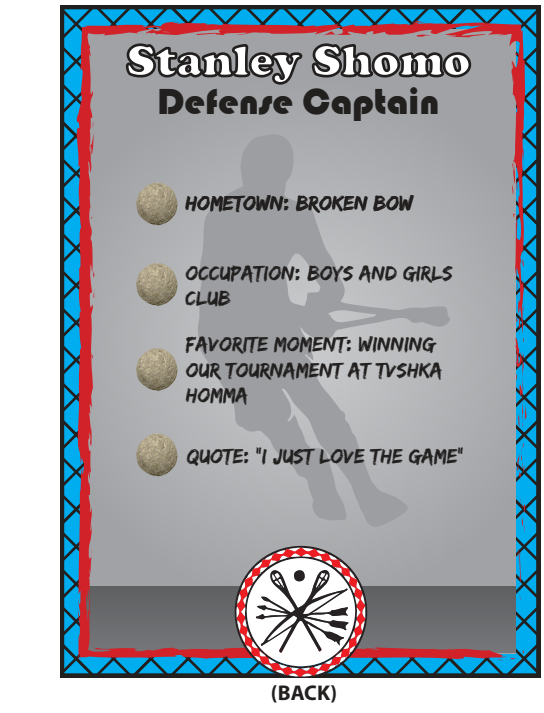
On her Choctaw heritage, Sawyer said being Choctaw is an honor, opportunity, and responsibility. “It’s an honor because I am a descendant of people who forged a path through their own pain and injustice to give me a heritage. It’s an opportunity because of the doors it opens in my life to benefit from their perseverance. It’s a responsibility to remember, preserve, and share their legacy of faith and endurance,” she said.

This focus on heritage is apparent in Sawyer’s work, which tends to tell the stories of Choctaw characters and chronicle events in Choctaw history.

For Sawyer, the people she gets to meet and work with are some of the best things about being an author.

Meet Sarah Sawyer at the Choctaw Store on June 27.
Choctaw Store • 1882 Hwy 69/75 • Colbert OK 74733
580.296.2672

Coming soon:
Team Tvshka Homma trading cards



Biskinik is currently gathering posed and action photos of Choctaw stickball players for an ongoing trading card project. We will start with Team Tvshka Homma, the official team of Choctaw Nation, but this could branch out to other adult and youth teams in the future. To submit photos for this project, email a photo with name and phone number to:

biskinik@choctawnation.com

Meet the Artist Carolyn Bernard Young



By RONNI PIERCE
Choctaw Nation

She works the clay into a small circular mass then slowly and suddenly, the shape of a bowl takes form. Strong, steady hands work to reveal something that wasn’t there before. And, like the bowl, a woman’s talent reveals itself over time.

Carolyn Bernard Young was not a born a potter. She did not appear on earth throwing clay and carving animal figures and totems. Her life and her art were formed by her experiences.

In 1993, Young was traveling in the Middle East while working for an aerospace company. She was spending most of her time on the road and had just lost her parents and an older brother. She began searching for a creative outlet to relieve her stress and took a pottery class at the recommendation of a friend. “When my hands touched the clay I was lost. I took as many classes as I could,” she said.

She first learned by using a potter’s wheel. Then she took a workshop carving pots while studying petroglyphs and that’s how she began her unique process of carving into the clay revealing what was underneath.

In the meantime, she reconnected with the person who would become her conduit into the most creative part of her life, her husband Sam. They had worked together at General Dynamics in 1978, became friends, and then, as friends sometimes do, drifted apart. In 2011 they found each other again and married that same year. With his support and encouragement, Young became a full-time potter and artist. He poured the concrete for her new studio at their home in Weatherford, Texas, in January 2012 and she moved in. “That studio is my haven. I’m there by 8 a.m. I listen to my Native American flute music and tell myself how grateful I am to have my husband and my studio.”

Early on, Young was inspired by their honeymoon travels in the Southwest where some of the pottery they purchased inspired her to create one of her early pieces, Shadow Mountains. First, she carved a cloud pattern and then out of the pattern, appeared Monument Valley, a scenic desert region populated with sandstone buttes located in the Navajo Nation. She says it wasn’t an intentional creation, it just appeared to her like a dream. “I think the process lends itself to working toward inspiration because first I have to throw the pot on the wheel and it’s just a piece of white clay that becomes a pot. Then it has to dry, then it gets trimmed, then I put black under-glaze on it.” After the piece dries, she starts trimming and decorating. “So during that process I have lots of time to think about what this little pot is going to be.”

“I’m working on some sculpture ideas and wall pieces.” But for now, she works on the simple things—mugs, tea bowls, bowls—because those are what people love. “One of the things I really like to do is make a jar with a lid and put a sculpture on top of the lid,” she continued. “In fact, at the Choctaw Labor Day Art Show last year I entered a piece that had a beautiful little sculpture on top that depicted early Choctaw life by the river. It was a potter gathering clay at the river.” That piece is now part of the Choctaw museum’s permanent collection.

Young said her knowledge of the familial connection to the Choctaw Nation developed over time. The “Bernard” in her name is what ties her to her native heritage. Her mother traced her roots to the Nation through her mother’s side of the family. Growing up in Fort Worth, Texas, Young said her mother never talked about being a Native American. When her mother died and she found documentation of her Choctaw heritage, she started to embrace her history. “I have a lot of Choctaw books and Native American books, both picture books and storybooks,” she explained. “I feel like I’m behind in my heritage and I’m a sponge trying to learn everything I can.”

“I want my work to speak well for the tribe and evoke those ancient emotions. I want my work to be different, yet honor those who came before.” She feels honored and humbled to be connected to the tribe now. “Whenever I get a call from the Choctaw Nation to do something or be somewhere I always say yes. Because if there is anything that I can do to make our tribe better or

to get the word out about our tribe, I want to be that person. I want to help.”

Her work is now available at the Choctaw store in Colbert and online at the Choctaw store. She attended the Labor Day Festival last year for the first time and entered the art show. The piece she entered took home second place honors. She considered that a bit of a validation of her work and hopes it makes the tribe proud. “That was really good for me because it has only been three years since I really started doing this body of work and I want to keep doing this so it was important for me to know that my work is accepted by the tribe.”

Her recent lessons with the Choctaw Nation to create pottery in the traditional way have been a real eye opener. Her pottery is considered contemporary, not traditional. She uses commercial clay, a potter’s electric wheel, and fires in an electric kiln. When creating pottery the Choctaw traditional way, one must find the clay from river banks, dig it out, process it, temper it, and then form it completely by hand and fire it in a pit. “It’s really incredible to think about how our ancestors came to do that, first out of necessity, then with their natural creativity, adorning the pots in a way that made them decorative as well as functional. Carving, after all, was what drew me into clay.”

After showing her work at the Gathering of Nations and the Red Earth Festival, her next big project will be a series of carvings with Choctaw ponies and will be featured at the Southern Plains Museum in Anadarko from Aug. 22 through Oct. 17, 2015. The focus will be on wall hangings with representations of the pony’s preservation. Sam has been working closely with her during the project acting as a research assistant and sometimes reading to her about the ponies as she works. “I’m really excited about this work. It’s rewarding to see it evolve,” says Young.

“My first step was to learn how to draw a horse. So I’ve been drawing horses, horses, horses.” She says they’re getting better and hopes to incorporate the design in a mural or a relief that has some movement to it. “Maybe the horses will be raised, or the mountains. I’m hoping to have that ready for the museum show in August.



Photo by Payton Guthrie

Carolyn Bernard Young cradles one of her traditional pots. Young typically works with an electric wheel and kiln, however, she has recently taken up the traditional Native way of making pottery by hand.

And then I also have an idea for some vertical wall pieces that will be like box tiles. They won’t be flat, they’ll have sides, and hang on the wall as independent pieces and be completely different and yet connected in some way and not necessarily with carving. There may be carving on some pieces and not on others. But it will be more of a tribal look without being as graphic as my pots are now. I haven’t figured out how to get them there yet, but I’m working on them.”

The one thing she does know is how lucky she is to have found her calling, “I am very blessed to be able to devote my life every single day to my art. And to my tribe.” She is more than willing to give back to her tribe in any way she can because she feels that willingness is what causes things to happen for her. “It’s really been pretty cool, the last couple of years, pretty cool.”

Years of throwing clay have taken their toll on Carolyn’s hands, but when she sits down to create she said she becomes lost to the clay. She’ll keep showing up at the studio and sitting down at the wheel as long as it continues to “sing to her and feed her soul.”

Inter-Tribal Arts and Crafts Beading Class

EVERY Thursday • 6 - 9 p.m.

Choctaw Community Center, 1203 W. Liberty Rd., Atoka OK

Public is welcome to come learn tribal beadwork. Beads and thread available for purchase.

A Phoenix Rises

Rebuilding and Surviving After the Trail of Tears

By AMADEUS FINLAY
Contributing Writer

Note from the author: due to the nature of The Trail of Tears and subsequent social reconstruction in Indian Territory existing as two sequential incidents in social memory, this piece largely concerns the experiences of the first generation of Choctaw in Oklahoma.

In the late fall of 1831, as the chill of winter began to creep across the southern Mississippi Valley, 15,000 Choctaw men, women and children were torn from their homelands and plunged into a bleak unknown. Two thousand five hundred of them didn't make it.

For the 12,500 individuals who survived the ordeal, ahead lay a bleak future in a dry land of dust and predominantly flat prairie, a world entirely contradictory to that which they left behind. Their ancestors, the bones that tied them to the place of their birth, were now a distant memory, and the spirituality so intertwined to their homeland seemingly lost.

It was a set of circumstances so wretched, so utterly distressing, that this writer would not even attempt to describe them. Yet, this was to be their future, and in this future there were only two choices—either submit to the overwhelming pressures of distress and lose whatever was left of the Choctaw, or rally as a community to rebuild a new home in a strange land. In one of the most inspiring stories of post-Columbian America, the Choctaw did not submit to Jacksonian subjugation, but recovered from the trauma of removal and established a society that was destined to flourish.

Things did not get off to an easy start. In June 1832, the Arkansas River flooded its banks and washed away their farms. Already highly vulnerable from their forced exodus and lacking any form of backup, the Choctaw faced famine. It was an unstable and uncertain period, made all the worse by a succession of epidemics that tore through the community.

In time, however, the Choctaw recovered, and within two years had built a stable economy and constructed a comprehensive and sophisticated legal code upon which they based their commerce.



In fact, so successful was the Choctaw economy that historian Angie Debo reports of small towns such as Skullyville flourishing with hotels, blacksmiths and stores that quickly became popular stopping points for travelers on their way to California and Texas.

Arguably, one of the most impressive pieces to the reconstruction puzzle was the Choctaw Constitution of 1834. Not only was it one of the most groundbreaking legal documents of its time, but it possessed such versatility that in 1837 it was successfully modified to accommodate the Chickasaw Nation after they too had been removed from their homelands. Eager to extend their democratic system to their new neighbors, the Choctaw legislature went so far as to surrender one-quarter of their votes to Chickasaw representatives.

There was more than just capital gain and legislative advances to the Choctaw success story. No sooner had the people arrived in Oklahoma, than they built a church and established an independent public school system for their children. By the mid-1830s, five schools were operating in the new lands, with 101 students enrolled across the board. In 1844, Spencer Academy was opened, with Armstrong Academy opening two years later.

Over the next decade, affairs remained fairly stable, and in 1848, the first editions of Choctaw Telegraph were printed in Doaksville, with the Choctaw Intelligencer going into circulation two years later. Around this time, reports begin to surface of

large cotton plantations along the Red River, while along the Arkansas and Canadian rivers, prosperous farms with orchards and cornfields, cattle, hogs and fowl were producing in abundance. Such was the relative prosperity of Choctaw land that corn, pecans and cotton were exported in exchange for manufactured goods.

The legacy of that first generation of Oklahoma Choctaw still resonates today, with many of the older members of society having known someone with a direct connection to those who began life west of the Mississippi. Tribal storyteller and elder, Stella Long, is one such individual. Looking back from almost a century of experiences, Stella remembers meeting James Dyer Jr. the son of Reverend James Dyer. Born in or near Eagletown in 1838, Dyer was a first generation Oklahoma Choctaw whose parents had come west on the Trail of Tears.

Looking back from the 21st century, it is patently apparent that these first Choctaws were blessed with a remarkable sense of courage and determination. Not only did they create a completely new existence out of an unfathomable unknown, but in doing so provided the foundation on which today's Nation is built; a Nation that believes as much in faith and education as those brave few who made it west.

Let us celebrate that achievement. History is closer than you think.

Amadeus Finlay can be contacted at Amadeus_finlay@hotmail.com

TOT bikers back from the Trail

By ZACH MAXWELL
Choctaw Nation

The fourth year of the Trail of Tears Bike Ride took place in May with 16 participants including riders and "SAG" support members.

This year, the Choctaw Nation Bicycle Team set out from Clinton, Mississippi, and followed the Natchez Trace before crossing the Mississippi River.

Chief Gary Batton greeted the group on May 15 as part of a boisterous welcome at the tribal headquarters in Durant. The group was rain-soaked, muddy, and sore.

"This is about their heart and commitment to honor our tribal members for what they went through," Batton said. "It's a great honor that they are showing tribute to the sacrifices of our tribal members, who made us the great Choctaw Nation we are today. When you talk to all of them, you can tell their hearts are with the tribal members. It's not just a bike ride."

In total, the team logged 482.5 miles in five states—some of that along the very route that Choctaws were forced to walk from their ancient home in Mississippi to "Indian Territory" during harsh winters in the 1820s and 1830s.

Teresa Eagle Road has participated in all four rides and she is ever mindful of the purpose of honoring those ancestors.

"Our ancestors suffered from diseases, bad weather conditions and hunger to arrive in Oklahoma," she said. "I am glad to embrace our culture and to be able to share their his-



The Trail of Tears bike team near the end of a long journey as they enter Bryan County.

tory with our team members along the way. We may not face the harsh challenges our ancestors had faced back in 1830's, but we still hope to honor them in the small challenges we do face."

Those burdens are shared by the support team, called "SAG" in bicycle lingo. These supporters come from Choctaw Nation Health Services, Cultural Services, and the Atoka Health Clinic.

The Eagle Road family makes up four members of the team. They are joined by trail veterans Mary Boerner and Greg Barrs, Mary Ayn and Eli Tullier, Brian Johnston, and Johnnie Anderson. New to the ride this year: Dr. Tom Teasdale, Dr. Kevin Short and SAG members Jana Boykin and Beckah Boykin. Veteran SAG supporters are Donna Tawkoty and Tina James.

Riding the route "brings home how our people suffered to come here," said four-year rider Mary Boerner. "We are tough stock, that's the main thing. We've seen a lot of what our people have to go through. We're all a team, so everybody is lifting each other up, just like on the original Trail of Tears."

Chahta Anumpa

Aiikhvna

◆◆ Lesson of the Month ◆◆

Possessive Pronouns: im, i – his, her or its

Possessive pronouns indicate ownership and comes before nouns. 'im' or the 'm' form is used before nouns that begin with a vowel.

im – pronounced 'ihm'

- 1. Im isht ishko ya koli tuk.*
He cracked his cup.
- 2. Im ilimpa yvt kapvssa tuk.*
Her food was cold.
- 3. Im isht tiwa vma tuk.*
He gave his keys to me.
- 4. Im ibbak chush vt falaya.*
Her fingernails are long.

i – or the 'n' form (nasal underline), is used before nouns that begin with a consonant.

i – pronounced 'i(n)'

- 1. I chukka ia li tuk*
I went to her house.
- 2. I hattak vt Tulsa ia chi.*
Her husband will go to Tulsa.
- 3. I tanampo yvt weki.*
His gun is heavy.
- 4. I haksobish takohli yvt pisa achukma.*
Her earrings are pretty.

| | | |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>im, i – his, her, its</i> | <i>isht ishko - cup</i> | <i>ya – object marker</i> |
| <i>koli - crack tuk-past tense marker</i> | | <i>ilimpa - food</i> |
| <i>vt, yvt – subject markers</i> | <i>kapvssa – cold</i> | <i>isht tiwa – key/s</i> |
| <i>vma – gives to me</i> | <i>ibbak chush - fingernails</i> | <i>falaya - long</i> |
| <i>chukka – house</i> | <i>ia – go</i> | <i>li – I</i> |
| <i>i hattak – her husband</i> | <i>tanampo – gun</i> | <i>weki - heavy</i> |
| <i>haksobish takohli – earrings</i> | <i>pisa achukma – pretty</i> | |
| <i>a chi – future tense marker</i> | | |

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Trail of Tears Walk



Volunteers for the refreshment crew included Miss Heartland Marissa McCurtain, her mom, and Kanda Jackson.



(left to right) Kelly Ray VanValkenberg, Kelley VanValkenberg, Marcos Rasha, Taloa James, Ishmael Guiterrez, and Donovan James from Honobia and Talihina take a break after the walk.



Chief Batton welcomes the crowd and gives words of encouragement before the walk begins at Tvshka Homma on May 16.



Chief Batton, Reverend Bertram Bobb, and Councilman Thomas Williston listen to the opening speakers.

The Choctaw Nation Color Guard leads the Trail of Tears Walk attendees through the capitol entrance at the beginning of the Walk on May 16. The annual event is held to honor and recognize the Choctaws who were forced to march from their ancient homelands to Indian Territory nearly two centuries ago. The walk honors the many who died along the trail as well as the survivors who became the foundation for today's Choctaw Nation. The 2015 walk drew over 800 participants.



#LBoW



Robert Gipson captured Tvshka Homma lined up for a victory photo with their trophy after winning the Little Brother of War championship game.



Wayne Wilson tagged a number of action photos of Tvshka Homma and Chikasha Toli facing off on the field, tangled in scrums, reaching up during jump balls, and taking opponents down in tackles.



Joyce Gilmore tagged this photo of a little future stickball player who practiced near his family on the sidelines of the Little Brother of War tournament.



Cassandra Salinas tagged a photo of son Caleb Perry of the Osi Heli (Flying Eagle) stickball team with Jared “Pinti” Tom after the championship game.

Choctaws snapped photographs of the people and action during the first annual Little Brother of War stickball tournament on June 13. They shared their shots with everyone using the tag #LBoW on social media.

This is a look back at what they chose to share. For more, search #LBoW on the search bar of Facebook or Twitter.

If you want to get involved and share your experiences with your fellow Choctaws in the future, keep an eye open for the right tags before events and gatherings. The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma is your source for such information, so follow us on Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Youtube, and Instagram.

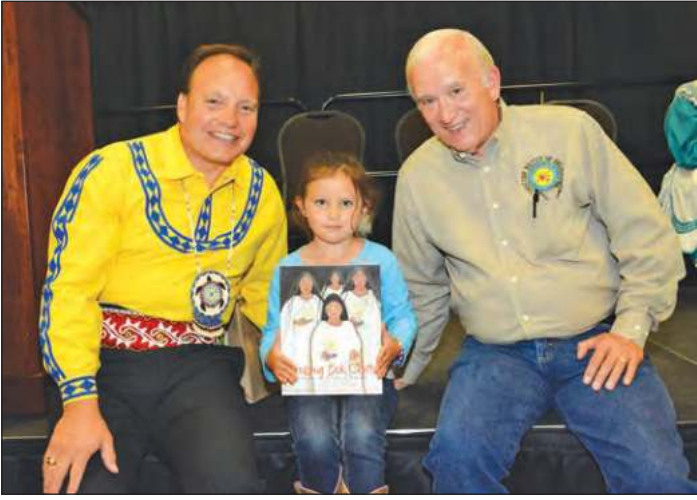
Poteau



Chief Batton is pictured with Ruthie McLellan and her father, Curtis Pugh. Ruthie set up a booth featuring her beadwork during the Poteau community meeting.



The youth stickball league championship team, Yv-nvsh Homma, were presented with their team medals by Chief Batton and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr., and their coach Dewayne Hornbuckle.



Chief Batton and Councilman Delton Cox presented Taytumn Raines with the Tim Tingle book, “Crossing Bok Chito,” for helping with the door prizes during the Poteau meeting.

Oklahoma City



Kyra Gustafson poses with her niece, Ara Johnson (right) and daughter Makaila.



Anna Reed of Oklahoma City is pictured with Assistant Chief Austin and Chief Batton. Anna and her mother wanted to thank the tribe’s Higher Education department for helping her get into Dartmouth in the fall.



Jared Tom shows Parker McColom of Harrah some basic stickball moves.



(left to right) Briza Silva, Allison Ramirez, Nadia Ramirez, Zxochitl Silva, and Jessi Bustos from Oklahoma City enjoy refreshments at the meeting.

Photos by Brandon Frye, Payton Guthrie, Zach Maxwell, Ronni Pierce, Vonna Shults, & members of the Choctaw Nation.



Various Choctaw Nation members, employees, and Choctaw Princesses join in on Hymns #48 and #11.



Assistant Chief Austin pauses to say hello to Choctaw citizen and veteran GM “Choc” Charleston of Oklahoma City. Choc served during WWII as part of the Army’s 739 Tank Battalion.