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CHOCTAW NATION

The Official Publication of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

May 2015 Issue

Tribal Council holds regular session

The Choctaw Nation Tribal Council met in regular session April 11 at Tvshka Homma. Committee reports presented: Youth Center in Talihina, Hugo Health Clinic, Historic Preservation, Idabel casino, Gaming Commission, Atoka Head Start, Procurement, and Choctaw Connecting Kids 2 Coverage, Chahta Ohoyo Tikba Hikia (Choctaw Women Leaders,) Tribal Victims Assistance, CMDC, and Children and Family Services.

- The following council bills were unanimously approved:
- Application for the SEPT Program Continuation
 - Application for the PREP Program Continuation
 - Application for the Child Passenger Safety Seat Program
 - Electric Line easement with OG&E in LeFlore County
 - Approve the Historic Preservation Department to apply for a NAGPRA Repatriation Grant
 - Authorize the Chief to place property in Bryan County in Trust Status with the United States

- Other new business
- Appointment of Marilyn Mitchell to Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Election Board
 - Appointment of Sharon Davis to Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Election Board

For detailed meeting information on these resolutions and council bills, go to <http://www.choctaw-nation.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/>



Photo by Brandon Frye

Chief Gary Batton, Tribal Council Members, and descendents of the first institute superintendent unveil the highway marker.

Tvshka Homma Female Institute highway marker unveiled

By BRANDON FRYE

Choctaw Nation

In 1892, near the Choctaw Capitol, the Tvshka Homma Female Institute (alternatively, the Choctaw Female Academy) opened its doors for up to 100 young Choctaw women to develop an education.

After burning down, being turned into a home, and finally purchased by the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma (CNO), the site received a historical highway marker on April 15.

Cooperation between CNO and the Oklahoma Historical Society (OHS) lead to the placement of the highway marker as part of a statewide program, which started in the 1940's and has grown to include more than 650 markers.

According to Kathy Dickson, Director of Museums and Historic Sites for OHS, historical markers let travelers know when they are near a historical site, and inform them of what happened there. She said many times people travel and don't know what is in the area or the historical importance, and the markers help.

The Tvshka Homma Female Institute location earned one of these markers for being of historic importance to the Choctaw Nation and the state of Oklahoma.

Peter Hudson was an original enrollee and the first superintendent for the institute. Three of his grandchildren—John Hooser, Suzanne Heard, and Betty Heard Watson (who were all educators themselves)—attended the unveiling of the highway marker to share their first and second-hand knowledge of the institute.

"After the location burned [in 1925], the land and material were sold. Anna Lewis



Photo Provided

The Tvshka Homma Female Institute as photographed while young Choctaws still populated the halls and played on the lawn.

bought this place," Hooser said. He explained Lewis had attended the institute as a child, and went on to become an educator. The new owners salvaged material from the institute to build a home for retirement, a home Hooser eventually lived in with his family during his youth.

"If you look at the old pictures, you'll find these rocks and bricks were all part of the original structure," he said.

Ownership of the location changed hands a number of times, and the spacious interior and rolling hills of the surrounding land offered home and shelter to each new family.

In 2014, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Circle of Life Community Award



Photo Provided

The Choctaw Nation was presented the Circle of Life Community Award during the Indian Health Care Resource Center's annual fundraiser to help support health programs for the Native American community on Feb. 21. Pictured are Todd Hallmark, Choctaw Nation's Executive Director of Health, Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr., and Chief Gary Batton.



The home built from the remains of the female institute as it is now, without tenants and purchased by the Choctaw Nation.

purchased ownership of the historic site, which rests in the middle of established Choctaw land being used for ranching.

Hooser's cousin, Suzanne Heard, said, "I'm so thrilled that our great Chief Gary Batton, Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr., and the Tribal Council consented to buy the property here. My mother was born here, and my grandfather was the first superintendent."

FAITH, FAMILY AND CULTURE



The year’s at the spring

Spring is one of my favorite times of the year because it has so much to offer. It’s a time of renewal, traditions, and achievement. There seems to be a perpetual excitement in the air as one adventure comes to a close and another begins.

The youth stickball league completed its second season with a full day of tournament play on April 25. Congratulations to the 2015 Youth Stickball League Champions—the Nashoba Homma junior team and Tvnpv Issuba senior team! All of the teams played great games.

The league started last year with 150 kids. There were over 350 boys and girls signed up to play this year, an amazing growth in participation. The day of the championship was a perfect example of Choctaw life and traditions handed down. Families traveled to Tvshka Homma from all of the districts to support the teams. These kids are keeping a traditional game alive and it is fun to see them grow and improve.

It’s getting time for our summer culture and sports camps. Last year about 1,800 kids participated, and this summer there are 3,500 registered. The camps begin this month with the cultural enrichment camp and run through the summer with golf, softball, baseball, basketball, football and stickball. At all of the camps, Tribal youth will get an opportunity to learn, grow, and interact with other Choctaw kids.

Spring also brings wild onion dinners with shukha nipi, banaha, tanchi, and of course, grape dumplings. I get hungry just thinking about them! It’s a great time for family and fellowship.

The month of May is time for graduations and I want to commend all the high school, college and university graduates for their dedication and hard work.

We’ve been receiving success stories from around the country and I’m thrilled to acknowledge these amazing young Choctaw men and women—honor students and state scholastic and sports champions. At Southeastern Oklahoma State University there were 98 Choctaw students graduating. That is a great number of Choctaw members. Out of the 800 Native American students at the Oklahoma Indian Honors, 200 were Choctaws. There is at least one Choctaw student named a Gates Millennium Scholar this year—Bailee Smith, a student from Sequoyah, Oklahoma, High School. The prestigious scholarship is awarded to only 1,000 students each year, chosen from over 20,000 applicants. We are so proud of you all!

Spotlight on Elders

with
Jerry Fuller



By **RONNI PIERCE**
Choctaw Nation

For over 42 years Jerry Fuller has had his dream job—a taxidermist by trade and writer/poet by choice. Jerry held a variety of jobs before he found his calling. After leaving the Navy, he dabbled in construction, machine repair, and worked for the phone company. When an injury forced him into retirement, he took up his true passion of taxidermy.

He loves the work, makes his repeat customers happy, and has the best stories. “I’ve been in this business 42 years in August. I love it and I get to meet the nicest people and hear some of the greatest stories.”

That’s evident as he peppers his spirited conversation with some of the stories he’s heard over the years, as well as his own homespun wisdom and favorite common sense quotes, such as, “A good conscience makes a soft pillow.” According to Jerry, he started putting his thoughts and memories down on paper about 15 years ago. Reflections of the people who inspire him show up in his poems and stories.

In fact, the one that inspired him the most is the memory of a child who lived next to his family in Stigler when he was young. The boy had polio and couldn’t walk, but his father made him a cart with two wheels that he hooked up to the family donkey. The boy made the trip to school every day on that cart, lying on his stomach, 2 1/2 miles to the small schoolhouse in the morning and 2 1/2 miles back home in the evening. “The fortitude that kid had,” Jerry explains. “You lay down on a cart on a bumpy road for 2 1/2 miles on your stomach, it’s not very comfortable. But he did it, twice a day. If he can do it, you can do it.”

And that became the title for his first children’s book, “You Can Do It.” It tells the story of Little Spirit, an orphaned Choctaw child being raised by his grandfather. The little boy can’t walk at first, but with encouragement from his grandfather and his horse Spirit Wind he learns to be a great hunter and protector of his tribe.

Originally his granddaughter illustrated the book, but when the book’s publisher discovered he had other grandchildren and great-grandchildren with talent, she insisted they all contribute their artwork. So all his grandchildren and great-grandchildren have at least one picture in the book including drawings of Little Spirit, Spirit Wind, and forest animals.

The book ends with one of Jerry’s poems, *An Indian Prayer*.

Another one of Jerry’s favorite quotes, “If something is worth living for, it has to be worth dying for,” recalls his being drafted after he graduated from Bixby High School. “I kept calling the draft board in Stigler to see if my number was coming up,” he remembers. When he was called, his friends convinced him he should choose the Navy. It was a life changing experience for Jerry.

During the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis, he served on a submarine tender, a supply ship for submarines. He met a lot of nice people and heard a lot of their stories, “Some of them I’ve remembered and written down.”

With his home port in Charleston, South Carolina, his ship served 12 submarines in his squadron. He says the old ship never traveled very far, but he recalls being stuck in a bad storm on the outer edge of a hurricane near Key West with waves cresting over the top of the ship.

“I got out before Vietnam got hot. Got two of my buddies on the Wall. Too many men were lost in that war,” he stops short and pauses. “But if I was called again, and could do it, I would.”

“In Korea, I had a brother in the Marine Corps and another brother and brother-in-law in the Army. I was young. But the things I saw my mom and dad go through, the uncertainty,” he reflects a moment, “My sis would address three letters every day with tear stains on them.”

He doesn’t really remember when he started recording his military memories or setting them to verse. But he takes great pride in the work and in reciting his prose for other members of the military. “I’ve sat on stages with generals, colonels, mayors, and they all have such big lumps in their throats they can’t talk.”

During a recent trip to the Indian health-care clinic in Claremore, a woman whose husband was going through diabetes treatment approached Jerry. She had bought his book for her husband and wanted to tell him how much it helped him get through his treatment. Her husband said if that little boy could make it, he could too. It motivated that man, and that makes Jerry both proud and humble, knowing that he can actually help people. “I’m just trying to get my ticket validated.”

“I’m proud I’m an Indian,” he says. “It can’t get much better than that—a Navy veteran and an Indian.”



Steady march of progress

Signs of progress continue as construction projects get well under way throughout the Choctaw Nation with more groundbreakings planned in the months ahead.

The dirt is being moved, slabs poured, and walls going up on facilities in Durant, Stigler, Wilburton, McAlester, Bethel, Broken Bow, Poteau, Smithville, Antlers and Atoka.

A grand opening will be held in June to celebrate the completion of the first phase of the expansion of the resort in Durant. The first phase includes a beautiful convention center and entertainment venue as well as a renovation of the Oasis pool area. The second phase involves the new hotel tower, the spa tower, and an indoor/outdoor bar and grill. The completion of the final phase is slated for September and includes a food court, bowling alley, arcade, laser tag and cinema complex. These are great additions for the area and will provide a prime family vacation destination or just a fun day in Durant.

Construction is beginning in Antlers on a new Travel Plaza and Casino Too, the first for Pushmataha County. The slab is poured and framing begun on the Chili’s® in Poteau and a groundbreaking May 8 marked the beginning of the new Chili’s® in Atoka. The development of Choctaw Nation businesses equals more jobs and a boost to the economy in Choctaw Country.

I enjoy watching the sites being prepared for the community center and preschool in Bethel, the Broken Bow distribution center, an addition of a wellness center to the Smithville community center and an 8-unit elderly living community in Smithville for Choctaw senior citizens.

The McAlester campus is really shaping up. The projected opening for the community center, food distribution, head start and wellness center is this fall.

Ribbon cuttings will also be held this summer for the new 10-unit independent living community in Stigler, the expansion of the Rubin White Health Clinic in Poteau, and the Wilburton wellness center.

The health clinic expansion in Poteau will add 21,000 square feet to the existing clinic. New services available will include pediatrics, podiatry, behavioral health, mammography, optometry, physical therapy and employee health. A wellness center providing exercise facilities is part of the expansion and will include a basketball court. Chief Batton, the Council and I consider good health one of the number one initiatives. Being active and healthy leads to more energy, control of diabetes, less prone to sickness, and an overall better quality of living.

There is a lot happening in Choctaw Nation with much more to come—in new facilities, experiences, and opportunities.

Chaplain’s Corner

The Word of God



Rev. Bertram Bobb
Tribal Chaplain

The Word of God is the true and complete story of God revealing Himself and His plan of redemption for mankind. Not only must the gospel story be heard, but it must be received, as the very Word of God.

Paul wrote these words to the church in Thessalonica in 1 Thessalonians 2:13: “For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.”

As the Scriptures are read God gives the faith to receive them, so we see then “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by

the Word of God.” (Romans 10:17)

Now when a person reads the Bible, he is going to find out several things that he does not like. First, he learns that he is a sinner. Man does not like this, he thinks he’s okay.

Next, he learns that he cannot save himself. This really shakes him. It hurts his pride. The flesh is always wanting to do something.

Finally, he is told that only the Lord Jesus Christ can save. But he does not want to bow to the Son of God. Jesus Himself said, “And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.” (John 5:40). If it was left up to man he would never accept the gospel. But here something happens.

The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God in some way miraculous to us to produce conviction in the heart of the sinner. He convicts men of the truth of the Scriptures, of his lost and hopeless condition of dying without Jesus Christ. This is generally known as conviction of sin. Pretty soon he is brought to an end of himself. He sees no hope in himself, in fact he takes side with God and acknowledges that he is a sinner, therefore worthy of

everlasting punishment in Hell. But the Holy Spirit never leaves a soul in that condition. He shows him that the Lord Jesus Christ is the very Savior he needs. And invites him to receive the Son of God, Jesus Christ as his personal Savior by faith.

Now, what do I mean by faith. Faith is just to “trust”. When a drowning man grabs a life preserver he puts all his hope in that life preserver. When a man sits in a chair, he rests on the finished work of the carpenter. Faith is just to trust in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I would emphasize that it is not the amount of one’s faith that matters.

It is not one’s faith that saves, but the object of that faith. The object we are pointing to is the Lord Jesus Christ. “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”

Who is the object of your faith? Who have you trusted for your salvation? Are you trusting your church membership? Or are you trusting your baptism? Look to the Lamb of God, He has finished the work of salvation. My prayer is that if you have not done this, you will today.

Pray for America. Pray for our brave men and women serving our country.

BE A HERO FOR HOPE

PRE-REGISTER BY MAY 20TH

THE FIRST 200 WITH A RACE BIB RECEIVE A T-SHIRT

CHECK OUT CHINISPY ON FACEBOOK FOR UPDATES & REGISTRATION FORM

MAY 30, 2015

Race Starts at 10am
Stipe Recreation Center
801 N. 9th St., McAlester, OK 74501

Packet pick up 8:30 - 9:30am
Costume Contest at 9:30am
Stickball Demo before and after race
Zumba and Tae Kwon Do demos prior to awards ceremony
SuperKids vs Villains Dash immediately after awards ceremony

Choctaw Nation Methamphetamine and Suicide Prevention Initiative
604 S. 2nd, McAlester, OK 74501
(918) 302-0052 • (918) 302-0082 (fax)

SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE
1-800-273-TALK (8228)

BUSINESS

Protecting children is goal of Choctaw business

By BRANDON FRYE
Choctaw Nation

If gas stations and pawn shops deserve protection from ballistics and active shooters, then our schools and children deserve at least this much, according to Sage Dyer Stafford, a Choctaw working to act on this thought with her business Safer Schools for America (SSFA).

Moments after making this point to a room full of Choctaw Nation officials, police, and security officers, Stafford's point was punctuated as bullets struck—but did not penetrate—a demonstration door. A bulletproof door shield, designed by Stafford, successfully stopped rounds and shells from pistols, revolvers, and shotguns.

"I put together the original prototype in my garage," Stafford said. "We took it out, we shot it, and it worked. So we refined and developed it, and eventually wrapped it in dry erase laminate so it would also be functional for the classroom it protects."

With the momentum of having successfully produced a means for children's safety, Stafford built up SSFA as founder and CEO. She did this with the help of her sons Justin and Zachary Miller.

Her door shield is only one of many products offered by the company as part of a three-step plan, and Stafford amassed a team of experts to perfect this plan.

According to Stafford, right now the three-step process can turn the classroom into a safe room. Step one is to lock down the classroom door, which is done with an instant remote lock system. Step two is to protect the door from being shot down,



Photo by Brandon Frye

Sage Dyer Stafford and son Zachary Miller after presenting their three-step plan for locking down classrooms and protecting school children in the case of an active shooter emergency.

kicked down, or shattered, and is achieved with the universal door shield. Step three is to protect the glass of the classroom with security laminate. Once in place, the three-step plan leaves the classroom protected without changing the look of a normal classroom setting.

Warren Pulley, certified international physical threat assessment expert working for SSFA, said the most important thing is to have some way to protect children when they are inside of our school buildings. "At the end of the day, once a gunman

fires a round, you have to have some way to stop the round," Pulley said. "The products I tested for Safer Schools for America do exactly that."

Currently, the Choctaw Nation and SSFA are working together to implement the three-step program in all Choctaw head starts and daycares.

"With the changing environment and the availability of weapons and active shooter scenarios, I think it would be a disservice to our children to not do this," Cecilia Armendariz, Director of Facilities Management

for the Choctaw Nation, said. "And with this being a Choctaw company, what a great opportunity to live our mission statement."

The relationship between SSFA and the Choctaw Nation began with the Preferred Supplier Program, under the supervision of Boyd Miller. The Preferred Supplier Program aims to increase business opportunities for qualified Choctaw tribal member-owned business enterprises, a goal accomplished with SSFA.

"The Preferred Supplier program is giving us a huge leg up," Stafford said. "It is very hard to break into an industry with a new product. But the Preferred Supplier Program gives us that opportunity, because it lends credibility to my company when an organization as important as the Choctaw Nation is involved."

SSFA makes it easier for schools and parents to help protect their children in a number of ways. Fundraisers are possible through Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA), where parents, teachers, and children can sell items like shirts and hats to raise money. Additionally, 10 percent of every purchase, including purchases from businesses and organizations, is donated to schools unable to afford implementation of the system.

Safer Schools for America can be found online, and Sage Dyer Stafford can be contacted at sage@saferchoolsforamerica.com. Also, Choctaw and minority business owners wishing to take advantage of the Preferred Supplier Program can contact Boyd Miller long distance at (800) 522-6170 or locally at (580) 924-8280 ext. 2889.



Photo by Payton Guthrie

Chickasaw Nation Governor Bill Anoatubby, Choctaw Nation Chief Gary Batton, Cherokee Nation Deputy Principal Chief S. Joe Crittenden, Seminole Nation Principal Chief Leonard M. Harjo, and Muscogee (Creek) Nation Principal Chief George Tiger meet during Inter-Tribal in Thackerville.

Inter-Tribal hosted by Chickasaws

By PAYTON GUTHRIE
Choctaw Nation

The Chickasaw Nation hosted April's meeting of the Inter-Tribal Council (ITC) of the Five Civilized Tribes April 9 to 10 at the Winstar World Casino and Resort in Thackerville.

The Five Tribes, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, Muscogee (Creek), and Seminole hosted over 20 work group meetings covering different aspects of tribal affairs, including culture, education, social services, housing, and health.

The general session opened with the posting of the colors by the Chickasaw Nation Honor Guard followed by an invocation by Reverend Bertram Bobb. Chief of the Seminole Nation Leonard Harjo called the meeting to order as President of the Inter-Tribal Council calling forth each representative of the assembled Nations to give brief reports on future projects.

Chief Gary Batton spoke to the Council detailing the continued efforts of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma in strengthening services and programs to help empower the Choctaw people. Chief Batton also spoke about the tribe's efforts to diversify tribal businesses giving special attention to the recent franchise with Chili's Grill & Bar.

Approved resolutions included:

- Passage of Oklahoma House Bill 1034. An

- act currently introduced in the 55th session of the Oklahoma State Legislature.
- The nomination of Cherokee Nation Treasurer Lacey Horn to the United States Treasury Tribal Advisory Committee.
- The federal legislation that restores respect for the Tribal Labor Sovereignty of Tribal Governments in the National Labor Relations Act.
- The 1115 (A) SoonerCare Research and Demonstration wavier amendment request by the Oklahoma Health Care Authority for the Insure Oklahoma "Sponsor's Choice" Option.
- The FY2016 President's budget proposal that Congress establish a mandatory appropriation for contract support cost.
- A resolution endorsing the Oklahoma Native American Juvenile Justice Task Force in developing memorandum of understanding between the Oklahoma Office of Juvenile Affairs and tribal government systems.

Opposed resolutions included:

- The Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) proposed restructuring and streamlining plan where the existing Oklahoma City BIE Office is not designated as one of the seven proposed education resource center (ERC) offices for tribally controlled schools.
- The proposed regulations governing the federal recognition process federal acknowledgement Rule (25 CFR 83) of the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Collaborative Action, U.S. Department of the Interior regarding groups seeking federal recognition as Indian Tribes.

Choctaw Nation Household Hazardous Waste Collection

Upcoming Events:

Poteau || May 30, 10 - 2, 109 Kerr Avenue

Coalgate || June 13, 10 - 2, 1507 S. Ada Street

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.

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.

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.

» 2015 Bow Shoot Schedule «

Tvshka Homma Capitol Grounds

June 13 • 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 bow 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.

During Autism Awareness Month, new initiative grows hope

Caregivers, teachers, parents, and supporters offer time and resources to better the lives of children and families impacted by autism

By BRANDON FRYE
and ZACH MAXWELL

Choctaw Nation

It started with a symbolic bubble release and finished on a celebratory note with community gatherings across the Choctaw Nation.

The hope is awareness and understanding of autism will take root in the rural communities within Choctaw Nation as a way to improve the lives of an often overlooked segment of our people: families and children living with autism.

The Nation’s Tribal Early Learning Initiative (TELI) took autism head-on in April, which is known as Autism Awareness Month nationwide. Choctaw Nation utilized a federal TELI grant to kick off its autism awareness activities.

“The Choctaw Nation is one of only four tribes who have received the TELI grant,” said Angela Dancer, Better Beginnings senior director. “We have the infrastructure needed with our child care programs, Head Starts, and the tribal maternal/infant early home visiting program. The directors of each program want to continue to build collaboration and develop a unified application and information system to share.”

The centerpiece of the initiative was a training conference held on April 17 in Durant for around 200 educators and caregivers. Key players in tribal early childhood programs signed a symbolic memorandum of understanding to develop “systems of care” for those with autism spectrum disorder.

Lisa Blackmon, Dallas regional director for the Administration for Children and Families, said the conference is helping meet the needs of providers with education and materials, empowering them to work with parents and children.



(left to right) Kailey Willis, Stacia Davis, Caden Stark, Abbie Belvin, and Zaiidah Bagsby watch as bubbles flow from a machine.



Photo by Zach Maxwell

Choctaw Nation Tribal Early Learning Initiative (TELI) members signed a memorandum of understanding on Friday, April 17, as part of an early childhood “systems of care” effort during National Autism Awareness Month. Rebecca Hawkins is signing the document surrounded by other Choctaw Nation early childhood leadership team members Barbara Moffitt, Patti Rosenthal, Kathy Pruitt, Monona Dill, Brandi Smallwood, Lisa Blackmon, B.J. Robinson-Ellison and Angela Dancer.

“They have all focused their efforts on trying to identify and meet special needs,” Blackmon said. “The Choctaw Nation has taken a successful simple approach of learning what they have available within their own programs and from there working as a network and referral source for those families.”



Damara Zuniga-Martinez reaches up, almost catching a bubble during the event.

Under the umbrella of the “Autism Community C.A.R.E.S. Initiative,” Choctaw Nation held a bubble release at the Durant Head Start on April 2, in honor of World Autism Awareness Day.

After words from TELI partners, children filled the playground of the head start and chased after countless bubbles. It was a reminder that all children need care and support to experience such joys as chasing soap bubbles.

According to Kelli Ostman, Autism Advocate and speaker at the event, the group first intended to use balloons, but in an effort to help conserve the environment, they decided to release bubbles in honor of autism awareness, where every bubble represented hope and love for an individual.

Ostman said she is herself a mother of a child with autism and knows first hand what these families are going through.

“When my son was first diagnosed with autism at four years old, we got a pat on our backs and sent on our way,” Ostman said. “There seemed to be nowhere to go for help. Families are handed this diagnosis and they don’t know where to turn, where to go.”

She said finding out your child has autism can be scary, but the Choctaw Nation Autism Community C.A.R.E.S. initiative and its website are offering help, and have been since the group’s beginning two months ago.

“We are saying, contact us and we will help you find these resources,” Ostman said. “We want to let families know they are not alone, even if they feel alone. There will be good days and bad days, but it gets better, especially with the right support and network around you.”

Choctaw Nation communities experienced a variety of autism awareness events during April. These included free autism screenings, resource fairs and community awareness gatherings. These efforts reached a wide audience and gained the attention of local media outlets, including KTEN News that lauded Choctaw Nation for “leading the way in autism awareness.”

But the main message from organizers of this effort: Information, help and hope are out there. For autism information and resources, visit their new website at www.autismcommunitycares.com.

Choctaw Nation Vocational Rehabilitation						
June 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 Durant 8:00-4:30	2	3	4	5 Broken Bow 8:00-4:30 Idabel by appt.	6
7	8 Durant 8:00-4:30	9 Talihina 10:00-2:00	10 McAlester 10:00-2:00 Stigler by appt.	11	12 Wright City by appt.	13
14	15 Durant 8:00-4:30	16 Poteau 11:30-1:00	17	18	19 Crowder by appt.	20
21	22 Durant 8:00-4:30	23	24 Antlers by appt.	25	26 Atoka by appt. Coalgate by appt.	27
28	29 Durant 8:00-4:30	30 Wilburton by appt.				

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. Choctaw Nation WIC participants can pick up their checks from the paraprofessionals at the WIC clinic sites. You do not have to wait for your WIC appointment to receive them. Just call your WIC site and say that you would like the farmers market checks before they are gone. They will be distributed on a “first come, first serve basis” until they run out.

Seniors’ checks were mailed out at the end of April to those who completed applications and sent them back in. Applications are still being accepted so if you have not filled one out you still have the opportunity to do so.

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

*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.
Please call the community center and make sure the Wednesday you plan to go that a farmers is there as produce is harvested at different times and may not be available which means they may not be there every Wednesday.*

Native Youth in Food and Agriculture 2015 Summer Leadership Summit

Now taking submissions for the
2nd Annual Native Youth in Food and Agriculture Leadership Summit
July 19 - 18
University of Arkansas in Fayetteville

Young people will travel to our campus to participate in an exciting week of discussion, leadership development, cultural experiences, field trips, learning, and planning. Because specialized business, law and policy issues surround Indian Country food and agriculture, we are focused at the Initiative on ensuring that our next generation has all the tools they need to succeed.

PLEASE APPLY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
Deadline for all applicants is June 1, 2015.

Spaces are limited, so please encourage interested youth to get their applications in as soon as possible. Applications can be downloaded from:
<http://www.indianaglink.com/?p=918> <<http://indianaglink.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1e36c34654180c3d6326af32c&id=0c94bd1b0d&e=36cd22b077>>

All food, lodging, instructional materials, and field trip costs will be provided. Depending on the number of students, some travel scholarships will also be provided. If you have any questions about the application process, please contact Rebecca Sims at ras017@uark.edu or call (479) 575-4434. You can submit your application by email (to ras017@uark.edu) or by mail to:

University of Arkansas School of Law
Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative
c/o Rebecca Sims
1045 W. Maple St.
Fayetteville, AR 72701



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

Words of Wisdom



To respect and to honor

Thank you for the Wisdom Blanket. It was a great surprise and very much appreciated. Thank you.

Tom Toole

My father was so surprised and so proud to receive his blanket! Dad is 97-years-old this year and all too often our Elders feel unappreciated and in the way. You show great respect and honor to our Elders and all in the Choctaw Nation and beyond.

Cindy Lily

Tom Toole is the son of Joseph Yates Toole, an original enrollee, son of Alfred Toole and Belinda Yates.

To cherish the gift

I was most surprised and pleased to receive the beautiful Wisdom Blanket which you so graciously sent. It is a cherished gift. Although I have spent the last 65 years of my life in states apart from Oklahoma, I am proud to be Choctaw and follow with considerable interest the remarkable progress of the great tribe. I count myself a Choctaw and represent myself as such whenever the occasion merits.

I look forward each month to receiving the Biskinik and reading of the impressive activities of the tribe. I continue to study Choctaw history and am fascinated with the manner in which the tribe has survived the traumas of the past and its progress continuing through diligence.

I am the grandson of David (Jack) Robinson of Bokchito and son of Jessie Mae Robinson Williams, both of whom were original enrollees. I served in World War II and graduated from Southeastern State College in 1948.

I send best wishes for your leadership in the tribe's continuing progress.

Belton R. Williams

To express generosity

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your wonderful gift. Thanks very much! I really appreciate it. I've always wanted something like that. Low and behold, I got one, thank you.

Thanks to you and your Assistant Chief for the service given to our people. Choctaws have come a long way, so keep it going. I remember very well when I came to Choctaw Nation, we had nothing. My guess is you were wearing three-corner trousers. I was working at T.I. The late Chief Roberts asked if I would come to Choctaw Nation, the rest is history. Don't lose touch with the Choctaws and Choctaw Nation.

Take care, be good, have fun, and stay well. Again thank you. Your Choctaw friend.

Frank Watson

*Gary Batton
Chief*

*Jack Austin Jr.
Assistant Chief*

The Official
Monthly Publication
of the
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

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

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

The BISKINIK is a nonprofiteer publication of the Choctaw Nation.

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

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



On my way to grad school

I would like to thank the Choctaw Nation for the graduate scholarship! This is a wonderful gift and will certainly help me progress through graduate school successfully and in a timely manner. I hope to graduate in two years with a master's degree in professional counseling from Concordia University in Wisconsin and would like to eventually work for the Choctaw Nation. Thank you again for helping me along this exciting journey!

Haley Maxwell

Recovering from Katrina

On Aug. 29, 2005, a devastating hurricane hit us. Since we lived 60 miles north of New Orleans, we thought we would not be affected by Katrina. When the storm passed, we went outside to check things out. Our road was blocked with trees and debris.

I packed a backpack for my husband and son and they started clearing the roads. They met up with others doing the same. Every road had trees and power lines down. They were able to clear a path just big enough for a car to get through. We had no electricity and it was so hot. My husband was unable to work because of no electricity. The bills did not stop coming in. When October came, we still had no electric so I contacted the Choctaw Nation to see if they could help us financially. They told me to send them my information. I am so grateful for the Choctaw Nation helping and supporting us by paying our bills for the month we were out of electricity. Thank you so much for being there for us. Yakoke.

Carolyn Wade Varnado

To Chief Batton & the Choctaw Nation

My family wishes to thank the Choctaw Nation for everything they have done for us over the years. First for all the help with our son's education. He graduated from the University of Kansas with his bachelor's degree. Next, many thanks for our beautiful storm shelter. We recently put it to good use. We feel so much safer now when the storms come. We really enjoyed the recent visit of the Chief to Tulsa. Keep up the wonderful programs that help our people so much. Proud to be a Choctaw.

Teresa & Carl Lantz

Safe room eases concerns

I would like to thank you for providing a safe room for me with the grant from the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Although I have recovered well after my knee replacement, I still have a great deal of difficulty with stairs. It is such a blessing to have a safe room in my garage that I can access easily. Thank you so much!

Georganne Thomas

Help from the tribe

Halito. My name is Lacynthia Brannon. I just wanted to personally thank you for helping me and my brother out this month with our electric bill. I can't ever tell you face-to-face how much the tribe's funds helped us out but the money given to us is very appreciated. Thank you.

Lacynthia Brannon

EVENTS

Chilocco Reunion

May 28 - 31

Chilocco Campus & First Council Casino Hotel

Reception	Thursday, 5/28	6:30pm
Picnic Lunch	Friday, 5/29	11:00am
Veterans Breakfast	Saturday, 5/30	7:00am
Banquet	Saturday, 5/30	6:30pm
Alumni Dance	Saturday, 5/30	9:00pm

For more information, contact Emma Jean Falling at 918.266.1626.

McAlvain Family Reunion

The 56th gathering of descendants of original enrollee, Polk McAlvain, will be held June 6th & 7th at the Lake Wister Activity Building on the north side of the lake. The family will meet at 10 a.m. Saturday and lunch will be potluck, with the meat portion provided. Each family is encouraged to bring a side dish, drinks and an auction item for both adults & children. On Sunday the 7th of June, the family will meet at the Kennady-McAlvain Cemetery at 9.30 a.m. Be sure to bring lawn chairs. Please RSVP by May 10th. For further information you may contact Curtis Pugh at 918 649 4064 or email him Curtis@abaptistvoice.com

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
• 6/2 Wilburton	• 7/9 Hugo
• 6/11 Poteau	• 7/16 Crowder
• 6/18 Durant	• 7/23 Broken Bow
• 6/25 Antlers	• 7/30 Smithville
• 6/26 Idabel	
• 6/30 Spiro	

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.

Brokeshoulder Family Reunion

Come and see! Laugh, eat and have fun at the 11th annual Brokeshoulder Family Reunion.

June 12-13

Sac and Fox Community Center, Shawnee

For more information call Serena Underwood (918) 820-2629 or email Wynona Lumpmouth at absenteeshaw@yahoo.com or Darrell Lumpmouth at dreed61.dl@gmail.com

Ritter Family Reunion

The Ritter family reunion will be held June 13 at the Quarry Island in Wister. Any relatives of Isaac (Ike) and Georgia Ritter and Frank and Jennie Ritter are welcome to attend. Please bring a covered dish and something to drink. Any donation to help with the reunion is greatly appreciated. For more information, contact Imogene (McCoy) Odell at 507 Chickasaw Street, Poteau, OK 74953 or (918) 647-3791 or (918) 647-7596.

19th Annual King Family Reunion

Saturday, June 13 starting at 10 a.m. at the Talihina Senior Center on Railroad Street in Talihina.

Descendants of Judy (King) Potts, Robert King, Ada (King) Spring, William Joseph King and Lillie (King) Mcgee are invited.

Bring your favorite covered dish, family pictures, family tree, and a good story. Also, items are needed for an auction for cemetery upkeep. Lunch at 11:45 a.m. and a short business meeting at 1 p.m. Contact: Janelle Kirkes (918) 522-4309 or John Bull (918) 522-4881.

Wade-Jefferson-Prock

Family Reunion

June 13, 2015

Robbers Cave State Park

Wilburton, OK

Bring photos, food and family!

For more details, call:

(580) 579-2332

BELVIN – POWERS FAMILY REUNION

June 13 @ Carson Creek Shelter

Brisket Dinner @ 6:30pm – bring a side dish

All Day – June 14 @ Cypress Spring Shelter

Pot Luck @ Noon – bring your favorite dish

**Family Auction following lunch for
next year expenses!**

BEAVERS BEND STATE PARK

Broken Bow, OK

Enjoy: Visiting – Good Food – Family

Questions/Info: Contact Cindy

@ 580-579-8293 or Pam @ 580-279-9505

Spring Choctaw Family Reunion

June 20

Church of Christ in Commerce, Texas
9am - 5pm

Descendants of John (Dutch) Spring and Ruth Nevada Cooper Spring. Potluck lunch, bring enough food for your family, plus one. Bring pictures!

Going Family Reunion

June 20, 3rd Saturday in the month
10 a.m.

Jones Academy Gym in Hartshorne, OK

Grill-out/picnic style lunch at noon. Menu includes meats supplied and grilled by Going grill committee. If you have a particular meat that is not being supplied you are welcome to bring it and they will grill it. Family members please bring potluck sides and condiments: breads/buns, salads, vegetables, chips, and your favorite dessert and drinks.

Remember to bring your family photos, stories, recipes, and be ready to eat and have a great time!

Door prizes, activities for family members of all ages.

For more information, contact Sherry Picone at (918) 917-0806 or sherrypicone@yahoo.com.

Father's Day Singing

The 17th annual Father's Day Singing will be held at Black-jack Church, 23 miles west of Antlers on Hwy. 3, on June 21. Supper at 5, singing at 6 p.m. Set up by Native Sound, MC Henry James. Singers will include Miracle Temple Choir and Al Brown. For more information contact Ethel Ishcomer (580) 372-5112 or Mary Jo Woody (580) 372-5114).

Hokit Family Reunion

June 27

Clayton Lake State Park

Potluck Lunch @ 12:30

Family and friends of the late Ruth Anderson Hokit are welcome.

For more information, contact Bobbie Barnes at (918) 424-3916.

Reunion for Kemp family

A family reunion for descendants of Stanton Kemp, original enrollee of the Choctaw Nation, will be held July 18, 2015 at 10 a.m. at the Choctaw Community Center in McAlester, located at 1632 S. George Nigh Expressway, next door to the Choctaw Casino. There will be a potluck luncheon. Everyone please bring your favorite covered dish. If anyone has pictures to share, please bring them. Contact Joyce Kemp-Vaughn by email, joycevaughn@yahoo.com with questions or for more information.

Joyce Kemp-Vaughn (405) 838-9819

Atoka Cultural Day - May 30

Choctaw Nation Community Center

1203 West Liberty Road

Artist Booths at 2 p.m.

District 10 Princess Pageant 3 p.m.

Cultural Program 4 p.m.

Traditional Dinner 5 p.m.

HEALTH

Taking the pressure off your heart

By ERIN ADAMS

Choctaw Nation

Halito, National High Blood Pressure Education Month is upon us this month of May. According to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) what we eat can either increase the risk of developing high blood pressure (hypertension) or decrease the risk. Research has shown that high blood pressure can be prevented as well as lowered by following the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) eating plan.

High blood pressure, according to the NHLBI, affects more than 65 million, or 1 out of every 3 American adults. Prehypertension, which increases the risk of developing high blood pressure, also is at an alarming rate of 59 million Americans diagnosed with this risk factor.

- High blood pressure defined as blood pressure higher than 140/90 mmHg
- Prehypertension defined as blood pressure between 120/80 and 140/89 mmHg.

The Dangers of High Blood Pressure

By making the heart work harder this:

- Increases the hardening of the walls of the arteries
- Can cause the brain to hemorrhage
- Can cause the kidneys to have decreased function, which can progress to kidney failure
- Can lead to heart and kidney disease
- Can lead to stroke
- Can lead to blindness

The good news, high blood pressure can be avoided and lowered by taking a few steps:

- Follow a healthy eating plan, such as DASH, that includes foods lower in salt and sodium.
- Stay physically active for at least 30 minutes on most days of the week.

- Get and maintain a healthy weight
- Avoid tobacco and heavy alcohol use

If you have been diagnosed with high blood pressure and your doctor has prescribed medicine, take your medicine as directed in addition to the above steps.

The DASH eating plan is rich in fruits, vegetables, fat-free or 1% milk and milk products, whole grains, fish, poultry, beans, seeds, and nuts. All of which provide potassium, magnesium, and calcium, protein, and fiber. These nutrients have all been associated with lowering blood pressure. In turn the DASH eating plan recommends less intake of salt and sodium; sweets, added sugars, and sugar containing beverages; saturated fat, trans fat and cholesterol ; and red meats. When following the DASH eating plan you will look at you age and level of daily activity. This will guide you on your daily calorie needs.

Calories Needed for Each Activity Level				
Gender	Age (years)	Sedentary	Moderately Active	Active
Female	19-30	2,000	2,000-2,200	2,400
	31-50	1,800	2,000	2,200
	51+	1,600	1,800	2,000-2,200
Male	19-30	2,400	2,600-2,800	3,000
	31-50	2,200	2,400-2,600	2,800-3,000
	51+	2,000	2,200-2,400	2,400-2,800

Now that you know how many calories you’re allowed each day, find the closest calorie level to yours in the chart called “Following the DASH Eating Plan” found at www.nhlbi.nih.gov. This shows roughly the number of servings from each food group that you can eat each day.

To help get you started below is a recipe rich in potassium and protein. Serve this with broccoli and whole wheat orzo to add extra magnesium, calcium and fiber.

NURSERY NEWS

Dane Remington Wood

Dalton would like to announce the birth of his baby brother, Dane Remington Wood. Dane was born to Dallas and Hannah Wood on Jan. 6, 2015, at the Choctaw Nation Health Care Center in Talihina. He weighed 8 pounds and was 20 inches long.



Proud grandparents are Ira and Gina Wood of Stringtown, Bruce and Megan Bacon of Daisy, and John and Kam Harden of Daisy. Delighted great-grandparents are Jack and Imogene Bacon, of Daisy, Calvin and Beth Gann of Antlers, the late Albert Wood and Elwin Wood, and the late Gene and Peggy Grubbs, Donna Grubbs.

Lariah Jaye Wesley

Proud parent Teresa Wesley is happy to announce the arrival of her daughter Lariah Jaye Wesley who was born March 11, 2015 at 9:28 a.m. at the Choctaw Women’s Center in Talihina, weighing in at 10 pounds, 13 ounces and 20 inches long. Proud grandparents are Sharon Wesley of Broken Bow, and Edgar R Stevens Jr of Boswell, and great-grandparents are Dorothy Wesley and the late Newton Wesley Sr. of Broken Bow, and Edgar R Stevens Sr. and the late Etta M Stevens of Boswell, Oklahoma.




Emory G. Hite

Emory G. Hite was born on May 23, 2014, at 6:41 am. He is the son of Emory and Jennifer Hite of Lake Alfred, Florida. He arrived at the Celebration Hospital in Celebration, Florida. He was 8 pounds, 14 ounces, and 20.75 inches at birth. He is the grandson of Jacqueline Janice James Hite of Bethany and the great-grandson of Rufus Leo James of Hartshorne.



Recipe of the Month



Lemon Dill Chicken

Recipe from EatingWell.com

Ingredients:

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, (1-1 1/4 pounds)
- 3 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil, or canola oil, divided
- 1/4 cup onions, finely chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 2 teaspoons flour
- 2 tablespoons dill, chopped fresh, divided
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- freshly ground pepper, to taste
- salt, to taste

Directions:

1. Season chicken breasts on both sides with salt and pepper. Heat 1 1/2 teaspoons oil in a large heavy skillet over medium-high heat. Add the chicken and sear until well browned on both sides, about 3 minutes per side. Transfer chicken to a plate and tent with foil.
2. Reduce heat to medium. Add the remaining 1 1/2 teaspoons oil to the pan. Add onion and garlic and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Whisk broth, flour, 1 tablespoon dill and lemon juice in a measuring cup and add to pan. Cook, whisking, until slightly thickened, about 3 minutes.
3. Return the chicken and any accumulated juices to the pan; reduce heat to low and simmer until the chicken is cooked through, about 4 minutes. Transfer the chicken to a warmed platter. Season sauce with salt and pepper and spoon over the chicken. Garnish with the remaining 1 tablespoon chopped fresh dill.

Nutrition Facts:

Makes 4 servings.

Calories 173

- Fat 6g
- Saturated fat 1g
- Mono Fat 4g
- Cholesterol 64mg
- Carbohydrates 3g
- Dietary fiber 0g
- Protein 24g
- Sodium 236mg
- Potassium 219mg

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.

OFFICE SITES:

Durant
(580) 924-7773

Antlers
(580) 298-6443

McAlester
(918) 420-5716

Poteau
(918) 649-0431

Broken Bow
Coming Soon!
Call (800) 522-6170 ext. 2334 for more information.

Please call to schedule an in-person intake interview.



SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD INITIATIVE

Next Step

Mission

To assist Tribal Members reach the next step of self-sustainment through supplemental food vouchers, financial fitness and healthy living.

* Participants are required to complete training set by initiative guidelines.

Eligibility Requirements:

- One Tribal Member in Household
- Reside in Choctaw Nation Service Area
- Must be a Working Household
- Over income for Food Distribution up to \$200



Her first tooth!
And she's babbling!

It's time to change how we view a child's growth.


It's natural to measure your child's height and weight. But you should measure other ways your child is growing, too. From birth to 5 years, there are milestones your child should reach in terms of how she plays, learns, speaks, and acts. A delay in any of these areas could be a sign of a developmental problem, even autism. The good news is, the earlier it's recognized, the more you can do to help your child reach her full potential. Talk with a doctor or nurse about your child's total development.




Learn the Signs. Act Early.



It was love at first sight...



NURTURE
your baby
with your
LOVE, your
WARMTH,
your **MILK**.



Babies were born to be breastfed.
Give your baby the only thing she needs:
your breastmilk and nothing else.

For more information about how you can give your baby the milk made just for her, call 1-800-323-6170 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

The U.S. Department of Agriculture prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.) If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish). For any other information dealing with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) issues, persons should either contact the USDA SNAP Hotline Number at (800) 221-5689, which is also in Spanish or call the State Information/Hotline Numbers (click the link for a listing of hotline numbers by State); found online at http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/contact_info/hotlines.htm.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

***** 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 June 1-30, except for:
June 6: Idabel 9-11:30 a.m.; Broken Bow 1-3:30 p.m. (market open)
June 13: Bethel 9-10:30; Smithville 12-2 (market open)
Closed: June 29-30 for inventory.

DURANT

Market open weekdays June 1-30, except for:
Closed: June 29-30 for inventory.

McALESTER

Market open weekdays June 1-30, except for:
Closed: June 29-30 for inventory.

POTEAU

Market open weekdays June 1-30, except for:
Closed: June 29-30 for inventory.

PEOPLE YOU KNOW



Choctaw philanthropist co-founds organization to assist others, is honored for service

Hector Roman Matthews is the co-founder, Chairman, and CEO of A Forum for LIFE, Inc., located in Brooklyn, N.Y.

The organization, founded in 2014, offers professional development training courses designed to enhance emotional, intellectual and physical growth of individuals.

He recently received the President’s Award by Lutheran Social

Services of New York in recognition of his selfless and devoted service.

Currently, A Forum for LIFE offers a health, safety and wellness curriculum and professional development and training programs, with focus on early childhood development throughout Greater New York. Community-based organizations, schools, daycare centers, individuals of low to moderate income, women

in need, and at-risk youth are among those who benefit from the mission A Forum for LIFE aims to carry out.

Matthews is a Certified First Responder, a First Responder Instructor who has trained over 200,000 individuals, an instructor Trainer with the Emergency Care & Safety Institute & the American Academy of Pediatrics, and a motivational speaker. He has been a benefactor to over 1,500 community-based organizations since 2004.

Before founding A Forum for LIFE, Roman was a vice president at The Sports Spectrum in Brooklyn, which is dedicated to assisting people with physical fitness, heart health, proper nutrition and productive living.

He has been married since 1995 to Edemar Arbuzow. They have three children: Marcelo, Marcos and Yvonne. Hector and Edemar enjoy travel, playing golf, cooking and spending quality time with people from all walks of life.

“I feel privileged for the opportunity to be of service. Being able to convey life-saving knowledge is the most rewarding work I can do,” Hector said. “As a member of the Choctaw Nation, I humbly accept this recognition and dedicate this award to the truly courageous people who have made tremendous sacrifice before we were born.”

Burdex places first in language fair



Paris Burdex, from Anadarko, won a 1st place position for one of the competitions at the Native American Language Fair.

She is the daughter of Evonne Zumwalt and the granddaughter of Viola Noah Zumwalt, who has taught at Riverside Indian School for 33 years. Paris learned her native language from her grandmother.

Byrum celebrates 90th birthday



The family of Christine Lee (Cricklin) Byrum will gather to celebrate her 90th birthday in June. She was born to Fred and Daisy Cricklin on June 14, 1925, and is one of five children.

Byrum has eight children, 18 grandchildren, 29 great grandchildren, and seven great-great grandchildren.

Her family said she enjoys cooking, gardening, her pets, and her grand babies.

The family wanted to express wishes for a happy birthday, saying “Happy birthday mom, we love you!”

Amos celebrates 92 years with granddaughter



Miss Choctaw Nation Princess Nikki Amos plans to take her grandfather Bill Amos out to celebrate his 92nd birthday on May 3.

Howard sets sights on Broadway



Brianna Howard, fourth grader from Tuttle Intermediate School, qualified for a national dance competition this summer in Branson, Mo. She qualified by getting a Double Plantnium, the highest award you can receive, winning first place in her age division and placing second overall for her solo routine.

Howard also received an invitation to take dance classes in New York during the summer, where she will meet the Rocketts, attend Broadway shows and take master classes.

She has also recently auditioned for the Oklahoma Children’s Actors Guild and will be joining their summer program to further her acting, dancing and singing skills.

Edlund competes in FFA, volunteers



Cami Edlund, freshman at Liberty Ranch High School in Galt, California earned a spot on the novice AgriScience team for Future Farmers of America (FFA). The team competed at state finals on April 19.

Her project centered on people’s preference for type of sugar in their soda, and earned her 3rd place in the overall competition. This past year Edlund also earned her Girl Scout Silver Award and volunteers regularly for a labrador retriever rescue group.

She is a member of her school’s scholastic group and enjoys being a junior counselor at Girl Scout camp. Her plan is to go into forensics.

Deramus celebrates 1st birthday

Laney Deramus celebrated her 1st birthday on March 28 with her family and friends.

She is the sister of Ronald Deramus III, the daughter of Ronald and Hallee Deramus of Idabel, and the granddaughter of Cindy and Ron Deramus of Broken Bow, and Roxy Hamilton of Idabel.

She is the great-granddaughter of Edgar and Hazel Taylor of Sobol, and Gladys (and the late Howard) Hamilton of Idabel.

She attends Cinderella’s Play and Learn Day Care.



Duncan shows champion heifer

A.J. Duncan, with the Tishomingo 4-H Club, exhibited the Grand Champion Heifer at the 2015 Johnston County Junior Livestock Show.

Duncan is a 5th grader at Tishomingo Middle School and his parents are Kevin and Shelley Duncan of Tishomingo. He is the grandson of Choctaw Janet Nix Anderson.



Frazier is committed to justice



The President and Board of Directors for Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma, Inc. awarded Bruce Frazier for his commitment to equal justice for all on December 16, 2014.

Zamarron joins Air Force Junior ROTC



Priscilla Zamarron, age 16, Sophomore at Medina Valley High School, joined the Air Force Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps this year.

At their annual awards ceremony, Zamarron was given the award for AS-1 Cadet of the 2014-2015 school year. Just prior to receiving the award, she opened the ceremony by singing the Star Spangled Banner. Her parents said they are very proud of her.

Willis and Wesley crowned as royalty



Citizens at the Choctaw Community Center in Idabel held the Community Senior Citizen Prom on April 11.

By way of vote, Leon Wesley earned the title King and Earlene Willis earned the title Queen during the event.

Mr. and Mrs. WhiteBuffalo celebrate 50 years together in marriage



Husband and wife Rochelle and Joy L. WhiteBuffalo Sr. celebrate their 50th anniversary on April 6.


“With God’s help, we managed to get through difficult times,” they said. “We have a wonderful family.”

The couple has three sons, Junior, Efrain, and Matthew. Their granddaughters are Shana and Kelsey, and grandsons are Kyle, Matthew, and Corey.

Allread gets involved with government



Tanner Allread was recently recognized as an Honorable Mention for the prestigious Udall Foundation scholarship program. The Udall Foundation is an independent agency of the executive branch, and recognizes the Nation’s top sophomores and juniors who are committed to American Indian self-governance, health care, and environmental stewardship. Tanner is a junior at Yale University and recently served as an intern for The White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education.




Do you have a student that attends school in TEXAS?


Enroll your student into the Choctaw STAR Program!

For more information and to access online enrollment, visit:

star.choctawnation.com



CHOCTAW COLLEGE CLOTHING ALLOWANCE



- The Choctaw clothing grant is a “one-time only” allowance.
- A grant of \$300 is provided for a semester GPA of 3.00 to 4.00.
- A grant of \$250 is provided for a semester GPA of 2.00 to 2.99.
- Students earning a semester GPA of 1.99 or less can re-apply once a semester GPA of 2.00 is achieved.
- A COLLEGE transcript is required to apply. Applicants must be full-time students and must have completed at least one semester of college prior to application.

NEED COLLEGE CLOTHING?

OBITUARIES

Jack Campbell

Jack Campbell, 86, of Carlsbad, N.M., passed away July 11, 2013 at Carlsbad Medical Center.

Jack Campbell was born Dec. 23, 1926 in Rocky Arroyo, N.M. to Dillard F. and Sarah A. (Hill) Campbell. Jack grew up on the family ranch in Rocky where he helped his father with the cattle and also drove the school bus. When he was 20 years old, his family moved to Texas where they had a farm near Mineral Wells. Jack farmed there off and on for many years. For a short time he also worked for General Dynamics. Jack also worked at the Uranium Mines in Grants, N.M., Southern Airways as a helicopter mechanic and at Palo Pinto Stone Company as a heavy equipment operator. In 1959 he moved back to Carlsbad to work at Duval Potash Mine where he was a mechanic foreman, retiring in 1990. Jack enjoyed fishing and hunting when he was younger, but after his retirement he was able to pursue his real passion by opening a small tractor repair business, Jack's Tractor and Supply. Jack not only repaired tractors for his customers, but also bought and restored old tractors.

Jack received his Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma membership card recently which made him very happy as he was always proud of his Native American Heritage. Jack will be sorely missed by his family and many friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents; son, Paul Kilgore; brother, J. D. Campbell; sisters, Frances Campbell, Wilma Truitt and Cleo Sanders.

Survivors are his wife, Mary Campbell of Carlsbad, N.M.; sons, Randy Campbell of Carlsbad, N.Mm, Jackie Campbell of Carlsbad, N.M., Kelly Kilgore and wife, Tammy of Carlsbad, N.M.; daughter, Judi Christopher of Carlsbad, N.M.; daughter-in-law, Kim Kilgore of Carlsbad, N.M.; seven grandchildren, Tyler Campbell, Chance Campbell, Justin Campbell, Jason Christopher and wife, Janna, Candace Christopher, Lauren Kilgore and Erin Kilgore; three great-grandchildren, Rylan Campbell, Zach and Elliott Christopher; and sister, Elizabeth Hutchison.

Malcolm Wade

Malcolm Wade, 65, of Norman passed away July 9, 2014. He was born March 19, 1949 in Oklahoma City to Malcolm Delos Wade and Mary Louise (Honea) Wade.

He was a teacher and coach at Carl Albert High School, retiring in 2011. Malcolm married Karen Snell in 1992.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Mary Louise Wade. Malcolm is survived by his wife, Karen; his son, Josh Wade and wife, Jana; his father, Malcolm D.; his sister, Linda and her partner Cris; brother, Charles Wade; grandchildren, Harrison Malcolm Wade and Ella Scout Jones; and numerous aunts, uncles and cousins.

Memorials may be made in memory of Malcolm to the Mid Del School Foundation, 7217 S.E. 15th St., Midwest City, Okla. 73110-5235 or the American Cancer Society, 6525 N. Meridian Ave., Oklahoma City, Okla. 73116, or charity of choice.

Arrangements for Malcolm and his family were placed in the care of the Vice family at the Havenbrook Funeral Home of Norman.

Keith Alan Wright

Funeral service for Keith Alan Wright, 51, Lawton, was held on Aug. 1, 2014, in the Becker-Rabon Funeral Home Chapel with Dr. Keith Miles, Pastor, Central Baptist Church officiating.

Keith was called to his eternal home on July 28, 2014 by Jesus Christ his Lord in Wichita Falls, Texas.

Burial was in Sunset Memorial Gardens.

He was born June 20, 1963 in Lawton to Bobby Ray and Mary Virginia Wright. He graduated from Eisenhower High School in 1981. He received his Bachelors Degree in Finance from the University of Oklahoma.

During his school years he lettered in tennis in the seventh grade and played through high school. Keith and his doubles partner won state honors their senior year. Other activities he enjoyed were water skiing, snow skiing, camping, fishing and golf.

He attended Central Baptist Church in Lawton from cradle roll until he went off to college. He worked summers as a bank teller and also continued helping his mom and dad at Wright's Frame Shop. After college, Keith was hired by Fidelity Investments as a stockbroker in Dallas. Also while in Dallas, he was saved at a Baptist church and continued serving the Lord wherever his job might take him. After working in Dallas for a while he transferred to Denver, Colo. Here he received his Chartered Mutual Fund Counselor Certificate. Within a few years he was hired by Quick and Reilly to set up a stock brokerage in Houston, and later opened a second office in Sugarland, Texas, and finally a third office in north Houston. He served as stockbroker manager for the three offices for several years. As a manager he traveled to New York for meetings and visited the New York Stock Exchange on Wall Street.

Keith married Lynn Marie Myhra while in Houston. After his father's death Keith returned to Lawton to help his mom run Wright's Frame Shop and Gallery, Inc. He had grown up in the framing business and also had a shop in Houston. Keith and his mom worked together for a few years until his health began to fail. At that time they both retired and the Lawton business was closed and the property sold.

He is survived by his mother, Mary Wright, of Lawton; aunts, Norma Jean Bowers and husband Carl, of Duncan, Patsy Bertoldi and husband John, of California, and Joanne Tompkins, of Houston; as well as numerous cousins and friends.

He was preceded in death by his father, Bob Wright; maternal grandparents, John and Lillian Tompkins; paternal grandmother, Mrs. Leon Wright; uncle, David Tompkins; aunts Patricia Payne and husband Chad and Dorothy Gill; and uncle James Wright and wife Vera.

Memorial contributions may be made to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society.

Wallace Glen Harris

Wallace Glen Harris was born May 20, 1941 in Tahlequah, the son of Douglas Joseph "D.J." Harris and Nancy Ora (Daniel) Harris. He was married to Linda Sue Chuculate on June 30, 1969 in Stilwell. Mr. Harris passed this life on March 21, 2015 in Sallisaw, at the age of 73.

He leaves to mourn his passing: wife Linda of the home; one daughter, Terri Long and husband Rick of Marble City; two sons, Anthony Harris of Sallisaw and Andrew Harris of Sallisaw; six grandchildren, Brittany Long, Madison Long, Gunner Harris, Ryleigh Harris, Kiah Harris and Connor Harris; one sister, Coleen and husband Bobby Joe Henning of Del City; two brothers, Kenneth and wife Wanda Harris of Muldrow and Henry and wife Gail Harris of Marble City.

He was preceded in death by one grandchild, Jordan; his parents; two sisters, Lavene Jones and Erma Ridgeway; and two brothers, Eugene and Joe Harris.

Interment was in Flute Springs Cemetery, Marble City.



Joan Bettis

Joan Bettis of Shawnee was born on Aug. 27, 1935 and passed away on Dec. 22, 2014.

She was preceded in death by her husband Thomas Bettis and her son Fred Holson.

She is survived by her children Elaine Penson, Linda Lee, Sharon Westcott, Bobbi Collins, Robert and Penny Lee, Carol and Charles Abel; and numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren.

Special thanks to the Choctaw Nation for assisting with burial expenses.

Theresa Mae Lewis

Theresa Mae Lewis, 56, of Talihina, passed away Jan. 26, 2015. She was born in Talihina to William McClure and Betty Ludlow McClure on May 22, 1958.

She enjoyed working as a home health provider. She worked for several years until she was diagnosed with cancer. She may have lost the battle, but gained life with Jesus Christ.

She was preceded in death by her father, William McClure; husband, Jonathan Lewis; step-brother, Alan Jones; and step-niece, Melinda Berry.

She is survived by her mother Betty Walton and husband H.B. of Talihina; step-son, Jonathan Lewis Jr.; sisters, Billie McClure, Valerie and Harry Rasha of Talihina; step-sisters, Winona and Cecil Berry of McAlester; nephews, Chris and Christy Taylor of Wilburton, Brent Durant and Crystal McIntyre of Talihina and Gabriel Rasha of Talihina; nieces, Tashina Taylor, Landa McClure and Kenda Lewis Rasha, all of Talihina; great-nephews, Lance Berry of McAlester, Gavin Taylor of Wilburton; great-nieces, Kendra Maroon of Wilburton, Joanna and Ariana Durant of Talihina; a very special friend, Tommie Nunley; numerous cousins and friends. She was fondly known as "Auntie Mae."

She was a member of Rock Creek Cumberland Presbyterian Church and took position of Eldership on June 27, 2010.

Interment was at Rock Creek Cemetery under the direction of Burkhart Funeral Service, Talihina.

Wilbur 'Leo' Christie

Wilbur "Leo" Christie of Red Oak died Jan. 28, 2015 in Wilburton at the age of 75.

Leo was born April 9, 1939 in Talihina to Andrew and Florence (Childers) Christie. He married Emmy Sensibaugh in McAlester and enjoyed 36 years of marriage before her death in 1999. Leo worked as a roofer and painter in Latimer County. He also was a talented guitar and piano player and enjoyed playing and singing. Leo will be greatly missed.

He is survived by his five children, Gordon Christie and wife, Vicki of Wilburton, Gaylon Christie and wife, Sonja of Wilburton, Renee Vance and Ronnie Joe Calvin of Red Oak, Tammy Rud and husband, Kenny of Houston, and Kay Howze and husband, Jack of McAlester; grandchildren, Steven Christie, Stormie Christie, Mary Long, Emily Christie, Carmen Christie, John Kinnikin, Trey Vance, Andy Rud, Mary Rud, Kimberly Rud and Todd Howze; numerous great-grandchildren; brothers, Bob Christie of Wilburton and Julian Christie of London, Texas; sisters, Pauline Motley of Wilburton and Alise Christie of Wilburton; and other family and friends.

Leo was preceded in death by his parents, Andrew and Florence Christie; wife, Emmy Christie; and five brothers.

Interment was at Centerpoint Cemetery, Wilburton. Arrangements entrusted to Jones Harkins Funeral Home, Wilburton.

Albert Wayne Hamilton

Albert Wayne Hamilton was born April 2, 1931 near Erick to Hafford and Odessa Harkins Hamilton. He passed away Feb. 8, 2015 at the Grace Living Center in Mangum.

He spent all of his life in Southwest Oklahoma except for three years in the Army.

He graduated from Plainview School in 1949. He entered the Army in 1951 and was stationed in Pine Bluff, Ark. He served in the Korean War from 1952-1954, where he was in the 279th Regiment of the 45th Division. He received a Bronze Star. He was discharged in January 1954 and he returned to Greer County. He married Norma Haygood on Dec. 17, 1954. They lived in Mangum for a year and then moved to Jester where they were engaged in farming. In 1971, they moved to Mangum. Wayne continued to farm until his retirement in 2013 due to failing health. But he still drove back to Jester to check on things and feed "Dog" each day.

He is preceded in death by his parents; one brother, Riley Hamilton; and one sister, June Tramel.

He is survived by his wife Norma of the home; two sons, Ken Hamilton and wife Terri of Mangum, and Perry Hamilton and wife Laura of Noble; and a daughter Janet Neighbors and husband Paul of Granite; nine grandchildren, Tara Neighbors, Sarah Partain and husband Dillion, Holly Pankhurst and husband Micah, Taylor Neighbors, Molly Hamilton, Ty Hamilton, Tegan Neighbors and wife Kirsten, Logan Hamilton and Allie Hamilton; great-grandkids, Brooklyn and London Pankhurst, Emma and Leroy Wayne Partain; five sisters, Betty Nippert, Mangum, Jimmie Ruth Boyd, Cleburne, Texas, Thelma Pender and Husband Buddy of Fort Worth, Texas, Nina Turner of Altus, Sherri Govett and husband Mark of Oklahoma City; two brothers, Bob Hamilton and wife Barbara of Pauls Valley, Arleigh Hamilton and wife Pat of Oklahoma City.

Interment was in Jester Cemetery under the direction of Fails Funeral Home in Mangum.

Clovis E. Gibson Jr.

Clovis Eulan Gibson, Jr., passed away on Dec. 21, 2014. He was 71.

Clovis was born on Oct. 19, 1943 in a log cabin in Antlers.

Clovis was a mountain man with many stories of his time in the Alaskan wilderness. He was a pilot as well as a police officer in California and Oregon. He was an expert marksman, hunter and fisherman and a musician and vocalist. He was a business owner. He was in construction work and used to say he knew everything there was to know about dirt and he had the dirt-moving skills to prove it.

He loved to be in the woods picking wild mushrooms and enjoyed the hunt almost more than the finding. He was an amazing story teller and wrote down many of his experiences.

He was proud of his heritage as a Choctaw Indian. Most of all, he is and wants to be remembered as a mighty warrior for Jesus. It was his biggest desire that all of his family and friends walk with Jesus. He was able to hear the words of Jesus when he entered Heaven's Gates saying "Well done thou good and faithful Servant." We love you Clovis, Papa "C," forever and ever.



Frances Charlene Hauser

Frances Charlene Hauser, of Edmond, left this life and began her eternal one with her Lord on Jan. 31, 2015, at Oklahoma City's Mercy Hospital after a sudden illness.

She was born June 9, 1928, to Charles and Josephine Packnett in Eagletown, and grew up in Antlers. Growing up in Antlers, Fran, as she was known to friends and family, was that person who lit up every room she walked into.

She loved cheerleading, choir, and served as the Drum Major for the Antlers Bearcat Marching Band. Fran loved adventure and life, and was the type who made all around her love them as well. When she was 14 years old she and her younger brother Joe, took a taxi ride 1,500 miles from Antlers, to Huntington Beach, Calif., to visit their mother who was working in the shipyards during World War II. The trip took three days and cost them \$20 each.

When she was 17 years old, Fran survived a deadly tornado which destroyed her hometown. She and her friends took refuge at a roller skating rink while the tornado cut a half-mile swath through town demolishing homes and businesses. The tornado killed 70 people and injured more than 300, but Fran escaped injury and ran home to her anxiously awaiting family.

Growing up, Frances overcame many hardships but always valued education. She graduated from Antlers High School in 1946 and from Murray State College in Tishomingo in 1948 with an associate's degree in science. She received her Bachelor's degree from NE State University. A devout believer in education, she naturally went on to earn two Master's Degrees, one from NE OK State University, and another from her beloved SW OK State University.

In 1977 she married the love of her life George Hauser in Wheeler, Texas. The couple lived in Weatherford while her husband served as the head basketball coach at SW OK State University. Fran spent 20-plus years teaching junior high and elementary school children in the Weatherford Public Schools. Prior to her tenure teaching in Weatherford, she enjoyed teaching at Bacone College in Muskogee and American Christian College in Tulsa. She had a unique teaching style that allowed her students to learn in a personal way. She loved the challenge of classrooms full of diverse students and giving the most resistant learner hope.

Frances had the ability to calm otherwise tense situations with her compassionate personality. She was a 20-plus year breast cancer survivor who graciously supported friends experiencing similar difficulties themselves.

She was a devoted wife who would faithfully accompany George on his travels. She rarely missed a game and would often accompany her husband on the road recruiting. Her personality and wit helped cheer Coach up after a tough game. She served as a surrogate mother to many of the players who often were a long way from home. She treasured her relationship with the players' families and the families of coaches throughout the state. She was a very loyal and supportive coach's wife who would often challenge the referees' calls and even once followed them toward the locker room noting the referee's lack of ability and lack of hair!

Frances was very proud of her Indian heritage. A proud member of the Choctaw Nation, she was an avid collector of Indian art and she and George enjoyed traveling to New Mexico in search of new adventures. She was fearless when it came to heights. She would look over the edge of the Royal Gorge Bridge, ascend to the top of the Sears Tower, and once stranded on top of a plateau in New Mexico had to get down on a ladder, she couldn't get George to climb!

She loved meeting her sister Maudine, brother Joe and sister-in-law Margurite at OU football games. She loved gardening, yard work, flowers, music and dancing. She loved glitter, sequins, and bling!

Her favorite TV show was All Things British on OETA. Most of all, Fran loved her family. Known as Auntie Franie, MiMi and MeeMaw to her family, Frances loved visits and calls from her many children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and nieces and nephews.

Fran Hauser was larger than life, and her passing leaves a large hole in the world, and in the hearts of the many, many who knew and loved her. Fran will be deeply missed, but those of us who have received salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ look forward to being reunited with her in eternity.

She was preceded in death by her parents Charles Packnett and Josephine Pierce; brother, Robert Pierce, and daughter Donna Lee.

She is survived by her husband of 37 years, George Hauser; her brother Joe Packnett of Norman; two sisters, Maudean Harden of Wynnewood, and Darlene Watashe of Kellyville; children, Carolyn King Wiggins of Sulphur, Rita King Ballinger of Bixby, Leslie King Ameen of Tulsa, David King of Tulsa; step-children Susan Stephens of Claremore, William Hauser of Tulsa and Brett Hauser of Georgetown, Texas; 24 grandchildren, 20 great-grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

Jim Marris

Jim Marris, 72, passed away on Feb. 28, 2015, at his home in Ardmore. He made such a beautiful transition from this life on earth and went on to be with the Lord living "next door to Jesus."

Jim was born in Ardmore, on June 13, 1942, to Winnie Marris and Sally (Rasha) Marris. He had been in declining health for the past several months, having received chemotherapy and radiation therapy for such. Jim's interests included his love for hunting, fishing and camping, especially down at Blue River in Johnson County. He is probably singing praises and playing music to the Lord with his guitar or doing his drumming. He really loved all kinds of music, but especially southern gospel songs. He loved to play music, playing with a few country and western bands around southern Oklahoma for most of his life. He also played in churches for the Lord and singing those southern gospel songs. He loved the Lord very much. He was a member of a Pentecostal Church in Ardmore. Jim will be remembered as always having a smile on his face and was nicknamed "Smiling Jim." He was an outgoing person and never met a stranger.

He was preceded in death by his father, Winnie Marris; mother, Sally (Rasha) Marris; brother, Ralph Hardy Marris; and sister, Helen Rasha.

He leaves to cherish his memories, his spouse, Earlene, of the home; his daughters, Gaylynn Marris of Marietta, and Tesa Marris of Ardmore; and his son, Jimmy Marris of Ardmore; and also a special person who he loved, cared for, and helped raise, Brandon Martin; stepchildren, Cheryl Wilkerson Brown of Ardmore and Todd Wilkerson of Ardmore; sister, Tena Layton of Lone Grove; brothers, Albert Lewis of Ardmore and Darryl Rogers of Azle, Texas; and sister-in-law, Pearl Marris; eight grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren; two step-grandchildren; and a host of nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Cremation services under the direction of Hillcrest Crematory.



OBITUARIES

William Lonnie Dills

Bill Dills, a beloved family man and respected resident of Durant, passed from this earthly life into the arms of his Savior on March 19, 2015 at the age of 91. He was born to Lonnie Burton and Una Irene (Duer) Dills in Durant on Nov. 11, 1923. Bill married his best friend and love of his life Edna Corine Manning in Sherman, Texas on Dec. 16, 1945.

Bill served his country proudly in the U.S. Army from 1942-1945 in the Special Troops-3rd Army, and also as a member of the 12th Army Group. He participated in several battles: Normandy, Northern France, Ardennes, also know as the Battle of the Bulge, Rhineland and Central Europe. Bill received the EAME Theater Ribbon, the Silver Service Star, Good Conduct Medal and the World War II Victory Ribbon. He was very proud to be a Choctaw veteran.

He was a construction worker by trade, from 1962 to 1980 at Peabody Gallion. He retired from there. Bill attended the Silo Baptist Church, he enjoyed gardening, raising cattle, hunting and fly fishing. But the most important thing in his life was his family, especially his grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Mr. Dills is survived by his wife, Corine of the home; children, Mike Dills and wife Lynn of Durant; Gail Baker and husband Jerry of Silo, Gary Don Dills and wife Janie of Durant and Lonnie Dills and wife Melva of Corinth, Texas; grandchildren, Michael Dills and wife Alice of Leonard, Texas, Gary Wayne Clark and wife Misty of Durant, Randall Dills and wife Sonya of Bonham, Texas, Janine Dills of Durant, Brandon Carter and wife Heather of Durant, Kendra Sullivan of Durant, Shane Dills and wife Angie of Durant and Matthew Dills of Corinth, Texas; 18 great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild; and numerous cousins, nephews and nieces.

Mr. Dills was preceded in death by his parents, Lonnie and Irene Dills; sister, Lahoma Briedwell; brother, C.E. Dills; grandson, Shawn Clark; great-grandson, Jaron Baker.

Interment was at Restland Cemetery in Silo.

Wallace Glen Harris

Wallace Glen Harris was born May 20, 1941 in Tahlequah, the son of Douglas Joseph "D.J." Harris and Nancy Ora (Daniel) Harris. He was married to Linda Sue Chuculate on June 30, 1969 in Stilwell. Mr. Harris passed this life on March 21, 2015 in Sallisaw, at the age of 73.

He leaves to mourn his passing: wife Linda of the home; one daughter, Terri Long and husband Rick of Marble City; two sons, Anthony Harris of Sallisaw and Andrew Harris of Sallisaw; six grandchildren, Brittany Long, Madison Long, Gunner Harris, Ryleigh Harris, Kiah Harris and Connor Harris; one sister, Coleen and husband Bobby Joe Henning of Del City; two brothers, Kenneth and wife Wanda Harris of Muldrow and Henry and wife Gail Harris of Marble City.

He was preceded in death by one grandchild, Jordan; his parents; two sisters, Lavene Jones and Erma Ridgeway; and two brothers, Eugene and Joe Harris.

Interment was in Flute Springs Cemetery, Marble City.

Mary Townsend Daniels

Mary Townsend Daniels, 94, entered into her heavenly home March 22, 2015. She joins many family members who had gone before her, including her husband Gillis Daniels, parents, three sisters, five brothers, one granddaughter, and a son-in-law.

Mary was born Nov. 3, 1920 in Valiant, the daughter of Clark and Ethel (Elkins) Townsend.

She was united in marriage to Gillis Daniels. She and Gillis resided in the Redland Community with their six children and Gillis' elderly father, Robert Hardy Daniels.

Mary was a member of the Redland Methodist Church while living in Redland. She later moved her church membership to the First United Methodist Church in Idabel when she and her four youngest children moved to Idabel in 1964. Mary was appointed to fill her late husband's uncompleted term as the McCurtain County Tax Assessor. After completing the term, she sought the office and was elected many years, retiring in 1989 after 25 years of dedicated service.

Mary was appointed to serve on the Choctaw Nation Housing Authority Board for 15 years. She was proud of her Choctaw Indian heritage. She was also a member of the Haworth Order of Eastern Star. Mary was very family-oriented and loved cooking and visiting her family. Her grandchildren were her pride and joy.

Mary also felt she had a blessed life that "The Lord was with her every step of the way." She resided at Memorial Heights Nursing Home since 2008, where she formed many close relationships with the staff and other residents.

She leaves behind to cherish his memory her daughters, Martha Leonard, Margie Wake and husband, Virgil, Betty Farley and husband, Max, all of Idabel, Carolyn Goodenough and husband, Mel, of New Braunfels, Texas, and Kay Raun and husband, Richard, of Montgomery, Texas; son, Ray Daniels of Stillwater; three sisters, Sarah Dunaway of Oklahoma City, Jane Whitten and husband, Bobby, of Idabel, and Pat Privott and husband, Norman, of Harrah; sister-in-law, Carol Townsend of Clay Center, Neb.; 10 grandchildren, Mike Leonard, Mitch Leonard and Charlie and Tracie Leonard, Dustin and Denise Wake, Tamra and Jack Hodge, Darby Vacar, Christi and Kyle Hahn, Clay Raun, Cara and Sam Belcher, and Candice and Collin Bullard; 13 great-grandchildren, Colt Leonard, Alex Leonard, Lathan Lucas, Kendyll Buckner, Rylan and Dalton Belcher, Emily Wake, Jentry Jet and Jetton James Hodge, Madison Claire and Truett James Hahn, and Asher and Burke Bullard; several nieces, nephews, cousins, other relatives and a host of friends.

Interment was at the Redland Cemetery.

Matilda (Thompson) Fisher

Matilda (Thompson) Fisher, 90, of McAlester, passed away March 25, 2015 at McAlester Regional Health Center.

Matilda (Thompson) Fisher was born Sept. 1, 1924 at Lequire to Isom and Laura "Sissy" (McKinney) Thompson. She married Anias Fisher on June 26, 1947 in Fort Smith, Ark. and he preceded her in death in 1978. She enjoyed baking and quilting.

Surviving relatives: three daughters and their spouses, Verna and Richard Watt of Gladstone, Mo., Dora and Don Layman of Eufaula, Lenora and Ronnie Cox of Checotah; nine grandchildren; one great-grandson; one great-granddaughter.

She was preceded in death by her husband; parents; daughters, Lahoma Ott, Mary Weaver; sisters, Lena (Thompson) Wallen, Sophie Elizabeth (Thompson) Morris; brothers, Turner Thompson, Sr., Jonas Thompson, Jeremiah Thompson, James Thompson, Ramsey Thompson and Homer Thompson.

Graveside services were held at Siloam Springs Cemetery near Lequire.



Melford Eugene 'Gene' Winfrey

Melford Eugene "Gene" Winfrey, 88, of Choctaw, passed from this life on March 25, 2015.

He began his life's journey on Aug. 29, 1926 in Dibble, born to Lee Roy and Fannie (Harrison) Winfrey. At 16, he went to Portland, Oregon working in the shipyards to help support his family. He was later transferred to San Francisco, where at the age of 18 he joined the U. S. Marine Corps. He proudly served his country during World War II serving with a truck brigade in the South Pacific.

Upon his return to Oklahoma he met and married his princess, the love of his life, Margaret (Thomas) Winfrey who preceded him in death on Oct. 3, 2013. He moved to Choctaw in the 1960s where he began his career at Tinker Air Force Base as an airplane inspector until his retirement in 1991.

He was and will remain an exceptional husband, father, brother, son, friend, father-in-law and grandfather (pappy). Jesus Christ was evident in the way he handled life. He loved to tell stories of his life with his family and friends. He had a love affair with hunting and fishing and his beloved bird dogs.

He attended the Choctaw Senior Citizens Center three times a week where he was loved by all. Gene was also very proud of his Choctaw Indian heritage and in earlier times he and his wife would attend the Choctaw citizens events with great pleasure. He patiently and lovingly took care of his ailing wife, never losing his ability to find the joy of life. Gene was a strong man of great faith and abundant love for his family. He was a strong protector of those that he loved and will be greatly missed.

Mr. Winfrey is survived by his daughter, Janice Kester and husband Calvin; grandson Mark Milburn and great-grandsons, Mason and Maddox; grandson, Paul Milburn and wife Richelle and great-grandson Davis Eugene Milburn; son Mike Winfrey and wife Melody; granddaughter, Jennifer Carter and husband Joe and great-grandsons, Jett and Jagger; grandson, Matthew Winfrey and wife Marcie; sisters, Reba Dickson and Nadine Swindell; brothers, LR Winfrey and Wendell Winfrey; numerous cousins, nieces, nephews and family.

Mr. Winfrey was preceded in death by his parents, Lee Roy and Fannie Winfrey; brother, Dale Winfrey.

Graveside services were held at the Bokchito Cemetery.



Erica Amada Martinez

Erica Amada Martinez, 23, of Broken Bow, passed away Wed., April 1, 2015 in Broken Bow.

She was born July 23, 1991 in Tlaxi-hina, the daughter of Adolfo Martinez and Vicki Winship Perez. She had lived in Broken Bow all of her life.

Erica was a member of the McGee Chapel Presbyterian Church and a member of the Choctaw Women Leaders, Chahta Ohoyo Tikba Hikia.

She was someone who never met a stranger and was always willing to help everyone. Erica enjoyed playing soccer, reading, going to the movies, spending time with her daughter, family and friends.

Erica was preceded in death by the father of her daughter, Neal Wesley; great-grandparents, Effie and Emerson Wallace, Stella Crosby and Robert Winship; cousin, Juan Perez.

She leaves to cherish her memory, her daughter Sierra Wesley of Broken Bow; mother and step-father, Vicki Perez and Cirilo Perez of Broken Bow; father, Adolfo Martinez of DeQueen, Ark.; grandparents, Bobby and Vera Winship of Broken Bow and Gloria Domingues and Jose Martinez; brothers, Adolfo Martinez, Cory Martinez, Alexander Martinez and Erick Perez of Broken Bow and Osvaldo Martinez of DeQueen, Ark.; sisters Gloria Martinez of DeQueen, Ark. and Samatha Baker of Idabel; aunts, Lisa Aaron and husband Dwight and Karen McKinney; great aunt, Lancy Wallace; uncle, Robert Winship Jr. and wife Verlinda; special cousin, Ashley Winship and special friend, Raul Gonzales of Mt. Pleasant, Texas; numerous other relatives and many special friends.

Interment was at the McGee Chapel Cemetery in Broken Bow. Services under the direction of Bunch-Singleton Funeral Home in Broken Bow.



Rev. Daniel 'Dan' McLemore

Rev. Daniel "Dan" McLemore, a respected resident of Durant, a beloved family member went home with his Lord and Savior on April 12, 2015 at the age of 66. He was born on Aug. 21, 1948 in Tahlequah, to Sanders and Mary (Mayes) McLemore. Sr. Dan married his best friend and partner in life Lucy Isaac in Muskogee on Nov. 29, 1975.

Dan was a man who dedicated his life in the service of his Lord and Savior and others. He was ordained as a Deacon in 1978 at the Boston Avenue Baptist Church in Muskogee, and then ordained at the 1st Indian Baptist Church in Muskogee. Rev. Dan McLemore served as the pastor of Grace Indian Baptist Church and continued on at the Ada First Indian Church, Chi-Ka-Sha Baptist Church, the Native American Mission in 2008 and the Stone Creek Baptist Church in Durant. He was an active member of the Fairview Baptist Church and a cherished member of the Holmes Coffey Murray Funeral Home family since 1991. Dan enjoyed going to garage sales, going to G.W. for men and WalMart. He loved going out to eat with his family and just spending time with them.

Rev. McLemore is survived by his beloved wife Lucy of the home; daughter, Candace Leach and husband Garry of Durant; granddaughter, Amber McLemore of Durant; sisters, Christine Mouse and husband Tony of Tahlequah and Margie Wacoche and husband Watie of Tahlequah; step-brother, Wayne Gray and wife Winona of Stillwell; also by numerous nieces, nephews and a host of friends.

Rev. McLemore was preceded in death by his parents, Sanders and Mary McLemore; sisters, Peggy Perry, Kathleen Kaniatobe and Patricia; brothers, Sanders, Jr., Billy J, Wilburne E., Bennie R. and Jimmie L. McLemore.

Interment was at Cedar Tree Cemetery in Tahlequah.



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. Only one photo per notice.

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

Mozelle G. Shoemake

Mozelle G. Shoemake passed from this life on March 23, 2015 in Durant. She was born March 25, 1940 in Crystal (Atoka County) to William Alonzo Shoemake and Geneva Eastridge.

She is survived by her sisters, Norma J. Price of Durant, Judy Winters and husband Edward of Farmington, New Mexico; and brother, Samuel Shoemake of Crystal. Also surviving are nieces, Paula Price, Debbie Shoemake and Dawn M. (Wendy) Russell; nephews, Earl W. Price, Michael A. Price, and Scott Price, E. Mark Winters, Patrick Winters, Joseph Eugene Shoemake, Charles W. Shoemake, and Donald Shoemake.; sister-in-law, Norene Shoemake; uncle, Vernon Eastridge and Viva Lee, and several wonderful cousins. She also had many health care provider friends at Oak Ridge Manor where she had lived for several years.

She is preceded in death by her parents; brother, William A. Shoemake; and nephew, Christopher Winters.

After high school Mozelle engaged in a number of interesting jobs. She worked for a year or more at Southwestern Bell Telephone Co. She then enlisted in the U.S. Air Force where she spent seven and a half years serving our country. She then worked for Western Union for about two years. Then went on to Dallas and worked for the Postal Service for five years. Her last few years she was a dispatcher for I.B.M. She retired at the age of 55 and for the past 15 years has lived in Durant.

Graveside services were held at the Crystal Cemetery in Crystal.



Bettye Jo Haggard

Bettye Jo Haggard, a long-time resident of Pittsburg, Kansas, died March 26, 2015 at the Via Christi Village Nursing Facility in Pittsburg.

She was born Dec. 20, 1924 in Kinta to an original enrollee of the Choctaw Nation, Buster Brashears and his wife Jimmie.

Bettye was active in the life of Pittsburg State University as a faculty wife, student, graduate and parent of PSU graduates. Many life-long friendships were formed through her work as wife of a city commissioner and mayor and her membership in the Baptist Church.

She married J.D. Haggard on Dec. 22, 1942 in Stigler; he preceded her in death on Sept. 28, 2000.

Survivors include a son, James Haggard and wife Charlotte of Lee's Summit, Mo.; a daughter, Barbara Novero and husband William of Arlington, Texas; a brother, Jack Brashears and wife Yvonne; four grandsons, Kelly and Jon Haggard, Andrew and Jay Novero; and eight great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her parents; a son, Jerald David Haggard; and a grandson, Michael Haggard.

Burial was in the Highland Park Cemetery.



Craig Edwin Godfrey

Craig Edwin Godfrey, 49, passed away March 28, 2015 at his home in Houston.

He was born on Oct. 5, 1965 in Arlington, Texas to Todd Godfrey, III and Janice L. Wilde. Craig attended Angelina College, Lufkin, Texas and graduated from Sam Houston State University with a degree in Business Administration. Craig was employed at Sue Ikeler Realty, Rocket Promotions, and the Roger Clemens' Family Interests.

He is survived by his mother, Janice Wilde; his father, Todd Godfrey, III; sister, Debbie Clemens and husband Roger; nephews, Koby, Kory, Kacy, and Kody Clemens; half-brother, Ronnie Berglund and wife Kathy of Oklahoma; niece, Michelle Pryer and husband, Brent; nephews, Evan Berglund and wife Jordan; Chad Berglund and wife, Emily, all from Oklahoma; half-sister, Vicki Peters and husband Benny; nephews, Ricky Mitchell and wife Cassie; Josh Peters; niece, Shawnda Robertson and husband Jarrod, as well as several great nieces and nephews.

In lieu of customary remembrances, contributions in Craig's memory may be directed to The Council on Alcohol and Drugs Houston, 303 Jackson Hill Street, Houston, Texas, 77007.



Edward Craig Futrell

Edward Craig Futrell was born Feb. 9, 1956, in Forney, Texas, to Gerald and Bessie Suela (Irvin) Futrell. He passed from this life April 1, 2015, in Hugo, at the age of 59.

Craig married Becky June Fails on June 27, 1974 in Soper. He was a resident of this area for 44 years, employed as Project Manager of Quality Control for the Choctaw Nation. He enjoyed wood working, spending time with family, and travelling. He will be dearly missed by many.

Craig was preceded in death by his parents; one uncle, Floyd Futrell; one aunt, Ernestine Futrell; and one sister, Brenda Futrell.

He is survived by his wife, Becky June (Fails) Futrell of Soper; his children, Amie Futrell of Soper, Jacob and Heather Futrell of Antlers, and Joey and Casey McClain of Soper; his daughter-in-law, Becky Sue Futrell of Soper; his brothers, Jerry Futrell of Clifton, Texas and Scott and Margret Futrell of McKinney, Texas; his grandchildren, Dylan Futrell, Tobie Futrell, Beth Ann McClain, Abe McClain, and Dally Hutson; as well as many other relatives and friends.

Burial was in the Soper Cemetery.



Joe Henry Baughman

Joe Henry Baughman, 55, passed away on April 9, 2015 in Oklahoma City. Joe was born on July 20, 1959 in Claremore to Ray Henry Baughman and Christine Ruth (Noah) Collins.

Joe went to school at Seneca and Sequoyah Indian Schools. He also attended Oklahoma City Trade School to be a mechanist. He played football and his hobbies included beading and wood burning. Joe was a happy, kind, strong, caring and loving man. He worked for many years in the shipping and receiving department for Tanaka Produce in Oklahoma City.

Preceding Joe in death are his parents.

He leaves behind his wife, Bernice (Harjo) Baughman of Seminole; his daughters, Crystal Baughman of Oklahoma City and Christine Baughman and husband Michael Vasquez of Seminole; sisters Victoria Collins and Lori Collins both of Oklahoma City; four grandchildren, Cree Wolf, Mia Wolf, Asa Wolf and Ralph R. Baughman; several nieces and nephews as well as a host of other relatives and friends.

Interment was at the Harjo-Warledo Family Cemetery in Wewoka. Services were under the direction of Hudson-Phillips Funeral Home in Holdenville.



EDUCATION



Martin earns diploma, pursues nursing

Vanessa Martin graduated from Idabel High School on May 15. Martin was a Warrior Cheerleader for two years and on the dance team for one year. She also served as District 1 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 Jr. Princess, and is a member of the National Honor Society.

The University of Kansas accepted Martin as an undergraduate, and she will pursue a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and begin a career as a neonatal nurse.

Her parents Alfonso and Gwen Martin, her brothers Alex and Donovan, and her sister Erica said they are proud of all she has accomplished.



Wyatt earns diploma, aims for nursing

Elizabeth Haleigh Wyatt graduates from Guthrie High School this year.

She is the daughter of Thomas and Jennifer Wyatt, grand daughter of Bill and Kathie Martin, Johnny and Melissa Faulkner, as well as Jerry and Lauraly Wyatt.

Wyatt will be graduating with a 3.5 GPA, and will attend Rose State in the fall of 2015 to earn a nursing degree.

“We are so proud of who you are and can’t wait to see what great things you choose to do in life,” her parents said.



Dalke earns degree in human relations

Heather Dalke Graduates in May with a bachelor's degree in human relations, finishing on the Dean's Honor Roll above a 3.5 GPA.

Dalke carried the Choctaw Nation tribal flag for the opening of the Oklahoma University graduation commencement.

She was a full time student while working to fully support herself through her studies. She worked an internship for the Governor's Office in Oklahoma for their public affairs department, and also volunteered for Loveworks Leadership Inc.

She helped her school raise \$5,612.68 for the Children's Miracle Network hospital's fund research in Oklahoma City, directly benefitting Oklahoma's children.

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



Photo Provided

The Oklahoma Indian Student Honor Society inducted the following Heavener High School students into their honor roll: (Front) Barbara Johnson, Bethany Cook, Makenzie Wilson, Makaylee Wilson, Lily Friedl, (Middle) Emaline Wiles, Sydney Crase, Shaylie Sanders, Faith Clark, Cheyanne Cranfield, Emily Yandell, (Back) Devon Mathews, Lakota Vickers, Malory Lynch, Gunner Sanders, Dawson Adrean.

Many Choctaw high school students join ranks of honor society with help of MAD

By BRANDON FRYE
Choctaw Nation

The Making a Difference (MAD) program of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma helped raise the number of Native high school honor society students in the state by 115 for the 2014-2015 school year.

The Oklahoma Council for Indian Education sponsors the Oklahoma Indian Student Honor Society, of which there are now many more Choctaw members. The organization advocates within Oklahoma for Native students and teaches effective educational strategies addressing the unique cultural and academic needs they possess.

According to Lori Wells, Director of MAD, the program mailed out applications to all 9-12 grade Choctaw students, many found they qualified for the Oklahoma Indian Student Honor Society, and many mailed the application back.

The number of awardees jumped from 73 to 188 Choctaw honors students in Oklahoma, and five to 30 within the 10.5 counties of the Choctaw Nation.

These Choctaws and members of other

tribes were invited to a banquet in Edmond at the University of Central Oklahoma, an event meant to acknowledge the success of the young Native students.

“I got an envelope in the mail from Making a Difference and it came with three scholarships along with a form to fill out for the Indian Honor Society,” Malacha Austin, graduating senior at Talihina High School said. “I filled them all out and received one back saying congratulations and that I was inducted into the Oklahoma Indian Student Honor Society.”

Austin said she received A's and B's throughout her high school career and finished with a GPA of 4.2, above the requirement of 3.9 for the honor society.

Among the high schools within the Choctaw Nation, Heavener High School saw the most growth. Heavener had no awardees in the previous year, but after receiving letters from MAD rose to 15 honors students.

Earning a spot on the honor society will help students with their future plans, according to Wells, because of how good the membership will look on college entrance applications and work resumes.

Over 18 years old? Don't forget to update your membership card.

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

Oklahoma Universities honor graduating Native students



Photo Provided

Southeastern Oklahoma State University students collect for a photo after attending the 10th Annual Native American Graduation event.

By BRANDON FRYE
Choctaw Nation

Native American students across Oklahoma walked across stages, shook hands, and received the degrees they have worked so hard for this month. Oklahoma Universities went above and beyond to recognize our Native students while celebrating alongside them as they move into the next phase of their lives.

SOSU holds 10th annual Native American Graduation ceremony

Southeastern Oklahoma State University (SOSU) hosted the 10th annual Native American Graduation recently in the Fine Arts Recital Hall. The 2014-2015 Southeastern graduating class consists of 227 Native American students from Choctaw, Cherokee, Chickasaw, Comanche, Citizen Band of the Potawatomie, Creek Nation, Kiowa, Osage, Ponca, Seminole, and Miami tribes.

Tribal representatives from the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, the Chickasaw Nation, along with University faculty and staff, were present for the event. Dr. Bryon Clark, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and Graduate Dean, welcomed the guest speaker, James Parrish.

Parrish, Executive Director of Education for the Choctaw Nation and a graduate of Southeastern, reminded graduating students of their unique purpose with three important words -- “you are special.” Parrish acknowledged the important role of the supporting staff from tribal programs and the Native American Center for Student Success at Southeastern for

their assistance in helping the students achieve their academic goals.

The Choctaw Nation Higher Education Program attended the ceremony and gifted Choctaw students with their own book of Choctaw Hymns. Debbie Vietta, Scholarship Officer with CNHEP, said “as part of the Choctaw Nation Higher Education Program, we were happy to support tribal members at the Native American Graduation Ceremony.”

The Native American Center for Student Success on campus at Southeastern supports students with scholarships, grants and tribal resources. The retention services contribute to Southeastern being ranked 6th nationally for graduating Native American students with bachelor degrees.

“The ceremony and reception is most important for the graduates to feel celebrated for their academic success,” said Chris Wesberry, director of the Native American Center for Student Success. “We are proud of their accomplishments and enjoy recognizing each student’s achievement.”

OU celebrates graduates with American Indian Academic Achievement event

Oklahoma University (OU) hosted the American Indian Academic Achievement Celebration, an annual event aimed at recognizing the success of the university's Native students, on May 8.

The American Indian Student Life Office and the OU American Indian Advocacy Council planned and hosted the event, offering appreciation and community among all Native graduates of the college.



Photo Provided

Oklahoma State University Native graduates showing off their new stoles at the Native American Graduation Ceremony.

Many American Indian students, including 13 Choctaw soon-to-be graduates, collected to share the experience of reaching this milestone.

Among them was Heather Dalke, who carried the Choctaw tribal flag for the opening of the OU graduation commencement.

“I am super excited to be graduating from the University of Oklahoma and honored to be carrying my tribe's flag during commencement,” Dalke said. “I could of not have done this without the help from my tribe through scholarships and other services that are provided for its members.”

Felicia Manning, a Choctaw who is also graduating from OU, said she attended the American Indian Academic Achievement Celebration because it was a good opportunity to represent her tribes and make her family proud.

“American Indians have overcome many obstacles, so I think it is great and important for us to be receiving recognition for our success,” Manning said.

OSU celebrates graduates with Native American Graduation Ceremony

The Native American Student Association at Oklahoma State University (OSU) hosted a Native American Graduation Ceremony on April 26.

Graduates were honored with stoles provided by the OSU Native American Faculty and Staff Association and the OSU American Indian Alumni Society.

There were 48 Choctaw students who graduated from OSU this spring with bachelors, masters, and doctoral degrees.

EDUCATION

Choctaw linguists attend 13th annual Native youth language fair

Choctaw language fair winners and participants

Day One - Students with **Riverside Indian School** placed first in the pre k-2 individual modern song competition. **Jones Academy second grade** placed 1st in the pre k-2 book and literature competition with the work “Itikana (friends).” **Jones Academy first grade** received an honorable mention in the pre k-2 book and literature competition with their work “A Chaha Ichuwa mica Holhtina Holisso Vmmona.” **Jones Academy third grade** placed first in the 3-5 book and literature competition with their work “Ossi yut Nan Vnnoa Anoli.” **Jones Academy fourth grade** placed 3rd in the 3-5 book and literature competition with their work “Osapa Antta Na Shohbichi.” **Jones Academy fifth grade** placed 3rd in the 3-5 film and video competition with their work “Himak Pilla Hvpim Anumpa.”

Day Two - **Alexis and Micah**, from Talihina Public Schools, placed first in 6-8 small group spoken language. **Echo and April**, from Talihina Public Schools, placed 3rd 9-12 small group spoken language. **Broken Bow Chahtas**, with the Choctaw Nation School of Language, placed 1st in the 9-12 large group spoken language competition. **Sydney Anderson-Cullum**, with the Choctaw Tribal Alliance of Oklahoma City, placed 1st in 6-8 individual spoken language, 1st in 6-8 individual modern song, 1st in 6-8 book and literature with her work entitled “Issi Lusakbi,” and 1st in the 2015 6-8 poster art contest. **Alicia and Lauren**, with the Choctaw Nation School of Language, placed 1st in the 9-12 small group traditional song competition. **The Coalgate Choctaw Nation Language Class** placed 3rd in the 9-12 large group traditional song competition. **The Coalgate Choctaw Community Class** received an honorable mention for performing during the 9-12 large group traditional song competition. **Jessica Meikle** with Chatah Ulla Ahlela placed first in the 6-8 individual spoken poetry competition. **Jones Academy sixth grade** placed 3rd in the 6-8 book and literature competition with “Animals Found in the Choctaw Nation.” **Kensey and Desiree**, with Halleyville Public Schools and the Choctaw Nation School of Language placed 1st in the 9-12 book and literature contest with “The Runaway Pig.” **The Choctaw 1 class**, with Halleyville Public Schools, placed 2nd in the 9-12 book and literature contest with “The Hunting Adventure.” **Trevor Malakowsky** with Talihina Public Schools placed 2nd in the 6-8 comic books and cartoons competition with “Himak Pilla Hvpim Anumpa.” **Aeneas Freeman** with Chatah Ulla Ahlela placed 1st in the 9-12 comic books and cartoons competition with “I go to Grandpa’s House.” **Taloea Pride** with Glenpool High School placed 2nd in the 9-12 2015 poster art contest. **Natasha Wadkins** with Antlers Public Schools placed 2nd in the 6-8 written poetry contest. **Brianna Hernandez** with Talihina Public Schools placed 1st in the 9-12 written poetry competition. **Mickala Scott** with Antlers Public Schools placed 2nd in the 9-12 written poetry competition. **Kaleb Standbridge** with Antlers Public Schools placed 3rd in the 9-12 written poetry competition.



Photos by Brandon Frye and Colina Hickman

By BRANDON FRYE
Choctaw Nation

Students and instructors of Native languages came together for the 13th Annual Oklahoma Native American Youth Language Fair at the Sam Noble Museum in Norman on April 6-7. The gathering aims to give recognition to young students, as well as give them an opportunity to use their tribal language skills publically. Many Choctaws did just this, as students from schools within and outside of the Choctaw Nation’s boundaries made trips to compete individually and on teams. Public school students attended, competitors from Jones Academy showed up, Choctaw speakers from community classes around the state demonstrated their skills. In addition to plainly speaking tribal languages, competitors recited poetry, performed songs, voiced chants alongside drums, took every chance to share their language with a large audience.



Sydney Anderson-Cullum earned 1st place in the 6-8 grade individual spoken language competition. Sydney also won the poster art design contest for this year’s language fair, and her piece “One Voice, Many Voices” decorated the flyers and shirts for the event.



Sarah Williston, Alisha Hardy, and Loren Crosby, with the Choctaw Language Class, performed Choctaw Hymn #53 during the Oklahoma Native American Youth Language Fair at the Sam Noble Museum.



April Osburne and Echo Merryman, with Talihina Public Schools, perform in the 9-12 small group spoken language competition.



Micah and Alexis, with Talihina Public Schools, hold their award for placing first in the 6-8 grade small group spoken language contest.



Photo by Brandon Frye

Nicholas Charleston and Virginia Espinoza led the event and offered lively banter.

The “Big Meeting” brings dancing, speaking, and celebrating our language

Ittafama Chito, or the “big meeting,” gave Choctaw linguists in high school language classes the opportunity to gather, see each other face-to-face, and celebrate today at the Choctaw Nation Event Center near Durant.

The students normally learn the Choctaw language from classes offered by the School of Choctaw Language, held over the Internet between instructors in Durant and classes across Choctaw Country.

This event is one of the handful of times the young speakers can show off their Choctaw to other classmates in other schools, join in on

social dancing, and receive recognition for their hard work.

Chief Gary Batton attended alongside tribal council members and other dignitaries to congratulate students on their academic successes and show appreciation for their furthering the Choctaw Language.

“If it wasn’t for you, we wouldn’t keep this rich culture and history alive for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma,” Batton told the students. “I challenge you to not stop here, it’s our challenge to keep this beautiful language of our Choctaw Nation bright and strong.”



Photo by Brandon Frye

Linda Massey presents Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. with a Distinguished Alumni award from East Central University. Austin earned a bachelor’s and master’s degree from the university.

Austin is ECU Distinguished Alumnus

By BRANDON FRYE
Choctaw Nation

Assistant Chief Jack Austin, Jr., received a Distinguished Alumni Award from East Central University (ECU) in Ada on April 17.

The Distinguished Alumni Award, granted by ECU’s Department of Human Services, recognizes the alumni who attain distinctive success in his or her chosen field and perform outstanding service for their community. Service and contributions to the advancement of the university are also considered.

Awardees must be graduates or former students of the university, and Assistant Chief studied extensively at ECU alongside his wife Philisha Austin. He earned an undergraduate

degree in human resources, a master’s degree in education, and earned credit toward being a Licensed Professional Counselor at the university.

Austin then went on to serve in the military, work in the healthcare system in the Material Management department, and spent time as program director for the Choctaw Nation Recovery Center, before being selected as Assistant Chief.

Austin said he did not set out to earn titles. “What I set out to do was merely help people, the best I could,” he said.

One of Austin’s mentors, Linda Massey, Professor at ECU and Coordinator of Clinical Rehabilitation and the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program, said she has known and respect-

ed Austin for years.

“Jack really is such an inspiration, and such a blessing to his family, his friends, as well as the Choctaw community,” Massey said. “He has been with the Choctaw Nation for 24 years. He has been a youth pastor, a mentor, someone that all people can look up to with his humble heart. He leads by his faith and the love of his people.”

Speaking of Assistant Chief, President of ECU John Hargrave said, “We are very proud of Jack Austin Jr., and his wife Philisha. Both are East Central University alumni. Everyone who knows Jack stresses what an outstanding man and leader he is. We are pleased to have him as this year’s Distinguished Alumni in Counseling.”

Mark your calendars for

Choctaw College Connect

A link to your future

2015

Saturday November 7th, 2015 at 10:30 am

Choctaw Event Center
3702 Choctaw Road
Durant, OK 74701

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

Wild Onion Dinners

Idabel



Choctaw Nation employees giving their time to help prepare and serve wild onions and banana at Idabel.



Chief Gary Batton visits with District 1 senior princess Mandy Steele and her mom Shanna at the Idabel dinner.



Anna Stephan of Idabel led a rendition of “Amazing Grace” at the wild onion supper gathering.



Susie Rose was one of many door prize winners in Idabel.



Jade Wesley, Lola Wesley, Wilma Wesley and Kris Tisho in Idabel.



Marcia Noahubi, Margaret McKinney and Stacy Shepherd help serve desserts at the traditional dinner in Idabel.



Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. with Sandra Crippin, who provided the banana for the Hugo traditional dinner.

Hugo



Chief Gary Batton with Rosalie Mitchell in Hugo.



Junior Miss Choctaw Nation Summer Moffitt with Barbara McKee in Hugo.



Sharon and Kenneth Armor help dish out the wild onions and eggs in the Hugo Community Center kitchen.



Jesse Pacheco and Perry Thompson at the Hugo dinner.



Ernest and Linda Oakes with peach tree saplings in Hugo. Oakes presented saplings to Choctaw Nation for use in a possible future orchard.

Wilburton



Diane Coley helped cook the traditional meal of wild onions and shukha nipi.



The Meashintubby family with Councilman Joe Coley, Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. and Chief Gary Batton: Nathan (standing), Shirley, Mary and Archie.



Kylie Mote volunteered to serve drinks, shown here delivering to Lin and John Anderson.



Tom Clemons serving wild onion dinners to Debbie Lloyd and Joanna Lloyd.



Leslie Harley, Gary Harley and Debbie Wesley with Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr., Councilman Joe Coley and Chief Gary Batton.



Cornelius and Judy Winship in Wilburton.

Free Will Preparation Clinic

at the following
Choctaw Nation Field Offices

June 19, 2015: 2408 E. Lincoln Road, Idabel, OK
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 Perimeter Center Drive, Suite 222
Oklahoma City, OK 73112
www.oilsls.org

800-643-6457
800-658-1497
800-917-7080 (TX)

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LLSC

Attention: Tribal Members!

We love hearing from you!

But in order to serve you more efficiently, we remind anyone mailing forms, letters, or other correspondence to the Choctaw Nation to include the department or individual where the mail should go.

In the address line, simply use “Choctaw Nation ATTN: (department or individual’s name), PO Box 1210, Durant OK 74702” Thank you for your continued interest in Choctaw Nation services and programs!

SPORTS

YOUTH STICKBALL CHAMPIONS Tvnvp Issuba and Nashoba Homma!



Coach Rashad Cusher and the Tvnvp Issuba (War Horse) team from McAlester are the senior division (13-17) champions of 2015 Choctaw Nation Youth Stickball League.



Youths from the Hugo and Antlers area make up Nashoba Homma (Red Wolves), junior division (ages 8-12) champions of 2015 Choctaw Nation Youth Stickball.

(Photos Provided by Choctaw Nation Youth Stickball)

Choctaw takes state crown in 3A wrestling

Choctaw Heath Gray from Chandler recently won the class 3A state wrestling championship (160-pound class) at the fairgrounds arena in Oklahoma City to cap off an undefeated 37-0 season.

Heath, son of Janice and Tony Gray, completed the quest for a state championship after having finished his junior year as a state runner-up with a 37-1 record.

He credits his parents and Coach Mike Ryan for urging him on to victory.

“I was in the same boat this year, going into the state finals undefeated,” Gray said. “But this is senior year, so I said, ‘Not again, not this year. Nobody is standing between me and my title.’”

“Without coach, I wouldn’t have a chance,” Gray said. “He’s the one who pushed me and helped me accomplish my goal.”

Heath describes himself as a “proud Choctaw” and particularly enjoyed getting the new Choctaw license plate on his truck.

He plans on continuing his wrestling career in college at Newman University, an NCAA Division II school in Wichita, Kansas. He plans to enter the medical field, possibly as a physical therapist.



Heath Gray celebrates a 3A state championship wrestling match recently in Oklahoma City. The win capped a perfect 37-0 senior season. (Photo provided.)

Fichik Baleli Running Star



Parker Wilson finished the River Valley Endurance Half Marathon on March 14. He placed fifth overall and first in the 15-19 age group with a time of 1:39:06. Parker is a student at the Van Buren High School Freshman Academy. He is on the Cross Country team and the track team.



HANNAH GOINES

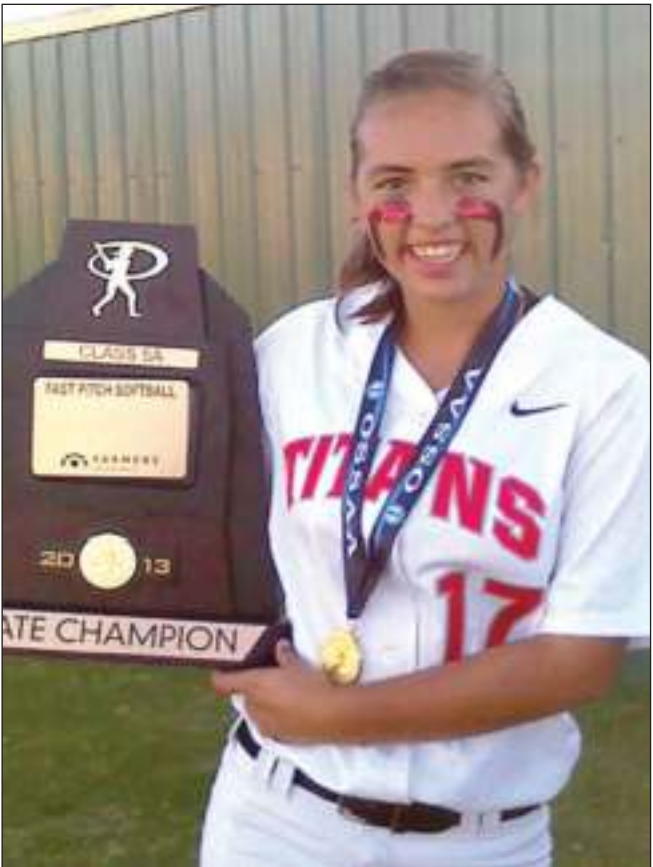
Goines selected to All-State softball team

Hannah Goines was selected for the 2014 Oklahoma Fast-Pitch Softball Coaches Association’s (OFPSA) Small East All-State Softball Team.

She will play in the 2014 OFPSA Fast-Pitch Small School All-State game on June 13 at Oklahoma Christian University of Science and Arts in Edmond.

As a freshman, Goines played varsity fastpitch softball at Panama High School, the team won districts and regionals and went into the state tournament unranked. The Ladybacks were 2011 Class 2A Fast-Pitch Softball State Champions.

Goines recently signed on to play softball at Eastern Oklahoma State College in Wilburton.



Adrienne Phillips with the state championship trophy for Carl Albert High School in 2013.

Phillips will continue softball career at MACU

Adrienne Phillips, daughter of Michelle Phillips of Oklahoma City, recently signed her letter of intent to play collegiate softball for Mid America Christian University.

Adrienne was one of three girls from her class to be selected to attend the Oklahoma Girls State convention hosted by the American Legion. Past accolades include being on the 2013 fast-pitch softball 5A state champion team at Carl Albert High School and the 14-under championship at Jim Thorpe Native American Softball Tournament in 2012 with her team, the Oklahoma Red Race.

Adrienne strives to be a champion in everything she does and it shows in her grades, her community service, and softball talent.

McGee in stride for UCO Bronchos track



Alayna McGee at the start of the Oklahoma Baptist Invitational NCAA track meet.

(Photo Provided by UCO)

Alayna McGee captured the 200-meter dash and led off on Central Oklahoma’s winning 1,600-meter relay unit to lead the Bronchos at the Oklahoma Baptist Invitational on March 28.

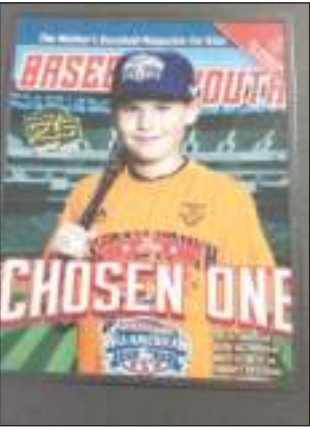
McGee is from Atoka. She took the 200 in 25.12 seconds before teaming with Destinee Howell, Katie Cease and Juanne Lewis to win the 1,600 relay in 3:52.14.

The Bronchos also had a runner-up finish in the 400 relay as McGee, Lewis, Madison Berryman and Ashlyn Carroll set a school record with a 47.43 clocking.

Palmer takes place on Florida tourney team

Twine Palmer, the son of Dustin and Sherry Palmer of Hartshorne, recently took part in a winter baseball camp and tournament in Florida as part of the Majestic Yellow team.

Palmer was the only player from Oklahoma at the event and was ranked in the 10-and-under Elite 25 by Baseball Youth, making the cover of their souvenir magazine.



Twine Palmer on the cover of Baseball Youth.

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!

Maxwell takes first at track meet



Miko Maxwell of Houston earned first-place honors in several track events at the Clear Creek District Track Meet in April. Miko took first place in 3200 and 800-meter runs and the 4X4 relay with three teammates. Miko is in eighth grade at Space Center Intermediate School. He is the son of Zach Maxwell and Laura Aguirre.



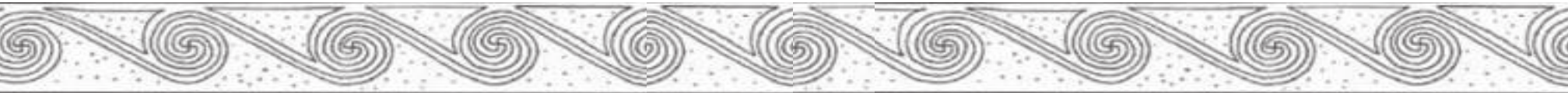
HUNTER STANLEY

Hunter Stanley excels on and off the field

Hunter David Stanley is a 10th grade student at Coleman High School.

When he was in 9th grade his academic team competed in the State Academic meet where they finished as state runners-up. This year they qualified for the state competition and again finished as runner-up. Also, in fall 2014 he played first base for his high school baseball team as they competed in the state play-offs. Hunter is very proud to be a member of the Choctaw Nation!

Send us your Choctaw Champions!
biskinik@choctawnation.com



Iti Fabussa

Our ancient neighbors from the past into the present

Ethnic diversity in what is now the southeastern United States did not begin with European contact. When Europeans first began to build permanent settlements in the Choctaw region (roughly 300 years ago), it was already a multi-ethnic place, occupied by complex, numerous, and diverse Native American tribes. Our ancestors were a product of this diversity, many of them spoke multiple tribal languages, knew multiple tribal customs, and had family members from other neighboring tribes. Formalized relationships with these tribes were carefully negotiated by Choctaw leaders and helped to define the course of Choctaw and southeastern history. This month, Iti Fabvssa takes a look at some of the tribes that were our neighbors 300 years ago, and briefly examines where they are today.

Chickasaw – In 1700, the Chickasaw were living about 100 miles north of Choctaw territory. Both Chickasaw and Choctaw oral stories indicate that the two tribes were once part of the same group. It is no surprise that the Chickasaw and Choctaw language are mutually understandable and the tribes are close culturally. Yet, by 300 years ago, the Choctaw and Chickasaw had become bitter enemies. The Choctaw (allied with the French) and the Chickasaw (allied with the English) fought each other regularly. Lasting peace was made in 1759. In 1837, the Chickasaw moved in with the Choctaws in Indian Territory (Oklahoma). In 1855, the Choctaw Nation ceded lands for the establishment of the Chickasaw Nation to our west. This is where Chickasaw Nation is still located today.

Alabama – 300 years ago, the Alabama lived to the east of the Choctaw, on the Alabama River. Several generations earlier they had lived in what is now Mississippi. Like the Chickasaws, the Alabama have a language and culture that are similar to the Choctaw, and according to some oral traditions all three tribes were once a part of the same group. The Alabama tribe’s name may come from the Choctaw phrase “Alba Amo,” meaning “Vegetation-Gatherers” (Halbert 1899:65). During the French colonial period, the Alabama were often allied with the English and regularly fought against the Choctaw. Today the Alabama-Coushatta tribe of Texas lives near the town of Livingston, and the Alabama Quassarte tribal town is located within the Muscogee “Creek” Nation in Oklahoma.

Tohome/Naniaba– In the early 1700s, the Tohome and Naniaba tribes lived to the southeast of the Choctaw, on the Tombigbee River, above its confluence with the Alabama River. Tohome/Naniaba language and culture were similar or identical to Choctaw language and culture of the time period, although the Tohome were said to have darker skin than the Choctaw (Waselkov and Gums 2000). These two small tribes were closely allied with the Choctaw, and allowed Choctaw people to stay in their villages when they were processing salt from nearby springs. In the 1760s, the Tohome/Naniaba joined the Choctaw tribe, so today, some Choctaw tribal members are descended from the Tohome and Naniaba.

Mobila – The Mobila were a slightly larger tribe that lived on Mobile Bay in 1700. Under Chief Tvshkalusa, they had fought and crippled an invading Spanish army under Hernando DeSoto, 160 years earlier. The Mobila language was very similar Choctaw, and they had a close political alliance with the Choctaw. The name “Mobila” may come from the Choctaw word “Moeli”, meaning “To Paddle” (Halbert 1899:68). Mobile, Alabama, derives its name from the tribe. In the 1760s, some of the Mobila tribe joined the Choctaw, others moved on to Louisiana. Some of today’s Choctaw people are descended from the Mobila.

Pensacola – The name “Pensacola” comes from the Choctaw phrase “Pvshi Okla,” meaning “Hair People” (Swanton 1952:136). This tribe lived around Pensacola Bay in the Florida panhandle. The Pensacola spoke a Muscogean dialect, and in 1700 were fighting against the Mobila and later against the Choctaws. A few years afterwards, the Pensacola moved to the Pearl River and then vanished from recorded history (Waselkov and Gumm 2000:21-23).

Pascagoula – The Pascagoula lived to the south of the Choctaws. The two tribes were on good terms and their connectedness is shown through similar pottery designs. The name “Pascagoula” comes from the Choctaw term “Pvlaska Okla,”



meaning “Bread People.” In the late 1700s, the Pascagoula moved west, and today some of their descendants are among several Oklahoma/Texas tribes today.

Biloxi – The Biloxi are a Siouan-speaking tribe that may have originated in the Ohio River Valley. In 1700, they lived on the Pascagoula River, south of the Pascagoula tribe. Some Biloxi descendants moved to Texas and Oklahoma, others amalgamated with the Tunica tribe. Today, their descendants make up the Tunica-Biloxi tribe of Louisiana.

Houma – The tribe’s name comes from the Choctaw word “Homa,” meaning “Red.” The Houma are linguistically and culturally related to the Choctaw. In 1700, they lived on the east bank of the Mississippi River, across from the mouth of the Red River. In 1706, after an attack by the Tunica, the tribe moved to the New Orleans area. Today, thousands of Houma descendants live in Louisiana.

Acolapissa – The tribe’s name comes from the Choctaw phrase “Haklo Pisa,” meaning “Hears and Sees.” In 1700, this tribe lived on the Pearl River, to the southwest of the Choctaw. Culturally and linguistically related to the Choctawan groups, after a series of movements, they merged with the Houma.

Natchez – The Natchez lived on the Mississippi River to the west of the Choctaw. They spoke their own language and were noted for their centralized political structure. After repeated affronts by the French, the Natchez attacked and routed the local French settlement in 1730. In retaliation, the French, and their Choctaw allies decimated the Natchez tribe. Survivors were sold into slavery or fled to English-Allied tribes for asylum. Today, some individuals living among the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, the Muscogee “Creek” Nation, and the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma identify themselves as Natchez.

Tunica – The Tunica were living near the mouth of the Yazoo River in 1700. In 1706, they moved in with the Houma and attacked them. In the late 1700s, Tunica moved to the Marks-ville area of Louisiana. Today, their descendants make up part of the Tunica-Biloxi tribe of Louisiana.

Yazoo – The tribe lived on the Yazoo River to the northwest of the Choctaw. They spoke a language that was related to Tunica (Barnett 2012:77). Interestingly, in the 1700s, two Choctaw towns were named “East Yazoo” and “West Yazoo.” Their relationship

to the Yazoo tribe is unknown. In 1730, the Yazoo attacked the French along with the Natchez. Afterwards, the Yazoo tribe was decimated by the Quapaw. Survivors were sold into slavery in distant places or may have joined the Choctaw and Chickasaw.

Chakchiuma – “Chakchiuma” comes from the Choctaw phrase “Shakshi Homma,” meaning “Red Crawfish.” The Chakchiuma are said to have broken off from the Choctaw, moved to present-day Arkansas, and then to have been forced back into present-day Mississippi between the Choctaw and Chickasaw. Reportedly the Chakchiuma began raiding both the Choctaw and Chickasaw. Finally, a Choctaw/Chickasaw coalition destroyed the Chakchiuma tribe, with survivors joining the Choctaw and Chickasaw. Several Choctaw chiefs, including Coleman Cole were Chakchiuma descendants (Cushman 1899).

Taensa – In 1700s, the Taensa were living in present-day northeast Louisiana. Through the 1700s, they moved down the Mississippi River to near New Orleans, and then over to the Mobile, Alabama, area, where they presumably mixed with Choctawan people. In 1763, they moved to the Red River in Louisiana. Today, a formal Taensa tribe does not exist, but their descendants are among the Choctaw, Chitimacha, and Alabama tribes.

Quapaw– The Quapaw are a Siouan tribe, closely related to the Osage, Kansa, and Omaha. In 1700, they were living at the junction of the Arkansas and the Mississippi River. At times, the Quapaw were Choctaw trading partners. At other times, Quapaws attacked Choctaw hunting parties for trespassing on their lands in Arkansas. Today, Quapaw Nation is located in northeastern Oklahoma.

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Chahta Anumpa
Aiikhvna
◆◆◆ Lesson of the Month ◆◆◆

Possessive Pronouns: chim, chi – your
Possessive pronouns indicate ownership and comes before nouns. ‘chim’ or the ‘m’ form is used before nouns that begin with a vowel. chim – pronounced ‘chim’

- Yvmmvt chim ofi yq?**
Is that your dog?
- Chim aboha yvt lvshpa!**
Your room is hot!
- Chim isht boa yvt okpulo.**
Your hammer is broken.
- Chim ohoyo i hohchifo yvt nanta?**
What is your wife’s name?

chi – or the ‘n’ form (nasal underline), is used before nouns that begin with a consonant.
chi – pronounced ‘chi(n)’

- Ilvppvt chi shapo yq?**
Is this your hat/cap?
- Chi holisso hohchofo li tuk.**
I read your letter.
- Chi bashpo pota sv bvma.**
I want to borrow your knife.
- Chi chukka yvt homma.**
Your house is red.

chim, chi – your	lvshpa – hot	nanta – what
yvmmvt – that	isht boa – hammer	shapo- hat/cap
ofi – dog	okpulo – broken	holisso – letter, book, paper
yq – question marker	ohoyo – woman	hohchofo – read
aboha – room	i – his, hers	li – I
vt, yvt – subject markers	hohchifo – name	suk – past tense
bashpo – knife	pota – borrow	sv bvma – I want
chukka- house, home	homma - red	ilvppvt - this

www.choctawschool.com

A community grows hope

The inspirational message behind Isabelle’s Garden

By AMADEUS FINLAY
Contributing Writer

The world of cinema has long been the realm of immense budgets and computer gener-ated animation, but in a small corner of southeastern Oklahoma a pair of native filmmakers have successfully challenged the status quo. Debuting to critical acclaim at the Sundance Film Festival, Isabelle’s Garden is a moving, eight-minute film detailing how one young Choctaw girl works through poverty to ensure that her society can benefit from the produce of her vegetable patch.

“My husband, Jeffrey, and I were inspired to make a film about uplifting stories in our communities,” explains the film’s producer, Lauren Palmer.

“Far too often do you see negative stories surrounding Indian Country. We wanted to over-turn that perception by allowing a young girl to be the catalyst for change and lifting up her people from poverty and supporting the community.”

The film opens with the familiar sounds of dawn, “weary voices of the crickets and the frogs” as Isabelle describes it, played over a moody summer morning bruised by an irritable tumult of rain clouds. Isabelle wakes up in a lonely house—we see no other people—her dirty feet poking out the end of her bedclothes, the austere surroundings of her bedroom in direct contrast to the abundance reflected in the vegetable patch outside her window.

The house is dusty and untended, the cobwebbed corners sprinkled with dried garden mud. But nothing is by chance in Palmer’s statement piece; all the imagery is intentional, every-thing deliberately planned to submerge the audience in the reality of Isabelle’s world. Hers is an existence that is focused on the garden, and the few possessions she owns are singularly designed to help to nurture her plants. And it is here that we find the crux of the film, the basis upon which the allegory is formed. Isabelle, despite living in less than favorable circum-stances in which she dreams of a world “where poverty doesn’t exist,” is committed to being a symbol of hope, advocating strong social values in a community that needs them most.

She writes words of encouragement on scraps of brown paper, “ahni” (hope) na-yimmi (believe in something) hvpi knvia kiyo (we will never lose) i-hullo (love), and attaches them to the baskets of vegetables she gives to her neighbors. They are “to lift people’s spirits,” she says, each note as much a cultural marker as a kind gesture.

The film concludes with Isabelle providing her neighbors with their gifts, commentating throughout on the value of community and the promise of cooperation. It is a simple, yet devastatingly effective use of the visual arts to convey a message relevant to so many. Isabelle is a refreshingly honest character, and in 14-year-old Isabelle Cox, the actress who plays the lead character, both film and reality have an icon in the making.

Isabelle has an impressive resume. She has attended the Shakespearean Festival at South-eastern Oklahoma State University on several occasions, and recently served as Little Miss



Choctaw Native Isabelle Cox stars in *Isabelle’s Garden*. Directed by Jeffrey Palmer, the short film which tells the story of poverty and hunger and the hope for a better future when members of a community join together, debuted at the Sundance Film Festival in January.

Choctaw Nation. But for all her star-struck experiences, Isabelle Cox is more affected by the stories and issues that have the greatest impact on her people.

“The film is indicative of Native life in many tribes throughout the United States,” explains her father, Nate. “Poverty produces several unfortunate circumstances that Native people struggle with on a daily basis, and this includes accessibility to sufficient food resources.”

“Isabelle loves representing the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma in any capacity she can, and when she was approached to star in the film, it seemed to be a perfect combination of two of the things closest to her heart.”

Isabelle’s Garden is a marker upon which future social film projects can only be judged. Free from convoluted storylines or secondary distractions, here is a film with a clear message that can speak to the generations. This acclaim is a sentiment felt by many, yet the impact that it brought came as a surprise to some, not least of which was Lauren Palmers.

“We did not know how successful the film would be,” she explains, “Our idea from the beginning was to tell a story about poverty that transcended many audiences.”

She pauses for a moment, reflecting on the content of her masterpiece. “These,” she stresses, “these are the stories we need to hear today.”

Isabelle’s Garden can be viewed in full at <https://vimeo.com/116907675>
Amadeus can be contacted at amadeus_finlay@hotmail.com

ATTENTION

Choctaw Artists

If you are interested in participating in a juried and judged Choctaw Indian Art Show. Let us hear from you!

Please complete the following interest form in order to receive more information regarding the 2015 Choctaw Indian Arts Show held Labor Day weekend at Tvshka Homma, OK. **Must be 18 years of age & and a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma to participate.** Categories include: Painting, graphics, cultural, sculpture, pottery, jewelry, & basketry. **Please complete the form and mail to the address below.**

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____

Mail to:
Shelley Garner - CNO Cultural Services
P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702

Meet The Artist

Sarah Elisabeth Sawyer

Author & Choctaw Storyteller



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Rodney Anna
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Coming soon:
Team Tvshka Homma trading cards

Biskinik is currently gathering posed and action photos of Choctaw stick-ball 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



McKinney Brothers

(FRONT)

BAKERFIELD
CALIFORNIA
OKLA CHAHTA
CULTURAL GATHERING



Greg Jones (right) teaches the fundamentals of making stickball sticks to Richard Schuette.



Jr. Miss Kaili Harrison, Council members Anthony Dillard, Kenny Bryant, Delton Cox, Thomas Williston, Bob Pate, and Miss Okla Chahta Haley Scott enjoy the festivities. Chief Batton crowned the girls earlier that day during the Okla Chahta Royalty ceremony.



Jaxen and Trysten Lopez from Hugo practice their artist skills at a craft booth during the Airfest festival.



Traditional Choctaw social dancing on the tarmac at Eaker Field.



Chief Gary Batton and the 2015-16 Okla Chahta Royalty, Jr. Miss Kaili Harrison and Sr. Miss Haley Scott.



Okla Chahta Board President Bill Harrison invites the youth to join in the games.



Earl Caldwell fastening a Choctaw Nation lapel pin on his dad's shirt. Earl Sr. is a veteran of Korea.



Jocelyn Bockover demonstrates what it takes to be Choctaw pisa achukma.



Aaron Wilkins teaching stickball to the kids.

2015
Take to the
Skies Airfest



One of the air show pilots waves to photographers and the crowd at Take to the Skies Airfest.



Choctaw artists Christian McGowan (left) and Donna Bartee work on their craft. Christian paints with ink and watercolor and Donna makes traditional corn husk dolls



Sherry Scott and her latest novel *Abandoned* a story about a Choctaw man who saves a young girl abandoned in the wilderness.

Photos by
Lisa Reed,
Shelia Kirven &
Zach Maxwell

Coming soon:
Team Tvshka Homma trading cards

McKinney Bros.
Kyle, Casey, Tyler

HOMETOWN: BROKEN BOW

OCCUPATION: CASINO, STUDENT, STUDENT

FAVORITE MOMENT: PLAYING IN MISSISSIPPI FOR THE FIRST TIME

QUOTE: "WE LOVE THE GAME AND ENJOY THE COMPETITION AND THE BROTHERHOOD"

(BACK)

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:

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