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CHOCTAW NATION

The Official Publication of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

May 2016 Issue

Tribal Council holds regular session

The Choctaw Nation Tribal Council met in regular session April 9 in its chambers at Tvshka Homma.

Committee reports were presented on the Travel Plaza in Pocola, Casino Too in Wilburton, the Youth Center in Talihina, the Rubin White Health Clinic in Poteau, Chi Hullo Li residential treatment center for women, the Guest Services department, the Choctaw Casino in Pocola, and the historical Wheelock Academy site. New business included:

- Authorization of Chief Gary Batton to place property in McCurtain County in trust status with the United States of America
- Application for the AmeriCorps Indian Tribes Grants
- Application for the Native Asset Building Initiative
- Application for the Support for Expectant and Parenting Teens, Women, Fathers, and their Families Program
- Application for the National Workforce Diversity Pipeline Program
- Application for the Injury Prevention Program
- Approve the disposal of surplus equipment
- Approve requesting federal funding for preliminary engineering, including survey, design, engineering, and preconstruction activities; and bridge replacement of bridge 06274 in LeFlore Co.

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

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

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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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Annual Ittvfamma Chito Held in Durant

By KENDRA GERMANY
Choctaw Nation

The Choctaw Nation Language Department held its annual Ittvfamma Chito Language Finale on April 27 at the Choctaw Nation Event Center in Durant.

High school students who were enrolled in Choctaw language classes had the opportunity to meet each other face-to-face and celebrate the school year coming to an end. According to Assistant Director of Education Teresa Billy, 32 schools attended the Ittvfamma Chito event.

Choctaw language classes are broadcast to students and schools across Okla-

homa via the Internet.

According to Executive Director of Education Jim Parrish, 40 schools have Choctaw language classes. Parrish hopes by next year four more schools will offer Choctaw language classes to students. Parrish also stated that during the course of a year, 700 students take Choctaw as a language class.

This event was an opportunity for students to show off the Choctaw words and phrases they have learned throughout the school year. Students also participated in traditional Choctaw social dances and had the chance to win door prizes.

Hartshorne students Jus-

tin Johnson, Anthony John, Izzy Tejeda, and Romeo Farve thought the meeting was an interesting and awesome experience.

The group placed second in Choctaw II Video Production at the 14th Annual Native American Youth Language Fair this year in Norman. Their video was on stickball. John said they chose the topic of stickball for the video to expand their culture.

Chief Gary Batton addressed the students during the opening ceremonies of the event. Batton thanked students for learning Choctaw language and culture.

“I don’t know if you real-



Photo by Kendra Germany

Chief Batton and Assistant Director of Education Teresa Billy look on as OU quarterback Baker Mayfield talks about his Choctaw language classes.

ize this, but you are honoring our ancestors by showing up today, by learning the language and continuing our culture and our language,” said Chief Batton.

“That’s why I’m here to say Yakoke, and say a big thank you for doing that. That means the world to all of us, to continue the language.”

Chief Batton encouraged students to share what they have learned with everyone

forth conversation ensued about the Choctaw language. Dan Patrick even suggested that Mayfield use Choctaw during football games. After the interview, Mayfield and the Choctaw language soon became a trending topic on social media.

Baker has been taking Choctaw classes at OU for two semesters, along with his teammate, University of Oklahoma starting running



Photo by Stacy Hutto

Caspin (top) and Eiful Hayes give the toys a test run during the ribbon cutting ceremony for Durant’s Early Head Start.

Giving Choctaw Kids a Head Start

By TINA FIRQUAIN
& STACY HUTTO
Choctaw Nation

April brought a groundbreaking and ribbon cutting to Choctaw Nation.

Ground was broken for a new Head Start in Atoka on April 1. “I think it represents that we are making a focus on our youth and that they are critical to us,” said Chief Gary Batton. “They are the next generation and they are going to lead this great Choctaw Nation. It has been proven that education can change their lives, and I love it because it will be close to our community center and they will be close to our seniors and they will be able to learn from and speak to our elders.”

The Head Start will be a part of a campus style setting with Choctaw Nation buildings on West Liberty Road, along with the community center and health clinic. The idea of the campus setting was to ensure all services are more accessible to Atoka tribal members.

The new Head Start will accommodate up to 33 students in a school-readiness program for children. It will have an indoor safe room, and classrooms will be equipped with newer technology, such as touch screen

smart boards and student computers. There will also be a parent resource room with computer/Internet access.

Councilman Anthony Dillard said, “We’re excited to have a new Head Start building, it’s been long overdue. This is a great addition and they’re going to have more room than they know what to do with.”

The 7,352-square-foot building is expected to be completed in November 2016.

Katy Pruitt, Director of Choctaw Nation Head Start, said “We hope to have the doors open January 2017 for the families and children of Atoka.”

And on April 11, an open house and ribbon cutting for the Early Head Start in Durant was held under stormy skies.

The Early Head Start will open its doors to children in early summer. Children eligible are infants up to 3 years old.

“Early Head Start is a huge need for our parents in Bryan County, which is why we established this facility,” Chief Batton said.

“This means parents can go to work and there will be help with child care. This will truly give everyone in a family a head start,” continued Batton.

There will be two teachers per room, with a teacher to student ratio of 1-4. All teachers will be CDA certified.

Classrooms will be equipped with the latest technology, such as smartboards and iPads. In addition, there will be a parent resource room with computer and Internet access. The Early Head Start will be able to accommodate up to 48 children.

The Early Head Start was made possible by an initial grant of nearly \$6 million. Additional grants will help sustain the program in the long term.

“I am honored to be a part of a program that focuses on the success of our families,” according to BJ Robinson-Ellison, Early Head Start Director. “This program is meant to help provide social and emotional support to children for School Readiness and it encourages the parents to be involved in their child’s education starting in infancy.”

Currently, the Choctaw Nation partners with child care centers in Bennington, Broken Bow, and Coalgate, operating under grants slotted for Early Head Start.



Photo by Stacy Hutto

Hartshorne students (left to right) Justin Johnson, Anthony John, Izzy Tejeda, and Romeo Farve placed second in Choctaw II Video Production in Norman on April 1. The subject of their video was stickball.

they meet, and to continue to use the Choctaw language in the future.

Students in attendance of Ittvfamma Chito had a special surprise video message from University of Oklahoma quarterback, Baker Mayfield.

Mayfield brought national attention to the Choctaw language back in November of 2015, a few days after winning the Big 12 Conference Championship. During an interview on the nationally broadcasted Dan Patrick Show, Baker told the host Dan Patrick that he had just left Choctaw class at the University of Oklahoma. Mayfield taught Dan how to say “halito”, and a fun back and

back Samaje Perine.

In the video message during Ittvfamma Chito, Baker encouraged students to continue learning about the Choctaw language and culture.

“I encourage you to expand your knowledge on the Choctaw Nation,” said Mayfield. “It’s been a fun thing for me. It’s an interesting class that I’ve taken in college, and I enjoy it very much.”

Choctaw classes and lessons are also available for anyone online.

For more information about the Choctaw Language Department, visit www.choctawschool.com or call (800) 522-6170 Ext. 2179.



Photo by Tina Firquain

Tribal Council Speaker Thomas Williston, Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr., Chief Gary Batton, District 10 Councilman Anthony Dillard, and Atoka Seniors Anna and Jimmy Scott are among those turning the dirt at the official groundbreaking for the Atoka Head Start on April 1.



The Trail of Tears Commemorative Walk will be held this year at Tvshka Homma on Saturday, May 21, beginning at 10 a.m. The annual Walk is held to honor and recognize the

Choctaws forced to march from their ancient homelands to Indian Territory nearly two centuries ago.

Activities will include gospel singing in the traditional Choctaw style and Chahta Anumpa language, cultural demonstrations, basket weaving, bead-ing, pottery, and Choctaw social dancers.

Lunch will be served in the cafeteria and shuttle buses will be available between parking sites and the Capitol.

Faith ♦ Family ♦ Culture



that affects one in 68 people in the United States. The Choctaw Nation has developed the Autism Community CARES initiative whose goal is to establish a strong network available in tribal communities. We hear from our tribal members who have family affected



Photo by Stacy Hutto

District 9 Councilman Ted Dosh and Chief Gary Batton cut the ribbon on the Early Head Start building in Durant on April 11.

by autism, so we are hoping CARES is just a first step in how we can begin to develop services in this area. The Choctaw Nation is the only tribe in the State of Oklahoma delivering a graphics media campaign that includes Native children in the autism community.

Recognizing the early signs of autism is critical. Young children may not respond to their name and are slow to develop speech and language skills. They may not want to play games or show interest in objects. Patterns of unusual behaviors over time or continuous problems with communication are causes for concern. Research shows early intervention can produce positive outcomes. The websiteAutismSpeaks.org has several helpful articles for anyone who wants to learn more about ASD.

Two of the events focusing on autism awareness last month were a training on challenging behaviors in children hosted by the Choctaw Nation Tribal Early Learning Initiative in Durant and a workshop on autism awareness held during the Oklahoma State Johnson-O'Malley Conference in Tulsa.

A ribbon cutting in Durant on April 11 celebrated the opening of the tribe's first Early Head Start center for children up to 3 years old. The facility is equipped with state-of-the-art technology and CDA-certified teachers. The staff gave us all a tour and I enjoyed seeing Choctaw culture incorporated throughout the center.

The staff, teachers and parents are investing their time in caring for our youth and are demonstrating a dedication to developing strong, healthy lifestyles for the boys and girls. There was a field day at Southeastern Oklahoma State University as the gates opened April 16 for Choctaw kids age 9 to 12. The Nike N7 Youth Movement's guest speaker was James Winchester, a Choctaw tribal member and long snapper for the Kansas City Chiefs. It was a full day of fun that included Choctaw social dancing, stickball, and lacrosse.

April also marked the end of the youth stickball league's season and hundreds turned out for the championship tournament at Tvshka Homma. My granddaughter and Assistant Chief Austin's son were both on teams this year. It was great fun. We didn't just cheer for their teams, we cheered for all the kids. The youth league learns many life skills through stickball, as well as knowing they are carrying on a centuries-long Choctaw tradition. I hope this has been a great season for our youth!



Spring is the Time of Plans and Projects

Spring is a time of renewal. I see the signs everywhere and am glad to see the family of bald eagles still flourishing near Sardis Lake. Their nest rests high in a tree and it's exciting to watch them sitting tall in their nest, guarding their home where they will soon have a family to raise. The fields are full of Indian Paintbrushes and other wildflowers, another sure sign of spring. It is a beautiful time of year here in Oklahoma.

Chief Batton and I had the pleasure of attending a singing and birthday celebration last month for tribal member Dan Adams at the Thessalonian Baptist Church in Red Oak. We spent the evening singing, eating good food, and sharing fellowship. One of the great things about being part of the communities is having the opportunity to attend such wonderful celebrations. Dan played the piano and Tribal Council Chaplain Joe Coley emceed and led the congregational singing. Like so many Choctaw churches, they have exceptional singers and cooks. It was a blessed evening, one in which we experienced the values of a loving group of God's family.

Chief and I sat down with Dan's sister, Laura Mackey, and visited with her quite a while. It was good to see their brother, Richard Adams, too. The Thessalonian Baptist Church is over 118 years old and Laura has spent years gathering documents and fascinating information about the church. The oldest documentation she has is dated 1898. They held their 100-year celebration in 1998. The stories she shared are very valuable to us as a tribe. They hold singings on the second Saturday of every month and have only missed one in the last 55 years because of an ice storm. The dedication of the church family is evident.



Photo by Ronni Pierce

A newborn Choctaw Pony takes a nap in spring flowers under the morning sun.

It was a trip down memory lane for me. The kids were having a great time after dinner, running around outside, and were really excited at finding some baby rabbits and a tiny turtle. I watched them playing and realized the things I did as a kid are still being enjoyed by the new generation. I thank God for His blessings and the simple things in life.



Iti Fabussa

A pair of young dark brown eyes watched as the car that brought her here winded its way back up the drive. The brown eyes of her mother looked back at her and she could see that although they were full of tears, they were smiling and telling her to be brave. The young girl gave a small wave as the car passed through the gate and finally let a tear fall down her cheek. She was already homesick and felt very much alone. She turned at the sound of giggling and gazed at the white buildings and Pushmataha Hall with its large porches. She took a deep breath to steady herself and caught the scent of roses that would guide her from the dormitory to her classes each day. She knew the story of Wheelock. Its history was told to her by her mother and grandmother. She knew that what she learned from these buildings and these teachers would create the groundwork that she would build her life on. She also knew that when she looked back at these years, she would remember the hardships of not being able to speak her native language, the work they were made to do and the illnesses endured. More often, the good times of laughter and lifelong friendships, favorite lessons and music, and the games would be remembered. She would have her own stories to tell one day and they were just beginning. At that moment, another pair of smiling eyes with braids came up and asked if the young girl wanted to play, and a ball was tossed into her hands.

the survival of the Choctaws, as a sovereign nation and as a culturally rich people. It is also an acknowledgement by these leaders that having well educated young women was necessary to having a strong foundation on which to build the tribe. These young ladies would become wives and mothers who would encourage and raise future leaders. But many of

in Mississippi. Wheelock began as a mission day school in 1833 but became a small boarding school as the need for a facility of its type arose. A few years after the War ended, a fire destroyed most of the buildings at the old mission site with the church being the only surviving structure. In 1883, the Choctaw General Council appropriated funds



Photo by Dawn Standridge

Friends and family gather at the first Wheelock Storytelling in March. Organizers hope to make this an annual event.

these women would also go on to make contributions of their own to their communities as nurses, teachers, and civic leaders.

Tribal leaders had hoped that by adopting the religious practices and education of the emerging American society, they would be able to retain Choctaw ancestral lands and national identity. But unyielding pressure from the U.S. government and states forced removal of the Choctaws. The Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek was signed in September 1830 and became the first removal treaty signed under the Indian Removal Act. The Choctaws began the dangerous journey to Indian

for a new school to be built near the previous mission site. The first buildings were constructed in 1883-1884 and it was opened to students in the fall of 1884. Fifty students were enrolled and would move into the new dormitory named Pushmataha Hall, in honor of the late Choctaw Chief.

Additional buildings would be added over the years and control of the school would change hands multiple times as a result of federal government involvement. Wheelock Academy would see its last class of graduates in 1955.

Over the years, many of the buildings have been lost to the elements. Wilson Hall (the school building) and the iconic Pushmataha Hall are in grave danger of following suit. Three buildings have been restored to the point of being usable: the superintendent's office and cottage, and Leflore Hall. Leflore Hall, originally the teachers' dormitory, now houses the Wheelock Academy Museum and Gift Shop.

There is a renewed interest in preserving the campus of Wheelock Academy. Architects and engineers have been conducting a feasibility study of the aging buildings funded by Choctaw Nation. The study will determine what can be done to sustain Wilson and Pushmataha Halls so that they may continue to be used to educate future generations. The results of the study should be available in 2016.



Photo Provided

Wilson Hall (left) and Pushmataha Hall are two of the Wheelock buildings in dire need of restoration.

Wheelock Academy is an integral part of the history and heritage of the Choctaw Nation. It was a visible acknowledgement by Choctaw leaders back in the early 1800s that formal education was essential to

Territory (Oklahoma) over what is commonly referred to as the "Trail of Tears."

Reverend Alfred Wright and his wife, Harriet, arrived in southeastern Indian Territory to continue the mission work they started

Choctaw Nation Storm Shelter Program

The program provides a grant for storm shelters to Choctaw tribal members who live in Oklahoma, Texas, Kansas, Missouri, and Arkansas, which are states with a high risk of tornados.

- Applicants now have to be **45 years of ages or older** to receive the full grant amount of \$2,500.
- Applicants **under the age of 45**, who meet all other requirements will receive a grant in the amount of \$1,250.
- To qualify for the \$4,200 grant, applicant must have a **documented ambulatory disability**.

For a complete list of requirements, see the Choctaw Nation website. For more information or for assistance with completing the application, please contact the Housing Authority office at 580.326.7521 or 800.235.3087.



Halito!

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Photo by Brandy Griffin

Pictured back row (left to right): Cindy Janway, Rebecca Good, Jason Baker, DeAnn Reeves, June Dobbins, Jennifer Helt, Brian Johnston, Chance Adams, Chase Henson, Carey Lester, Amy Sturgeon, and Andrea Osborn.
Pictured middle row (left to right): Jennifer Coffey, Cassie Halcomb, Doris Winlock, Tammy Gibson, Teresa Davis, Tanya Bess, Teresa Lawrence, Cari Corley, Ross Tucker, Kristi Poole, Annette Whisnant, and Kay Boydston.
Pictured front row (left to right): Michelle Miklaucic, Staci Sawyer, Natasha Hudson, Patti Rosenthal, and Shelly Maxey.

Certified Healthy Awards Presented to Choctaw Educational Programs

By BRANDY GRIFFIN
Choctaw Nation

Several Choctaw Nation programs received recognition as Certified Healthy Oklahoma establishments at the Certified Healthy Oklahoma Conference Awards and Luncheon on March 2.

The event, administered by the Oklahoma Turning Point Council and Oklahoma State Department of Health, Center for the Advancement of Wellness, began in 2003 as a way to recognize businesses, communities, schools, restaurants, congregations, early childhood programs, and campuses across Oklahoma promoting healthy lifestyles for their employees.

Through policy implementation, various programs and procedures, recognized businesses set examples and promote healthier futures for not only their employees but others as well.

To receive the Certified Healthy Oklahoma honor, applicants must meet criteria in nine scored categories: Organizational Support, Tobacco Control, Nutrition, Physical Activity, Stress Management, Mental Health, Chronic Disease Prevention and Management, Occupational Health and Safety, and Health Promotion. Those submitting applications must receive a minimum of required points and fulfill specific criteria in order to receive a certification as either Excellence, Merit, or Basic.

This year, 29 Choctaw Nation establishments applied for and received this free, voluntary statewide certification.

The Choctaw Nation Bethel Pre-school met criteria to qualify as a Certified Healthy Oklahoma school and received the Excellence certification.

Choctaw Nation Child Care Development met criteria to qualify as a Certified Healthy Oklahoma Business and earned the Excellence certification for all six Child Care Development program sites: Bennington, Coalgate, Durant, Idabel, Stigler, and Talihina.

The Choctaw Nation Health Services Authority met criteria to qualify as a Certified Healthy Oklahoma Business and earned the Merit certification. The Choctaw Nation Health Clinic in Atoka and Wellness Centers in Broken Bow, Hugo, Idabel, Durant, Crowder, and Atoka met criteria to receive the Excellence certification.

Choctaw Nation Head Start Administration and programs in Bennington, Broken Bow, Antlers, Durant, Stigler, Coalgate, Poteau, Wilburton, Hugo, McAlester, Idabel and Atoka met criteria to qualify as Certified Healthy Oklahoma Early Childhood programs and received the Excellence certification with the Choctaw Nation Head Start program in Wright City receiving a Merit Certification.

5/26 Thursday	6:30pm	Reception	Campus Student Union Building.
5/27 Friday	8:30am	1-Mile Walk	Chillicothe Arch
	11am	Fun Day Friday	Chillicothe Campus
		Free BBQ Lunch, Open to the Public	
	2pm	Pow Wow, Gourd Dancing	First Council Event Center
	7:30pm	Pow Wow Grand Entry	
5/28 Saturday	7am	Veterans Breakfast	First Council Event Center
	9:30am	Annual Reunion Business Meeting	
	1 p.m.	Play Day	Chillicothe Campus
		Sack lunch, music, bingo, horse shoe tournament, and more	
	5:30pm	Hall of Fame Banquet	First Council Casino Event Center
	9pm	Hall of Fame Dance	
5/29 Sunday	10am	Featuring Smilin Vic & The Soul Monkeys	
		Prayer Service	Campus Student Union

For more information, please contact:
Emma Jean Falling, Treasurer
Chillicothe National Alumni Association
(918) 266-1626 or 18517 E. 3rd Street, Tulsa, OK 74884

The reunion will be honoring the Golden Class of 1966 and Silver Class of 1976.

Each year, the Choctaw Nation will select a school district within the Nation to be the recipient of each Box Tops Program.

The 2015-2016 recipient

Hartshorne Public Schools.

Don't have anyone to give our box tops to?

Here's how you can help!

It's easy for anyone to get involved with Box Tops!

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

Send to:
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
Attn: Jerry Tomlinson
P.O. Box 1210
Durant OK 74702

Yakoke to all of the Biskinik Readers for all of your Box Top contributions!

You are making a difference!

For further information, contact Jerry Tomlinson at 580.924.8280, ext. 2904

Wild Onion Dinners

Hugo



Chief Batton was given two Peach trees by Ernie Oakes. Ernie's late wife, Linda L. Oakes babied the trees. Before she passed, Ernie said, "She told me 'Now don't forget to give Chief his trees.'" The trees given to Chief Batton will bear fruit sometime next year, according to Ernie.



(left to right) Emersin Robertson with Shelby Crow and Heather Robertson with Sophie Crow all enjoyed hearing Chief Batton speak in Hugo.



(left to right) Elizabeth Nored, Chief Batton, Jan Maxwell, Faye Cannon and Winona Taber. The ladies had the chance to talk to the Chief before food was served.

Crowder



Lloyd "Buddy" Dugan prepared the scrambled eggs and wild onions for the Crowder Wild Onion Dinner.



Victoria Gonzalez enjoyed the first Wild Onion Dinner in Crowder with her father, Houston Baker.



(above) Youth Advisory Board members, pictured from left, Jasmine Mills, Cheyenne Hill, Olivia Rolland and Kaytlen Sennett, helped deliver food and drinks to diner's tables.



(left) Walter Phelps described the items in the silent auction prior to the auction ending, while Shirley and Leon Cloud grabbed a bite to eat after helping serve dinner.

Idabel



(left to right) David, Jandi, and 9-month-old Sawyer Caudle take a pause before the dinner begins. David works for Choctaw Nation's Housing Authority in Hugo and Jandi is a teacher for the Nation in Broken Bow.



(left to right) Josephine Baker, Matilda Paxton, and Lorene Lajeunesse take a well-deserved break after preparing over 100 meals for the dinner in Idabel.



Councilman Williston and Chief Batton serve the guests at the Idabel dinner.

Photos by Tina Firquain, Stacy Hutto, and Ronni Pierce.

Chahta Anumpa

Aiikhvna

◆◆ Lesson of the Month ◆◆

Toffahpi

(Spring)

H	N	P	A	A	S	Z	A	O	A	I	I	M	N	N
Y	V	B	M	S	N	K	W	K	P	P	H	A	W	V
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A	P	K	U	I	U	B	G	I	B	F	H	I	C	F
O	G	H	K	S	T	X	E	H	H	F	S	X	H	P
B	S	D	H	A	V	O	X	S	O	O	N	K	A	O
E	W	I	J	S	H	D	M	W	H	T	M	K	M	F
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Q	E	I	F	K	U	H	C	U	A	I	A	O	D	U
Z	C	K	A	Q	W	T	T	O	W	A	N	A	G	T

AKAKUSHI -chick	AKSHISH -root	CHUKFI -rabbit
FOWI -bee	HIMONA -new	HOFFVLI -hatch
HOSHONTI -cloud/s	HVSHI TOMI -sunshine	LACHA -wet
LAKNA -yellow	LIBESHA -warm	MAHLI -wind
MALATHA -lightning	NIHI -seeds	OFFO -grow
OKCHAKKO - blue	OKCHAMALI -green	OMBA -rain
PAKANLI -bloom	SHUSHI -bug/s	SHUTIK -sky
SHVPO -hat	TOFFAHPI -spring	TOWA -ball

Answers will be in next month's issue of the Biskinik.

Answers to last month's Word Match: 1.g, 2.i, 3.u, 4.r, 5.b, 6.w, 7.n, 8.e, 9.p, 10.x, 11.i, 12.s, 13.t, 14.y, 15.d, 16.z, 17.h, 18.v, 19.k, 20.a, 21.j, 22.q, 23.m, 24.o, 25.f, 26.c

www.choctawschool.com

HEALTH

Keep It Down! Stop High Blood Pressure

By ERIN ADAMS
Choctaw Nation

Halito, May is National High Blood Pressure Education Month. The following is an article from the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention. Less is better in some things, including in blood pressure. About 1 of 3 US adults—67 million people—have high blood pressure. High blood pressure makes your heart work too hard and increases your risk of heart disease and stroke. You can have high blood pressure and not know it. That is why it is called the silent killer. It is also why it is so important to have your blood pressure checked. If you know family or friends who haven’t had their blood pressure checked recently, make it a point to ask them to do it in May. It is easy to check blood pressure and it is painless. It can be checked by your doctor, and many pharmacies have free screenings. Blood pressure is the force of blood on the walls of your blood vessels as blood flows through them. This pressure naturally rises and falls during the day, but when it is consistently too high, it is considered high blood

pressure. The medical term is hypertension. Like the pipes in your house, your arteries can fail if they are under too much pressure. The video, “High Blood Pressure Basics,” illustrates the concept of high blood pressure. More than 360,000 American deaths in 2010 included high blood pressure as a primary or contributing cause. That’s 1,000 deaths each day. Blood pressure has two numbers, systolic, and diastolic, and is measured in millimeters of mercury (mmHg). Systolic pressure (the top number) is the force on the blood vessel walls when the heart beats and pumps blood out of the heart. Diastolic pressure (the bottom number) is the force that occurs when the heart relaxes in between beats. If your blood pressure is less than 120 systolic and less than 80 diastolic, then your blood pressure is normal; between 120 and 139 systolic and 80-89 diastolic, you have prehypertension. Systolic of 140 or greater, or diastolic that is 90 or greater, is hypertension. Men and women are about equally likely to develop high blood pressure over their lifetimes, but their risks vary at different ages. The condition affects more men than women before 64 years of age. For people aged 65 years or older, more women than men have high blood pressure. If you have high blood pressure, there are steps you can take to get it under control, including:

- Ask your doctor what your blood pressure should be. Set a goal to lower your pressure with your doctor and then discuss how you can reach your goal. Work with your health care team to make sure you meet that goal.
- Take your blood pressure medication as directed. If you are having trouble, ask your doctor what you can do to make it easier. For example, you may want to discuss your medication schedule with your doctor if you are taking multiple drugs at different times of the day. Or you may want to discuss side effects you are feeling, or the cost of your medicine.
- Quit smoking—and if you don’t smoke, don’t start. You can find tips and resources at CDC’s Smoking and Tobacco Web site or Be Tobacco Free Web site.
- Reduce sodium. Most Americans consume too much sodium, and it raises blood pressure in most people. Learn about tips to reduce your sodium.

See this month’s recipe for a wonderful chicken entrée which is low in sodium and high in flavor!



Photo by Kendra Germany

Choctaw Nation Senior Executive Officer Teresa Jackson and LogistiCare Solutions, LLC, General Manager Mike Van Pelt at the contract signing.

Nation and Tribal Transit Make History

By BRANDY GRIFFIN
Choctaw Nation

The Choctaw Nation Tribal Transit program made history on March 30 becoming the first tribe in the U. S. to sign a full contract with LogistiCare Solutions, LLC. Mike Van Pelt, General Manager for LogistiCare Solutions, LLC., said the contract has been eight years in the making, working closely with Choctaw Nation to come to an agreement. LogistiCare is the managing partner for SoonerRide in the state of Oklahoma and has won the contract bid three times since 2003. They manage approximately 80,000 rides for non-emergency medical transportation

across the state each month. Transportation services include accommodations for almost anyone including patients with wheelchairs. Choctaw Nation Tribal Members and community members alike will benefit from the contract signed between LogistiCare and the Tribal Transit program. The Nation will receive reimbursement for transportation provided to qualifying SoonerCare/ Medicaid patients, something they were unable to do in the past. Revenue from the reimbursements will expand the current Tribal Transit program, creating more jobs, adding additional vehicles, and growing the program. The Tribal Transit program is a community based program which means that through the contract, services will be available to eligible patients with SoonerCare/ Medicaid in addition to Tribal Members. The contract between Choctaw Nation and LogistiCare Solutions, LLC, hopes to pave the way for future agreements with other tribes.



Marinated Chicken Breasts

Recipe courtesy of Food Network Kitchen

Recipe of the Month

Ingredients:
1 to 2 tablespoons vinegar (cider, balsamic, or red wine)
2 to 3 teaspoons dried herbs (thyme, oregano, rosemary, or crumbled bay leaf)
1 to 2 tablespoons mustard, whole grain or Dijon
1 to 2 teaspoon garlic or onion powder, optional
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, each about 6 ounces

Directions:
Put the vinegar, herbs, mustard, powders if using and oil in a large re-sealable plastic bag. Close the bag and shake to combine all the ingredients. Open the bag, drop in the chicken breast in the bag. Close and shake the bag to coat evenly. Freeze for up to 2 weeks. Thaw in the refrigerator overnight, under cold, running water, or in the microwave at 30 percent power for 1 minute at a time. Heat a grill or grill pan. When the grill is hot, place the chicken on the grill and cook for about 4 minutes per side, or until cooked through. You can also bake the thawed chicken in a 375 degree oven for 15 minutes, or until cooked through.

Nutrition Facts
Amount Per Serving (Yields 4 Servings) Serving Size 201g
Calories 427 Calories from Fat 184 Total Fat 20.5g
Saturated Fat 1.9g Trans Fat 0.0g Cholesterol 147mg
Sodium 200mg Potassium 514mg Total Carbohydrates 3.8g
Dietary Fiber 1.4g Sugars 0.8g Protein 57.0g
Vitamin A 2% Vitamin C 2% Calcium 7% Iron 19%

Serve this marinated chicken over a fresh green salad for a wonderful spring dinner. Hope you will enjoy this dish as much as all of us at the Diabetes Wellness Center in Talihina. For further information you may contact Erin Adams, RD, LD, Choctaw Nation Diabetes Wellness Center (800) 349-7026 ext. 6959.

NURSERY NEWS

Kassandrae’ Bella-Rose Short

Kassandrae’ Bella-Rose Short was born July 11, 2015, at Paris Regional Medical Center, Paris, Texas. Her parents are Brandon and Carle Usry Short. Grandparents are Jillian Usry Ingram, Paul Shane Simpson, Holly Buskirk, all of Paris and Gary Short of Tennessee; great-grandparents are Lloyd and Debra Cornett Usry of Paris, Gary and Kathy Simpson of Atlas, Texas and Eddie and BJ Short of Richmond, Kentucky.; great-great-grandparents were the late Charles R. and Ruth Bryan Usry of Paris, the late Leighton and Ruth Moore Cornett of Paris, and the late Ernest Simpson and Lola Beavers Simpson of Paris. Kassandrae’s great-great-great-great-grandmother Ida Bell Watts Lloyd, was an original Choctaw enrollee.



Paisley Fay Boothe

Paisley Fay Boothe was born on March 1, 2016, at 1:28 p.m. at Lakeside Women’s Hospital in Oklahoma City, to proud parents Phillip and Wanda Boothe. She weighed 6 pounds 4 ounces and was 20 inches long. Paisley is the granddaughter of Lois Weatherly of Calumet and the late Bobby Weatherly and Brenda Carter of OKC and John Boothe of Berryville, Arkansas. She is the great-granddaughter of the late Mary Jane Beaver and Roscoe York of Hugo, Oklahoma. She is also the great-great-granddaughter of the late Gaynell Wishon Beaver and also of late Zennie Cochnauer York of Hugo.



Aria Isabella Macon

Aria Isabella Macon was born April 14, 2016, at 9:35 a.m. and weighed 8 pounds 1 ounce and was 19 1/2 inches long. Her parents are Roosevelt Macon and Pamela Billy. Grandparents are Willie Billy Jr. and Lawanna Billy. Great-grandparents are Willie Billy Sr. and Margaret Billy. Great-great-grandfather is Willis Billy (Choc Billy).



***** Public Hearing Notice *****

Choctaw Nation Child Care Assistance Program
May 6, 2016, 9 a.m.
Choctaw Nation Child Care Assistance Office
3710 Choctaw Road, Durant, OK

The purpose of this hearing is to allow the public an opportunity to comment on the provisions of child care services under the Development Fund Plan. Child care providers, parents, and the public are invited to attend the hearing or may forward comments or questions to:

Choctaw Nation Child Care Assistance Program
ATTN: Monona Dill, Director
P.O. Box 1210, Durant, OK 74702
800-522-6170 or 580-924-8280 Ext. 2391

Breastfeeding assistance is just a phone call away.
1-800-522-6170 extension 2507

Choctaw Nation WIC supports breastfeeding moms. We welcome breastfeeding questions, and offer classes in five locations.

<p>McAlester May 11 - July 13 - Sept. 14 - Nov. 9 1-3 p.m. Choctaw Nation Health Clinic Downstairs Conference Room</p>	<p>Talihina May 4 - July 6 - Sept. 7 - Nov. 2 9-11 a.m. Choctaw Nation DWC</p>	<p>Durant April 6 - June 1 - Aug. 3 - Oct. 5 1-3 p.m. Choctaw Nation WIC Office</p>
<p>Poteau May 18 - July 20 - Sept. 21 - Oct. 12 9-11 a.m. Choctaw Nation Community Center</p>	<p>Idabel April 13 - June 8 - Aug. 10 - Oct. 12 9-11 a.m. Choctaw Nation Clinic Education Room</p>	

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

- * latch
- * frequency of feedings
- * breastfeeding resources

- * positioning
- * growth spurts

CHOCTAW NATION FOOD DISTRIBUTION

WAREHOUSES & MARKETS
*** HOURS ***

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

Antlers: 200 S.W. “O” St., (580) 298-6443
Durant: 2352 Big Lots Pkwy, (580) 924-7773
Poteau: 100 Kerr Ave, (918) 649-0431

MAY
ANTLERS

Market open weekdays May 1-31, except for:
Closed: May 26, 27, and 30.
Cooking with Carmen: May 10, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

BROKEN BOW

Market open weekdays May 1-31, except for:
Closed: May 26, 27, and 30.
Cooking with Carmen: May 5, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

DURANT

Market open weekdays May 1-31, except for:
Closed: May 26, 27, and 30.
Cooking with Carmen: May 3, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

McALESTER

Market open weekdays May 1-31, except for:
Closed: May 26, 27, and 30.
Cooking with Carmen: May 17, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

POTEAU

Market open weekdays May 1-31, except for:
Closed: May 26, 27, and 30.
Cooking with Carmen: May 12, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

JUNE
ANTLERS

Market open weekdays June 1-30, except for:
Closed: June 28, 29, and 30.

BROKEN BOW

Market open weekdays June 1-30, except for:
Closed: June 28, 29, and 30.

DURANT

Market open weekdays June 1-30, except for:
Closed: June 28, 29, and 30.

McALESTER

Market open weekdays June 1-30, except for:
Closed: June 28, 29, and 30.

POTEAU

Market open weekdays June 1-30, except for:
Closed: June 28, 29, and 30.

There are no Cooking with Carmen classes during June. Check back next month for Carmen’s July class schedule.

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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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.

NOTES TO THE NATION

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Legal Assistance

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

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

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

May Community Center Schedule

May 5 Antlers : 10-1 & 1:30-3

May 12 Idabel : 10-1 & 1:30- 3

May 17 McAlester: 10-1 & 1:30-3

June Community Center Schedule

June 2 Broken Bow: 10-1 & 1:30- 3

June 9 Bethel: 10:30-1 & 1:30- 3

June 14 Hugo: 10-1 & 1:30- 3

June 23 Smithville: 10:30-1 & 1:30- 3

June 30 Wright City: 10-1 & 1:30- 3

Job Connect 2016

Have you ever wanted to talk to someone about career opportunities? Do you have needs for career planning? What jobs are available at the Choctaw Nation?

These questions and more can be answered at the **Job Connect** event. Representatives from educational services, career planning, WIOA and human resources will be ready to talk about your future. Join us at any of the following Community Centers for these **Job Connect** events. Each event is scheduled for 10 AM to 3 PM.

Community Center Date

Crowder 5.3

McAlester 5.5

Wilburton 5.10

Broken Bow 5.12

Wright City 5.17

You may contact Human Resources at 580.924.8280, ext. 2911, you can also visit our Careers Site online at <http://careers.choctawnation.com>.

Looking for a Choctaw Veteran . . .

The Choctaw Nation Veterans Advocacy is in search of any relatives of Civil War Veteran, Captain Simeon Hamilton. Captain Hamilton died in February 1864 while a prisoner of war on Johnson's Island in Ohio. Anyone with information can contact the Choctaw Nation Veterans Advocacy at (800) 522-6170 ext. 2735, Harlan Wright, or ext. 2160, Roger Hamill.

Biskinik Announcement Policy

We will accept milestone birthday greetings for ages 1, 5, 13, 15, 16, 18, 21, 30, 40, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, and above. Couples may send in announcements of their silver wedding anniversary at 25 years of marriage, golden anniversary at 50 years, or 60+ anniversaries.

News from graduates of higher education only and sports submissions will be accepted as space allows. We do not post wedding announcements.

We apologize for any inconvenience. This is a necessary adjustment due to rising production and mailing expenses.

Notes to the Nation Submissions

Send thank you notes and event notices to:

Biskinik, Attn: Notes to the Nation

P.O. Box 1210

Durant, OK 74702

or email to: biskinik@choctawnation.com

LETTERS

Yakoke (Thank You)!

My name is Sherry Wolfe and my family and I live in Wilburton. I would like to thank Mrs. Mary Corley and her family for all the help they gave to me and my family. Mrs. Coley went above and beyond her job to help us.

She and her family have provided us with table and a bed and helped with all of my paperwork to get assistance from the Nation. Thank you, Mrs. Coley and family.

**Sherry Wolfe, Tyler Wolfe,
Brandon Wolfe and Charles Wilson**

*Gary Batton
Chief*

*Jack Austin Jr.
Assistant Chief*

The Official
Monthly Publication
of the
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

**Judy Allen, Senior Executive Officer
Lisa Reed, Executive Director
Ronni Pierce, News Director
Stacy Hutto, Managing Editor
Kendra Germany, Reporter/Photographer
Tina Firquain, Reporter/Photographer**

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580-924-8280 • 800-522-6170
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www.choctawnation.com
email: biskinik@choctawnation.com

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

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

The BISKINIK is a nonprofit publication of the Choctaw Nation.

Circulation is monthly. Deadline for articles and photographs to be submitted is the first day of each month to run the following month.

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.



To the Choctaw Nation:

I wanted to write a letter to personally thank you for helping me achieve my higher education goals. When I was younger I had no idea what career path I wanted to take and didn't know what direction to follow in college. A few years ago I began working at the Choctaw Casino in McAlester as a security officer. I immediately fell in love with my job, and through that experience I found a passion for law enforcement. Shortly after, I decided to return to college and get a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice, so I could learn as much as I could, and work my way up in the Public Safety division.

It's my dream to become a tribal officer and eventually take a leadership position. If it weren't for the Choctaw Nation helping financially that dream would have never become a reality. Also I am so blessed to work for a Nation that worked around my school schedule, allowing me to work while being a fulltime student.

The experience I've gained working here will be the rest of my life. I walked across the stage on Dec. 9 at the special Choctaw graduation ceremony and I couldn't be more proud to be a Choctaw. I am definitely looking for serving this Nation for years to come, and I hope to make it a better and safer place.

**Cameron Cody Golla
McAlester**

To Choctaw Chief Gary Batton, Assistant Choctaw Chief Jack Austin Jr., and Tribal Council:

I would like to compliment the medical personnel at Choctaw Nation Health Clinic in Stigler on my recent medical visit March 3. Dr. Valerie Robinson is a very caring, professional doctor, very attentive and thorough. Her nurse Stacy was very pleasant and kind, as well.

The medical lab techs were awesome! John Anderson and Shawna Smith were very caring and patient with me, helping me to relax.

I also wanted to compliment your fine employee, Leland Mattox in the Specialty, Vascular Cardiology Department in Talihina. What a super nice man. He treated me with caring professionalism and patience. The Choctaw Nation should be proud to have him as an employee. I would appreciate you giving him a "pat on the back" from me. May God bless the Choctaw Nation and every thing they do for their people.

The Choctaw Nation should be proud to have them all as employees.

May God bless the Choctaw Nation and every thing they do for their people.

**Denny Boyd
Blanco**

Choctaw Nation,

I truly appreciate you help in the emergency situation I had. I feel you saved my life, as I was at the end of my rope, not knowing what to do. Thanks again,

**Jo Wayland
Haileyville**

The people in your office were the most courteous and efficient of any I've had contact with during this trying time. My sincere thanks,

Phyllis Beams and family of Calvin T. Beams

Good Morning,

Thank you so very much for the Choctaw tag. Your generosity is appreciated. Thanks,

Valerie Asbury

EVENTS

Family Reunion

Noahubi-Columbus-Battiest

Saturday, May 7

8 a.m.-8 p.m.

Choctaw Community Center

Broken Bow City Park

Broken Bow, OK

Bring a covered dish, pictures to share, lawn chairs, and prizes for bingo.

Louise Janey, (580) 286-3647

Susie Rose, (580) 584-2971

Ritter Family Reunion

Saturday, May 21

Quarry Island in Wister, OK

*An invitation to any relatives of
Issac (Ike) & Georgia Ritter and Frank & Tennie Ritter.
Bring a covered dish & a drink. Donations appreciated.*

**Imogene (McCoy) Odell,
(918) 647-3791 or (918) 647-7596
507 Chickasaw, Poteau, OK 74953**

Ward, Casey Family Reunion

Saturday, May 28

Choctaw Indian Facility

Spiro

The potluck starts at 10 a.m.

Relatives from near and far will be there.

12th Annual Brokesboulder Family Reunion

Friday, June 10 at 6 p.m.

Saturday, June 11 from 8 a.m. - 9 p.m.

**Sac and Fox Nation Multipurpose Center
215 N. Harrison in Shawnee**

For more information call,

Serena Underwood at (918) 820-2629,
Wynona Lumpmouth at (623) 451-4653, or
Darrell Lumpmouth at (602) 361-4017

40th Annual Livingston Buck & Angeline Mitchell White Reunion

June 25

10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Eat at noon.

Summerfield Community Center

Bring a covered dish, dessert and/or soft drink, as well as your genealogy and/or any old pictures.

For more information contact

Kim White Robertson 918-647-3598

Traci Cox 918-677-2235

LeFlore Annual Alumni Banquet

Saturday, May 7 at 5 p.m.

LeFlore High School "new" Gym

The LeFlore High School Alumni & Former Students Association will be hosting the 57th Annual Alumni Banquet.

For more information contact

Suzette (Sullivan) Powers at (918) 649-4163, Alicia (Goad) Herell, or Denise (Green) Crakaal.

Siloam Spring Cemetery Clean-up Day

Saturday May 14 / 9:30 a.m.

Siloam Spring Cemetery is located near McCurtain, 11 miles south of Stigler in Haskell County. In case of inclement weather, the event is canceled.

Bring a dish for a fellowship luncheon;
also bring lawn chairs and yard tools.

Bill Durant, (918) 917-7322

Katherine Durant Prince, (918) 799-5167

Annual Hampton Chapel Church Singing

Saturday, May 21

Wild Onion Supper starts at 5:30 p.m.

Singing begins at 7 p.m.

Floyd Peters will be the MC.

Everyone is welcome.

**For more information call,
(580) 326-4961**

School Reunion Hartshorne Class of '66

May 21

Our class is planning its 50th class reunion. We need help locating classmates who attended Jones Academy: Annie Culley Shaw, Edna Francis Natseway, Clara McClure.

Please have them contact:

**Carol Ranallo Brown at 918-429-2908
carolabrown1966@yahoo.com**

or

**Kay Isbell Day at 918-637-4094
bday967768@yahoo.com**

18th Annual Father's Day Gospel Singing

Sunday, June 19

Black Jack Church, one mile west of Sobol

Supper begins at 5 p.m. followed by singing.
Truman Jefferson will be the MC.

**For more information call,
(580) 372-5114, or (580) 372-5112**

Reunion for the Families of Folsom-Ward-Thompson-Kelly

June 11

Choctaw Community Center

1203 W. Liberty

Atoka, OK

Starts at 10 a.m.

Karen Kelly, 580-509-0254

Bring a side dish

Jaynell Patton, 405-238-6564

20th Annual King Family Reunion

Saturday, June 11 at 10 a.m.

Senior Citizens Building

Railroad Street, Talihina

Descendants of Judy (King) Potts, Robert King, Ada (King) Spring, William Joseph King and Lillie Josephine (King) McGee are invited to attend the reunion.

Bring a covered dish, family pictures, family tree and a good story.

Janelle Kirkes, (918) 522-4309, or John Bull, (918) 522-4881

Thompson Family Reunion

May 28

Clayton Lake

Bring tables, chairs and a potluck dish. Bingo prizes and cakes needed.

For more info call,

Yvonne Arriola

918-471-5458

Allen-Williams-Battiest-LeFlore Family Reunion

Saturday, June 4

McGee Creek in Atoka

Bring a covered dish.

For more information contact,

Naomi LeFlore
(580) 927-5696

Sharon LeFlore
(580) 272-7540.

OBITUARIES

Clifford Ollie ‘Chief’ Steelman

Clifford Ollie “Chief” Steelman, 86, passed away on Jan. 5, 2016, in Fort Smith, Arkansas. He was born March 15, 1929, to John Richard and Eliza Ann (Dain) White Steelman, an original Choc-taw enrollee, in Reichert.

Chief was a cowboy, rancher, and county employee. He was a member of Big Creek Baptist Church where he served as a deacon for 60 years. Chief was known as the best “All Around Bare Back Rider” back in the day. He was a member of the Quarter Horse and Paint Horse Association. Chief was also the owner and operator of Poorboy Livestock Auction and the Poteau Livestock Auction in 1966. He retired from the State Department of Agriculture after serving eight years as a state livestock inspector. He also worked for the U.S. Forest Service. Chief received the Farmers and Rancher Award. He was recognized by Heavener Chamber of Commerce in 2011 for 67 years of support, patience, and dedication given to the Heavener Rodeo and City, 1966 Champion of Ribbon Roper for Ward Brothers Rodeo Company, and the original owner and retailer of Chief’s Horse Medicine.

He was preceded in death by both parents; son, Roger Dale; five brothers, J.L., Hershel, Merle, Delbert, and Finis; sisters, Pauline Rex and Esther Dedmon Ryburn; step-brother, Elvin Coker; and step-sisters, Velda May Huie and Marie Magison.

Chief is survived by his wife, Dorothy Brown Steelman; son, Clifford Steelman and wife, Nora of Poteau; daughters, Joyce Altstatt and husband Gene, Jan West and husband Rick, Gail Hudson and husband Ronnie, all of Heavener, Melba Hall and husband Mike, and husband Jay all of Poteau; 12 grandchildren, Michael and Bradley Steelman, Shannon Mathis, Jamie Altstatt, Melody Durnigan, Beth Mead, Bruce West, Lindsey Anderson, Kara Nichols, Dustin Hall, Spencer Hall, and Whitney Kirby; 15 great-grandchildren; sisters, Camelia Luman of Heavener and Ida Bell Moody of Modesto, California; along with numerous nieces, nephews, cousins; and a host of friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Dowden-Roberts Funeral Home of Heavener. Interment was at Reichert Cemetery.

Ronald Eugene Anderson

Ronald Eugene Anderson, 77, passed away on April 8, 2013, in Tucson, Arizona. He was born on March 27, 1936, to Cleveland and Pauline Eva Anderson in Blue.

Ronnie followed in his father’s footsteps and joined the United States Air Force. While in the Air Force, he served as a firefighter. During the Vietnam War, he fought fires from the sky. After serving 20 years in the military, he retired in Tucson.

He worked at Hughes Aircraft where he worked for 20 years. Ronnie was known by the nickname “Andy” by his lifelong buddies.

After two retirements, he spent his time traveling to see his family, grilling, watching football, and fixing anything that needed to be fixed.

He was preceded in death by both parents; son, Jimmy Anderson; sister, Bobbie Lowell; and brothers-in-law, Jack Rachels, Bobby King, and Harold Angel.

Survivors include his loving wife of 58 years, Katherine Anderson; two sons, John (Arlene) Anderson; and William (Laura) Anderson; all of Tucson; grandchildren, Chris (Brenda) Bailey, Crystal Anderson and Tiffany Anderson, all of New Braunfels, Texas; Rebecca Anderson of Gresham, Oregon; and William Medina of Tucson; great-grandchildren, Brock and Amber Bailey, Preston Anderson and Dylan Ransdell, all of New Braunfels; Jacob Kenney and Meeya Knoke both of Gresham; sisters, Billy Rachels and Belya Lee, both of Bossier City, Louisiana; Kay Angel of Haughton, Louisiana; Betty King of Tacoma, Washington; along with numerous nieces and nephews.

Harold Gene Layne

Harold “Harry” Gene Layne, 82, of Clemson, South Carolina, passed away on Jan. 22, 2016. He was born on Oct. 30, 1933, to the late Giles H. and Ruby Anderson Layne in Pittsburg.

Harry graduated in 1950 from Ceres High School in Ceres, California.

He served four years in the U.S. Navy. Harry served on the USS Duncan, DDR-874 during the Korean War. He was a signalman on the ship. Later he was appointed “skipper” of LCU-983 based in Yokosuka, Japan.

After his service, Harry attended Modesto Jr. College in Modesto, California. He graduated in 1956. Harry then went on to study at Sacramento State University, Sacramento, California, Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville, Illinois, and The Harvard University Business School extension. He studied at these institutions while working with The Western Union Telegraph Company from 1955-1984.

Harry was an avid golfer most of his adult life. He was a member and elder of Walhalla Presbyterian Church, Walhalla, South Carolina, and member, elder and Clerk of Session of Pendleton Presbyterian Church, Pendleton, South Carolina. He was also the first full moderator of Foothills Presbytery. He was a graduate of The Presbyterian Lay School of Theology of South Carolina. Harry and his wife of 56 years Margaret Elizabeth attend First Baptist Church, Pendleton.

He was the grandson of Osborne B. Anderson, and the great-grandson of Robert Anderson.

Harry is survived by his wife Margaret; son, David A. Layne of Charlotte, North Carolina; daughter, Sharon K. Layne Hawkey and husband Adam of Los Angeles; grandchild, Isabelle A. Hawkey; and brother, Danny R. Layne of Twain Harte, California.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Duckett-Reboring Funeral Home. Interment was at Oconee Memorial Park in Seneca, South Carolina.



Debra Kay Green

Debra Kay Rachels Green, 59, passed away on Nov. 29, 2015, after a courageous battle with cancer. She was born on April 28, 1956, to Jack and Billy Rachels in Mobile, Alabama.

Debbie had been a dedicated and longtime employee at the Jimmie Davis Highway Animal Hospital in Bossier City, Louisiana.

She was also very supportive of her grandchildren in all their sports, gymnastic, cheering, dance, and school activities.

Debbie also attended Simple Church. She graciously opened her home for family and holiday related events. She was a wonderful hostess and cook, especially desserts.

Debbie was preceded in death by her father, Jack. She is survived by her husband of 41 years, Michael Green; daughters, Melissa and husband Shawn Bouillion, Rachal Smith, and Angela Green; grandchildren, Tyler and Kaelyn Bouillion; Abbigail, Caroline and Colton Smith, and Trenton DeFatta; mother, Billy Rachels; sisters, PJ Rachels and Shelly White and their families; along with a host of extended family and friends.

Interment was at Hill Crest Cemetery. Arrangements were made under the direction of Hill Crest Funeral Home in Haughton, Louisiana.



Jerry Glen Stratton

Jerry Glen Stratton, 69, of Maysville passed away on Jan. 20, 2016. He was born on April 24, 1946, to Jack Tommy Stratton and Geraldine (Holt) Stratton in Pauls Valley.

Jerry grew up in Oklahoma City. He graduated from John Marshall High School and attended college briefly.

He spent most of his adult life in Maysville.

He held a variety of jobs including mechanic, farmer, ranch hand, and machinist. He also worked in utility construction and assisted his son, Jason, at Stratton Motor Company.

Jerry enjoyed getting up and going to work every day and being around people. He loved spending time with his family and his coffee-drinking buddies. He was known for going midnight shopping, for his love of animals, and for his collection of unique items. Jerry was a member of the First United Methodist Church in Maysville.

He was preceded in death by both parents; wife, Carol Stratton; and niece, Morgan Stratton.

Jerry is survived by his children, Jason Stratton and wife Shelly of Blanchard, Bridget Ballenger and husband Andrew of Fairfax, Virginia, Jamie Gatton and husband Ben of Wichita, Kansas, and Jakob Stratton of Maysville; brothers, Jackie Stratton and wife Jo of Holly, Colorado, and Jimmy Stratton and wife Jan of Salsbury, Massachusetts; sister, Janette Dreadfulwater of Tahlequah; grandchildren, First Lieutenant Jerritt Larson, Jaxon and Jazmin Stratton, Madison, Asa, Samuel and Henry Ballenger, and Dexter Gatton.

Arrangements were made under the direction of John Williams of Winans Funeral Home in Maysville. Interment was at the Maysville Cemetery.



Mary Kathryn DeMaria

Mary Kathryn DeMaria, 91, passed away on Feb. 8, 2016. She was born on July 5, 1924.

Kathryn graduated from Rattan High School, and shortly after moved with her family to Pittsburg, California.

She worked in the base exchange at Camp Stoneman, where she met her husband Anthony DeMaria. The couple and their family moved all over the country, but eventually settled in Colorado. They had five children.

Kathryn worked as a telephone switchboard operator, later becoming the first female employee of the Golden, Colorado, Post Office. She also worked in daycare.

She enjoyed nature, poetry, art, and children. Kathryn was also a poet and painter.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Anthony. Kathryn is survived by her children, Carol Antonette, Victor William, Donna Louise, Edward Louis, and Teddy Lee; grandchildren, Emily, Deirdre, Mark, Rachel, Owen, Anthony, Liam, and Isabella; great-grandchildren, Trystan, Dylan, Rowan, Leonardo, Alessio, Marco and Victor; as well as her sisters, Anita Barton of Durant and Patsy Jaime of Pittsburg, California.

Arrangements were made under the direction of All-States Cremation. Services were at Fort Logan National Cemetery.



Timmy Glyn Herrington

Timmy Glyn Herrington, 48, of McCurtain, passed away on Feb. 26, 2016. He was born on March 13, 1967, to Chester and Sue Mayhall in Poteau.

He was preceded in death by his maternal grandparents, Calvin and Gertie Fisk; paternal grandparents, Leonard and Ellen Mayhall; aunts, Ruby Payne and Gail Mayhall; uncles, Carl Fisk, Gary Fisk, Keith Fisk, and Derrell Fisk.

Timmy is survived by his parents, Chester and Sue of McCurtain; sons, Joshua Glyn Herrington and Calvin Jacob Herrington of Okay; daughter, Shyanne Renee Herrington of Okay, mother of his children, Suzanne Gossett of Okay; brother, Donnie Mayhall of McCurtain; sister, Kim McCormick of Krebs; numerous nieces and nephews; as well as one great-niece and one great-nephew.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Mallory-Martin Funeral Home in Stigler. Interment was at Miners Cemetery.



Carol Eileen Shomoh

Carol Eileen Shomoh, 69, of Broken Bow, passed away on Feb. 16, 2016, in Texarkana. She was born on July 28, 1946, to Nora Bell Shomoh in Talihina.

Carol was of the Methodist faith. She enjoyed reading, going to the senior citizens group, gardening, and spending time with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Carol is survived by her mother, Nora; son, Robert Shomoh; brother, Andrew Tushka all of Broken Bow; sisters, Audrey Vandygriff of Ben Franklin, Texas, Joyce Bailey, Donna Tushka, Michelle Tushka, Sherrie Aldana and husband, Aurturo all of Broken Bow; three grandchildren, Vanah Shomoh, Ryan Shomoh, and Zachary Shomoh; three great-grandchildren, Emily Childs, Kason Childs, and Draven Shomoh; uncle, Claud Shomoh; along with a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Brumley Funeral Home in Broken Bow.



Irene O. Tennent

Irene O. Tennent, 94, of Springfield, Oregon, passed away on Jan. 19, 2016. She was born on April 28, 1921, to Ray and Ivy Holloway Wilson in McAlester.

Irene married Harold Tennent in McAlester on December 31, 1939. They were blessed with 61 years of marriage, until his passing in 2001.

Irene worked for Woolworths and Alexander’s Department Store in Springfield. She also worked for Dr. Alan Marshall as a dental receptionist. She retired in 1982.

Irene loved sports, especially her Oregon Duck’s basketball team. She enjoyed knitting, walking, and exercise classes. She was also a member of Norkenzie Church of Christ.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Harold; and son Ray Tennent.

Irene is survived by her daughters, Sue Scales and Kyle Tennent of Springfield; sons, Richard Tennent of Salem, Oregon, and Tom (Gail) Tennent of Eugene, Oregon; 13 grandchildren; and 13 great-grandchildren.

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



Coleman Bully Sr.

Coleman Bully, Sr., 74, of Durant, passed away on Nov. 30, 2015. He was born on Sept. 13, 1941, to Boswell Buster and Lena (Jacob) Bully in Talihina.

Coleman was a mechanic by trade. He enjoyed his home and liked to work in his yard. Coleman was a member of the Jesus Name Lighthouse Church.

He was preceded in death by both parents; brother, Bill Bully; sisters, Margie Bully Brown and Mary Bully Floyd; grandmother, Annie Eva Carney Roberts; uncles, Dick Polk and Hampton Polk; and aunts, Sue Thompson and Ruth Polk.

Coleman is survived by his daughters, Louella Mincher and husband Tony of Durant, and Christy Canaday of Caddo; son, Coleman Bully, Jr. of Lawton; grandchildren, Alesha Summer and husband Charles of Durant, Kristina Drinnon and Mark Dooley of Bokchito, Patrick Drinnon and Aime of Durant, Brandon Justus of Colbert, and Amber Justus of Colbert; brothers, Paul Bully of Durant and Roy Bully; sisters, Rachael Mays and husband Kenneth of Soper, Patricia Bully of Durant, Emma Bully of Durant, Agnes Marie Bully of Roberta, and Donna Bully of Denison, Texas; great-grandchildren, Christopher Brown, Nathaniel Drinnon, Leland Drinnon, Isiaha Sumner, Matthew Summer, Jayden Summer, Noah Summer, Kadence Summer, Nevaeh Drinnon, and April Drinnon, all of Durant.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Holmes-Coffey-Murray Funeral Home in Durant.



Myra Jo McDonald

Myra Jo McDonald, 56, of Lawton, passed away on Jan. 19, 2016, with her loving family by her side. She was born on Oct. 22, 1959, to Thomas Lee and Gladys McDonald in Stratford.

Myra grew up in Oklahoma City and graduated from Stratford High School.

She married Ruben Rodriguez in 1980. Together they had four children.

Myra attended Chisholm Trail Technology Center for graphic design, and she used that talent for many family members and friends.

She enjoyed sewing and making quilts for her grandchildren.

She was a softball player with the Indian Nation. She loved spending time with her grandchildren and enjoyed watching them in their various activities.

She was preceded in death by both parents; brothers, Amos, Michael, and Thomas; and sisters, Doretta and Sandra Lynn.

Myra is survived by daughters, Tomi and husband Dennis Moore, Samantha Rodriguez and husband Steven French; sons, Julian Lee Rodriguez and Ruben Dewayne Rodriguez, all of Lawton; grandchildren, Ariana, Kiana, Nathaniel, Briana, Autumn, Trinity, Melinda, Syenna, Laura, Haley, Zoe, Sylas, Alexia, Maria and soon twin boys; brothers, Mitchell McDonald and Ronnie McDonald, of Oklahoma City; and numerous other family members and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of the Comanche Nation Funeral Home. Interment was at the Highland Cemetery.



OBITUARIES

George W. McKinney III

George W. McKinney III, 64, of Midwest City, passed away Feb. 10, 2016. He was born on Nov. 14, 1951, to George W. and Rose (Jeannotte) McKinney in Coalgate.

George grew up in the Choctaw area and graduated from Choctaw High School.

He was a member of the Spencer Road Freewill Baptist Church. George was an avid outdoorsman and enjoyed golfing. He loved fishing and hunting.

He was preceded in death by his grandchild, Asa Sellers; and nephews, Kyle Rule, Travis McKinney, and Blake McKinney.

George is survived by his wife, Desma; daughters, Jennifer McKinney, Tiffany Sellers and husband Jeremy, Dana Newell and husband Seth, and Shannon McCroskey and husband Jay; grandchildren, Tanner, Chloe, Yana, Kennedy, Corbin, Luke, Jameson, Shelby, and Benjamin; parents, George Jr. and Rose McKinney; siblings, Earl McKinney, Amber Sawyer and husband Larry, Patty Rule and husband Tom, Michael McKinney, Cindy Anderson and husband Danny, Danny McKinney and wife Linda, Avis Hamilton and husband Glen; sister-in-law, Myra Mabray and husband David; brother-in-law, Scot Posey and wife Sandy; along with a host of nieces, nephews, and other family members.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Bill Eisenhour Funeral Home in Oklahoma City.



Charles Donald Zumwalt Sr.

Charles “Chuck” Donald Zumwalt, Sr., 82, passed away on Feb. 8, 2016. He was born on Feb. 2, 1934, to Louie and Elsie Zumwalt in Seminole.

Chuck graduated from Clovis High School in Clovis, California. While attending Jones County Junior College, he entertained fellow classmates with his ragtime piano talents.

Chuck served in the United States Air Force during the Korean Conflict. He spent over 20 years in the oil and gas industry before his second and much-loved career of over-the-road trucking. His wife of 61 years, Sally Rae Collins Zumwalt, often traveled along with him. They enjoyed seeing all of the United States, while visiting family and friends on many occasions.

He was preceded in death by both parents; brother, Jack; grandson, Drew; and great-granddaughter, Ava.

Chuck is survived by his wife Sally; brother Wayne (Mary); daughter Pam Ruffin (Rob); sons Donnie (Lauren), Ronnie (DD), Phil (Debra) and Chris (Becky); thirteen grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; a host of nieces, nephews, and friends; as well as his beloved dog, Bill Bailey.

Richard Wayne Mann

Richard Wayne Mann, 73, passed away on Feb. 15, 2016. He was born on April 30, 1942, to Ira and Pearl Hampton Mann in Lawton.

Richard’s mother was an original enrollee of The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

He grew up on the family farm in the community of Bradley. Richard attended school briefly in Bradley and Chickasha. He also worked in a sheltered workshop in Chickasha. Richard made his home at the Center of Family Love in Okarche after his mother’s death in 1996.

Richard enjoyed life and had many friends in the Bradley, Alex, and Okarche communities. He liked working around the family farm, especially with cattle and chickens. For many years he enjoyed riding his horse, Sunshine. He had many pet dogs over the years all named Jack. Richard enjoyed going to camp each year and participating in the Special Olympics. He also loved traveling with his mother. Richard especially enjoyed taking pictures with his Polaroid cameras, going to the movies, bowling, feeding birds, and eating cheeseburgers.

He was preceded in death by both parents; infant sister, Agnes Faye Mann; and nephew, John Mark Mann.

Richard is survived by his brothers, Ira J. Mann (Claudia) of Bradley, Ray Hampton Mann (Geraldine) of Garden City, Kansas, and John Ben Mann (Claudine) of Louisville, Kentucky; numerous nephews, nieces, great-nephew,s and great-nieces; and a 105 year old aunt, Nettie Hampton Trice of Chickasha.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Boylston Funeral Home in Lindsay. Interment was at the Bradley Cemetery.



Larry Going

Larry Going, 58, passed away on Feb. 16, 2016, at Mercy Hospital in Fort Smith, Arkansas. He was born on Oct. 5, 1957, to Isom and Elizabeth (McGee) Going in Tahliha.

Larry was a member of the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah’s Witnesses in Broken Bow and loved talking about Jehovah.

Larry and Rebecca Lynn Fields were united in marriage at the Kingdom Hall on July 12, 1986, in Broken Bow.

He enjoyed camping, hunting, fishing, and playing with his grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by both parents; and uncle, Curtis Going.

He is survived by his wife, Rebecca Lynn Going of the home; children, Ty and Brandi Going, Timothy and Josi Going, and Ashton Going; grandchildren, Kaiden, Carson, and Gracie all of Broken Bow; brothers, Winfred Going of Mineola, Texas, Allen Going and Junior Going both of Watson; sisters, Dusty Bohanon of Smithville, Edna Rowan, Carol Going, Loretta Going and Karen Going all of Watson; along with several nieces, nephews, other relatives, and a host of friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Brumley Funeral Home in Broken Bow. Interment was at Watson Cemetery.



Billy June Rachels

Billy June Anderson Rachels, 77, passed away on Feb. 10, 2016. She was born on April 9, 1938, to Cleveland and Pauline Anderson in Blue.

Billy loved cheering on her great-grandchildren in all of their activities. She was a regular attendee of the Simple Church. Billy loved cooking for her family and friends. She was a survivor of stage four metastatic breast cancer.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Jack Rachels; daughter, Debbie Green; both parents; siblings, Bobbie Lowell, Ronald Anderson, and Belva Lee; and nephew, Jimmy Anderson.

Billy is survived by her daughters, P.J. Rachels, Shelly (Michael) White, Jackie Rachels, and son-in-law, Michael Green; grandchildren, Melissa (Shawn) Bouillion, Rachal Smith, Angela Green, Jason (Devin) Rachels, Jennifer (Robert) Mello, and Richard Lee; great-grandchildren, Morgan and Christina Kilpatrick, Tyler and Kaelyn Bouillion, Abbigal, Caroline, Colton Smith, Trenton DeFatta, Christopher and Sarah Grace Finklea, and Emma Rae Mello; sisters, Betty King and Kay Angel and their families; along with a host of extended family and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Hill Crest Funeral Home in Houghton, Louisiana. Interment was at Hill Crest Memorial Cemetery.



Gordon James Palmer Jr.

Gordon James Palmer Jr., 78, passed away on Feb. 12, 2016, at his home in Eureka Springs, Arkansas. He was born on Sept. 10, 1937, to Gordon Palmer Sr. and Wynie (Skelton) Palmer in Lawton.

Gordon attended Jones Academy and graduated from Ardmore High School.

He retired from working as a Nuclear Aerospace Engineer for the Boeing Company and the United States Government. Gordon was very proud of his work in supporting the defense of his country. He helped with the development of the Peace Keeper Missile System, guidance systems used in various defense missiles, and the NASA space program.

Gordon enjoyed traveling, reading, and gardening. He loved his dog, Gizzy, who Gordon took everywhere. He was a member of the Beaver Lake Baptist Church.

He was preceded in death by both parents; and son, Gordon Ray Palmer.

Gordon is survived by brothers, Anthony and Jerry Palmer; sister, Pam Ward; daughter, Tammy and son-in-law, Jack Baker of Eureka Springs; daughter-in-law, Karen Palmer of Rogers, Arkansas; five grandchildren; many great-grandchildren; along with a host of other family, friends, and loved ones.



Patricia Tilus

Patricia Tilus, 71, of Buffalo, South Dakota, passed away on Feb. 19, 2016. She was born in 1945 in Oklahoma City.

Patricia was raised by Grace and Benjamin Arnold in Waukegan, Illinois. She married David Tilus in 1963. Together, they raised four children. After 20 years she retired from Takeda Pharmaceuticals.

Patricia loved serving her Lord and those around her. She also loved singing and music.

Patricia is survived by her birth mother, June; half-siblings, Dyahn, John, and Robert; children, Brenda (Richard), Berneice (Paul), Bonita (Craig), and David (Tanya); grandchildren, Ashly, Nathan, Michael, Kayla, Cody, Rebeca, David, Thomas, and Rachel; and great-grandchildren, Tyler, and Mira.



Helen Marie Bess

Helen Marie Bess, 91, passed away on Feb. 13, 2016. She was born on May 5, 1924, to Roy and Mamie Scott in Durant.

Helen married Leonard “Bud” E. Bess in 1941. As the wife of a career Air Force officer, she experienced life all over the world. She collected art and antiques, friends, and fond memories. Helen and Bud retired to Santa Maria, California, in 1970 and enjoyed an active life together on the central coast for over 40 years.

Helen was a talented, creative homemaker. She excelled in china painting, doll making and collecting, tailoring, baking, and gardening. Helen was a member of the Santa Maria Doll Club. She and Bud were also members of many local square dancing clubs.

She was preceded in death by both parents; all of her siblings; and husband, Bud.

Helen is survived by her children, Marcella, Pamela, and Rick; seven grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Kuehl-Nicolay Funeral Home in Paso Robles, California. Interment was at Santa Maria Cemetery.



Obituary Policy

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

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

John Levere Allen

John Levere Allen, 64, passed away on Feb. 12, 2016. He was born on June 18, 1951, to John Allen and Norene Darling in Hugo.

John completed the ninth grade in Lubbock, Texas. He married Dail Goodwin on Feb. 19, 1985. The couple moved back to Boswell, where John worked as a maintenance worker and wood-framing carpenter. He dedicated the rest of his time raising kids and caring for his grandchildren.

John enjoyed spending time in the woods hunting and fishing. He loved his dogs, Chewy, Shadow, and Salty Jr. He loved gardening, raising chickens, and his rose bushes. John also loved collecting Choctaw artifacts and arrowheads.

John is survived by his wife, Dail; sons, David Brian Simmons of Grand Prairie, Texas, Alistair Ian Allen of California, and Duncan Scott Allen of Soper; daughters, Wanda Fay Morton and husband, Mark of Hugo, Jennifer Norene Floyd of Soper, Joanna Lynn Simmons of Unger, Johnnie Marie Hindman and husband, Brian of Soper, and Jessica Lorraine Anderson and husband, Toby of Antlers; siblings, Jackie Allen and wife, Vicky of Boswell, Jerry Allen and wife, Tracy of Boswell, Danny Allen of Boswell, Robert Allen of Oregon, Joe Allen of Washington, George Allen and wife, Liz of Achille, Billy Chase of Boswell, Hazel Larkins and husband, Howard of Boswell, Dorothy Colescott and husband, John of Oregon and Roberta McConnell and companion Mary of Idaho; eleven grandchildren; along with many other relatives and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Miller & Miller Funeral Home in Boswell. Interment was at Restland Cemetery in Boswell.



Max Douglas Knight

Max Douglas Knight, 31, passed away on Feb. 20, 2016, in Durant. He was born on July 17, 1984, to David and Tonya (Thompson) Knight in Ada.

Max enjoyed cooking out and just being outdoors. He loved music. In high school he was a member of the marching band, and over the years had composed many of his own tunes. Max was a Star Trek fan and loved trains. He was also on the Hickory Hollow hunting lodge board. He enjoyed having his friends over to play video games. But most of all Max loved his family and any time they spent together.

He was preceded in death by his great-grandmother, Julia Knight.

Max is survived by his parents, David and Tonya of Durant; brothers, J.D. Knight and R.T. Knight of Durant; nephews, Mason Knight and Zachery Knight of Durant; grandmother, Lydna Shroyer of Durant; special friend, Tiffany Maxwell of Durant; and numerous family and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Holmes-Coffey-Murray Funeral Home in Durant.



Zedark Daniel Caldwell

Zedark “Zeke” Daniel Caldwell, 77, of Royse City, Texas, passed away on Feb. 22, 2016. He was born Feb. 9, 1939, to Wilson Caldwell and Katherine Mayfield in Rufe.

Zeke served in the U.S. Air Force. While in the service he played guitar in a church band. Zeke was the owner and operator of Alert Window Guards. He had previously worked as a diesel mechanic for Lend Lease. Zeke was a member of Guiding Star Pentecostal Church in Sunnyvale, Texas.

He was preceded in death by his first wife, JoAnn Caldwell; both parents; daughters, Teresa Hass and Sheila McDaniel; grandson, Nicholas Crenshaw; sister, Christine Thompson; and brother, Austin Caldwell.

He is survived by his wife of nearly 16 years, Nonie Caldwell; children, Sandy Morris and husband James, Cheryl McKnight and Connie Lions and husband Joseph; son-in-law, Richard McDaniel II; grandchildren, Daniel Hass and wife Amber, Krystal Phillips and husband Gerald, Chalee Whitworth and husband Eric, Heather Young and husband T.J., Clinton Hass, Richard McDaniel III and fiancée Cresta, Christopher McDaniel and wife Regina, Ryan Morris and fiancée Gina, Alicia McDaniel and Gavin McKnight; great-grandchildren, Marty Jr., Victoria, Emily, Cade, Allison, Matthew, Cara, Kelsey, Kylee, Christopher Jr., and Crystal; numerous nieces and nephews; cousin, Eugene Wesley; and a host of relatives and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Rest Haven Funeral Home in Royse City. Interment was at the Royse City Cemetery.



Angelique Marie Roland Sickman

Angelique Marie Roland Sickman, 59, of Bartlesville, passed away on July 29, 2014. She was born July 13, 1955, to Fred and Mary Roland in Ardmore.

Angelique graduated from Pauls Valley High School in 1973. She received her bachelor’s degree from the University of Oklahoma in business administration in 1978. While attending college, she was an active member of the Gamma Phi Beta Sorority and was a RUF/NEK Lil’ Sis.

She is survived by two daughters, Jessica and Jordan Sickman of McKinney, Texas; father, Fred Roland of Norman; three sisters, Rachel Oaks of Bartlesville, Suzanne Gibbens of Loveland, Colorado, and Sabrina Roland; nephews, Zac Gibbens, Jeff Gibbens, and Kyle Gibbens; and her niece, Ariel Roland-Napier.

Cremation arrangements were made under the direction of the Stumpff Funeral Home and Crematory.

EDUCATION

—YOUTH of the NATION—

Miss Teen of Oklahoma Participates In Polar Plunge
By Sierra Smith

On Saturday, March 5, I jumped into a freezing cold pool for Special Olympics. The event was called The Polar Plunge, but the shirts also said Winter Warriors. Which I thought was very cool. Before I get too far ahead of myself, you're probably wondering how I got involved.

In November 2015, I was crowned Miss Teen of Oklahoma. As Miss Teen of Oklahoma, I am partnered with Special Olympics. At first I didn't really know that much about it until I became involved. I know what Special Olympics is, but you never really understand it until you get involved and meet

people. Everyone is very nice and welcoming, like being part of a big family.

My step-grandma's neighbor, Bess, used to work with Special Olympics and is still involved.

Naturally I look for her for some guidance in Special Olympics and she helped me get involved.

She brought the Polar Plunge and asked me if I want to participate or did I mind jumping into freezing cold water. I decided to take the challenge and take the jump. She supported me and made my outfit for the jump. She said she wanted me to look like Miss Teen of Oklahoma when I jumped in and I did. I went up there that morning to sign in and I got to meet so many nice people I had a great time. Even before I jumped, I got to play some basketball with the kids, even if the goal seemed tall for some reason. But, I had a great time with them. One thing I can't forget is taking all the great pictures with everyone. My whole family was there to support me when I jumped. The water was freezing when you were in it though. They did accidentally announce me as Miss Teen of America instead of Oklahoma when I jumped, but almost everyone already met me and knew who I was. I will never forget some of the kids I met. We raised some money for the Special Olympics and had fun doing it so that's all that matters. I can't wait for my next Special Olympics event and I hope you would like to get involved, too.



Anderson's Report on Code Talkers

Tristan "Turtle" Anderson, a 10-year-old student at Snyder Elementary School, recently completed a report for Mrs. McPherson's 5th grade class on Choctaw Code Talkers. His mother, Jessica Anderson, said it was cool and interesting for her and her son to learn about their history.



Porter Spelling Bee Finalist

Jacob Porter, a Choctaw tribal member and 8th grade student at Trinity Christian Academy in Lawton, was a semifinalist in the 2016 Oklahoma National Geographic State Bee held at the University of Oklahoma on Friday, April 1. Porter is the only student in Lawton to achieve this distinction. The 2016 National Geographic Bee Championship final round will air on the National Geographic Channel and Nat Geo WILD on Friday, May 27, at 8 p.m. EST. Porter is pictured pointing at the map next to Darryl Nightingale, who is the principal at Trinity Christian Academy in Lawton.

Grigson Inducted Into National Honor Society

Emma Grigson was inducted into the National Junior Honor Society on March 2, 2016. Emma is 13 years old and attends Evangelical Christian School in Memphis, Tennessee.

She is the daughter of Shawn and Kristen Grigson. Emma is the granddaughter of Ronald and Danna Shirley. She is also the great-granddaughter of Howard and Elsie Goines, and the great-great-granddaughter of original enrollee Augusta Victoria "Cassie" (Folsom) Goines.

Roberts Accepted into Arts Program

Bridgett Roberts of Valliant was recently selected to participate in the Gifted and Talented Arts program at her school.

Bridgett is in the 7th grade at Valliant. She is already an accomplished artist and has received numerous awards for her talents.

Her artwork was chosen during the Texarkana Regional Arts & Humanities Council 23rd Annual Juried Student Exhibition. Bridgett's artwork was displayed at the Texarkana Regional Arts Center. She was also runner-up during the Valliant Watermelon t-shirt drawing contest.

Bridgett entered the OSU Extension McCurtain County Solid Waste Poster Contest. Bridgett placed in the top 5, and was invited to attend the awards banquet where she was awarded the first place cash prize. She will now attend the state level banquet where, if chosen, her artwork will be featured in the OSU Solid Waste Calendar.

Bridgett is the granddaughter of Kathryn and James Roberts and Betty and Belton Walker. She is the daughter of Keith Roberts and Julia Deaton. Bridgett is also a fifth generation descendant of original enrollee Eddie Durant and wife Minnie (Wesley) Durant.



Megan Hart Completes Internship

Megan Hart, a member of the Choctaw Nation who lives in Glenpool, finished her internship at Advanced Research Chemicals, Inc., (ARC) during Cascia Hall's Minimester.

Hart chose ARC because of her interest in chemical engineering as a potential major and ARC, specializing in producing fluorine products.

Fluorine products are rare for chemical companies because fluorine is the electronegative element.

During her internship, Hart shadowed someone in a different department every day. Since Hart was interested in engineering, she was able to spend extra time in engineering than any other area.

Hart's favorite day during her internship was when she was able to spend an entire day in a gas lab, testing different types of gases to see how pure they were.

This was the first year ARC participated in Cascia Hall's Minimester.

Lara Claire Johnson Wins Watson Fellowship

Lara Claire Johnson, a 2016 senior at Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee, received a Thomas J. Watson Fellowship for the coming year.

In addition to the Fellowship, Johnson is on an academic scholarship as a member of the Choctaw Nation.

According to the Rhodes College website, Johnson is one of 40 graduating college students nationwide awarded the fellowship. She plans to visit Japan, Brazil, India, and Poland while completing her project "A Geek About Geeks: An International Exploration of Geek Identity and Culture."

Established in 1968, the Thomas J. Watson Fellowship provides for one year of independent study and travel outside the United States. Since 2002, Rhodes has had 10 Watson Fellows.

A graduate of Franklin High School and a student filmmaker, Johnson received the Bettye M. Pedersen Scholarship at Rhodes.

In 2014, while participating in the Rhodes Institute for Regional Studies, she researched geek culture and organizations. As a result, she produced the documentary "Geekland: Fan Culture in Memphis," which was featured at the Memphis Comic and Fantasy Convention and the 2014 Indie Memphis Film Festival.

Allen Named Gates Millennium Scholar

On Monday, April 18, Seagoville High School senior, Cheyenne Allen was named a Gates Millennium Scholar for the Class of 2016.

Allen was chosen from over 53,000 students who applied nationwide, advanced as one of 2,000 finalists in March 2016 and joins 999 other students as a Gates Millennium Scholar.

The application process requires students to write eight essays and secure both a nomination and a recommendation from members of their community.

Allen is the granddaughter of Jean Billy-Middleton and the great-granddaughter of Martha Cole-Billy.

She is a top student at Seagoville High School in the Dallas Independent School District. Allen's intrinsic drive and intellectual curiosity have helped her to maintain a 3.56 GPA, one of the highest in her class, while also maintaining the most rigorous schedule available to her—without sacrificing her love of music and theater. She is currently ranked in the top three percent of her class.

A natural leader with a vast range of interests, Allen holds leadership roles in a wide variety of clubs. She is the Vice-President of the Junior State of America Club, Drum Major for the Seagoville High School band, Secretary of the Drama Club, a dedicated member of the Mock Trial team, and the FFA.

She also plays an instrumental role in organizing Seagoville High School's Carter Blood Drive as the Secretary of the National Honor Society.



Choctaw Storyteller Visits Jones Academy

It is always a special event when Tim Tingle visits the Jones Academy Elementary School. His visit this past winter was no exception.

Tingle regaled the young students with stories both new and old, stories rich in the customs and traditions of the Choctaw culture.

His storytelling always immerses the heart and leaves indelible images on the minds of his listeners. His Choctaw tales can be silly or scary, or they can lead the listener to transformation.

Tingle did not disappoint his audience, which ranged from first grade to high school to adult staff members. He held three sessions for grades 1st through 6th, each session being a journey into the ways of the Choctaw.

There was the coming of age story of the young heroine in "Crossing Bok Chitto." Set in 1800's Mississippi, it is a saga of high adventure, danger, courage, and redemption. In the story, the young protagonist leads a group of




runaway slaves to freedom, much like the Biblical figure Moses in the Exodus.

In contrast, the humorous legend "How the Rabbit Lost His Tail" extols the virtue of listening over talking. Another of Tingle's narratives was about a boy called "No Name."

Using a drum for effect, the storyteller spun a tale about a boy who longs for his father's approval, reflecting the universal need for validation.

Tingle enriched the story by relating to his audience his own quest for his father's acceptance, a personal struggle he had endured as a young man. In his stories, Tim Tingle moved the young audience at Jones Academy, engaging them with his animated posture and facial expressions and voice.




Need more cash for the cost of college?

Choctaw Asset Building now serves tribal members *outside of Oklahoma!*

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Education Fund -
Your savings: \$2000
CAB match: \$4000
Total saved: \$6000

Starting earning money TODAY! Contact Choctaw Asset Building 866-933-2260 • choctawcab.com

2016 EDUCATION CLASSES	
Choctaw Nation Adult Education High School Equivalency(HSE) Class sessions will meet twice weekly for three hours each day for 12 weeks. Students can enroll only during the first two weeks of class. Please bring Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB), Social Security card, and state-issued ID (driver's license, permit, or ID). The class will meet each week for approximately 12 weeks. Books, supplies, and testing fees are provided. In addition, a \$10 per day attendance stipend will be paid to those who attend classes on a regular basis and attempt the HSE/GED test. Please contact Kathy Bench at the Durant office, (800) 522-6170 ext. 2122 for more information. A CDIB is required.	
July - September	October - December
Tuesday, July 5, 5 - 8 p.m. Durant, Headquarters South Building	Monday, Oct. 3, 9 a.m. - noon Stigler, Choctaw Nation Community Cntr.
Tuesday, July 5, 1 - 4 p.m. Hugo, Choctaw Nation Community Cntr.	Tuesday, Oct. 4, 1 - 4 p.m. Broken Bow, Choctaw Nation Community Cntr.
Tuesday, July 5, 9 a.m. - noon McAlester, Eastern Oklahoma State College, McAlester Campus	Tuesday, Oct. 4, 9 a.m. - noon Durant, Headquarters South Building
Monday, July 6, 9 a.m. - noon Poteau, Carl Albert State College	Tuesday, Oct. 4, 9 a.m. - noon Wilburton, Choctaw Nation Community Cntr.

PEOPLE YOU KNOW

Choctaw Artists Share Passion of the Heart and Create Passionate Art



Photo by Tina Firquain

Artists Gwen Coleman Lester and Carolyn Bernard Young spent a day away from their studios and set up at Choctaw Nation Headquarters in Durant for Heritage Day in April. Although their mediums are different, the reason why each one is an artist is similar, simply put it is their passion. Young said, “It has to be something that you love and you will find that thing that makes it your passion, some-

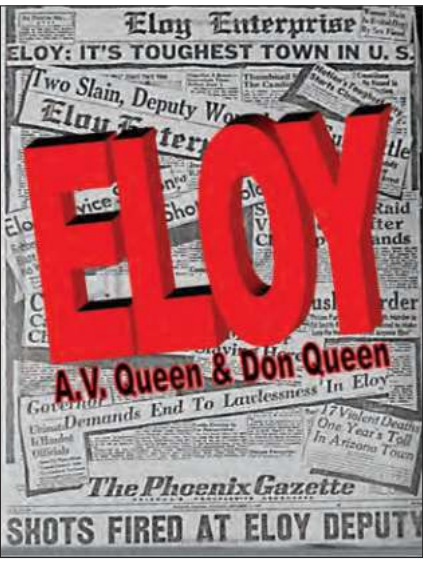
thing that you can’t not do.” Lester noticed at a very young age that there was not very much Choctaw art. The realization pushed her to create anything that is related to Choctaw history or culture. “I know it looks like I have a broad range of things that I do, but in my mind it is not,” said Lester. “When I was young, I would specifically look for Choctaw art, but I never saw anything that was Choctaw. Whenever I saw there were no Choctaw artists, I think that stuck in my head.” Lester’s artwork depicts what she has learned about the Choctaw Nation. Lester’s newest adventure in art is creating illustrations for a children’s book. The book, “Toby and the Secret Code—A Choctaw Adventure”, was written by Una Belle Townsend. Lester said, “I’m illustrating a children’s book and I have never done this before so this is kind of exciting for me.” While Lester enjoyed the company and visiting the nation’s headquarters, Young spent part of her day at the headquarters creating new pottery. Young took out unfinished pottery and etched “stories” onto the pottery during lulls at her table and between visiting with people. Young explained that no matter where she goes she usually brings something with her so when she has the urge to create art, she can. Young said, “When I touched clay for the first time, I was just lost forever. I knew that is just what I am sup-

posed to do.” She has been “throwing” pottery for about 22 years and it evolved as a way to relieve stress to her passion. Now she is trying to lean as much as she can about Choctaw history, because on each piece of pottery, she tries to tell a story of the Choctaw people. Both Lester and Young are taking what they learn about the Choctaws’ past and using it to create a more colorful and cultured future for all Choctaws.



Photo by Tina Firquain

Queen Re-publishes Book as Tribute to Father



Don Queen, brother to Wayne Queen, who was featured in April’s “People You Know,” has re-published his late, Cherokee, father A. V. Queen’s book titled “Eloy.”

The family was originally from Heavener, but had to move to Eloy, Arizona, because of A. V.’s medical condition. A. V. was a deputy in Eloy during and after WWII. Eloy was a “cotton boom town.” According to lspdigital.com, the publishing company, “Eloy’s population was 4,500, however, from September through January during cotton picking season the population swelled to around 15,000.” A. V. kept notes, pictures, and newspaper clippings from cases that occurred in Eloy. He wanted to compile everything and create a book, but according to Don, A. V. was “almost illiterate,” so he asked another deputy, Jim Slotter to help, but Slotter made the book over-exaggerated, according to Don. Don said, “Dad just wanted the book to be true, so I took it, used his notes and changed it for him.” In the book, a note from Don was published, it says, “As a tribute to Dad and his memory... some accounts from the original book will be enhanced with original newspaper clippings along with my personal recollection growing up at the youngest son of A. V. Queen.” Linda Daly, publisher and screenwriter of LSP Digital, helped Don re-publish the book and is now working on a screenplay based on the book. Daly said, “I’m writing it as a weekly series because there is so much that happened in Eloy.” Daly hopes a network will pick up the series and keep it based off the stories in the book.

Juanita Burnett Turned 90

Juanita Burnett celebrated her 90th birthday on March 21. Juanita was born on March 21, 1926. Her family would like to wish her a happy birthday.



Irene Davis Celebrated 75th Birthday in April

Irene (McCurtain) Davis of Hodgen, celebrated her 75th birthday on April 10, 2016. She is the daughter of Floyd and Gladys McCurtain. Irene is the granddaughter of Elum and Sianna McCurtain, great-great-granddaughter of



John and Rhoda Perry McCurtain and great-great-granddaughter of Thomas Elum McCurtain. Thomas Elum was brother to Choctaw Chief Cornelius McCurtain, whose sons were Chiefs Jackson Frazier, Aaron Edmund, David Cornelius, and Greenwood. Irene and her husband Edward, enjoy attending activities at the Poteau Choctaw Nation Senior Center. They are both retired and live east of Hodgen, in a community once called Houston after Houston McCurtain. Irene plans to help organize a McCurtain family reunion in the near future.

Ellis Wins Third in Statewide Contest

Congratulations to Jordyn Ellis, a 10th-grader from Duncan High School for winning third place in her grade division for the 2016 Oklahoma Trash Poster contest. Jordyn, the daughter of Roy and Rene Ellis, won with her drawing, “Have you HERD about littering? Yes, it is UTTERLY disgusting!” at the county level and then was submitted to the state level. Her poster was judged along with nearly 10,000 other posters from around the state. An awards ceremony took place on Wednesday, April 13, at the Oklahoma State Capitol and Department of Transportation. She was awarded along with 13 other winners, who will have their posters in the 2017 calendar. Ellis and the other winners were introduced by the Honorable Representative Harold Wright to the Oklahoma House of Representatives and she got to meet House Representative Dennis Johnson from Stephens County. He awarded her with a State Capitol Legislative Honor Awards Citation. This was a great day in the State Capitol and she is already looking toward the contest for next year.



Dot Glenn is 80

Dorothy Jean (Dot) Glenn celebrated her 80th birthday on April 1, 2016. She was born on April 1, 1936, to Henry Grady and Wanetta (Siddle) Glenn in Hugo. Dot graduated from Hugo High School in 1954, where she participated in numerous clubs and activities. She also won many awards during her time at Hugo High School. Dot went on to study at Victoria University in Victoria, Texas on a full tennis scholarship. She also attended Southeastern Oklahoma State University in Durant, where she was an undefeated tennis champion. Dot received her bachelor’s in Health, Physical Education and Recreation in 1958. Dot continued her education at Gregory Peabody College in Nashville. She later attended Oklahoma State University, where she received her master’s in HPER. Dot went on to do her doctorate work at the University of Nebraska, Pepperdine University and the University of Saltillo in Mexico. Dot worked as a teacher from 1958 until 1993. She is a member of numerous clubs and associations. Dot has also won many different awards over the years.



Whittlesey Named Chair for FRAC Board of Directors

The Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) announced Judith H. Whittlesey, executive vice president of Susan Davis International (SDI), has been named the new Chair of its Board of Directors. She succeeds former Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman, who served three years in the role for the national anti-hunger organization. “Judy has been an incredibly active and passionate Vice Chair of our Board, and we look forward to her ongoing dedication and leadership in her new role as Chair,” said Jim Weill, president of FRAC. “Her experience and deep knowledge have been—and will continue to be—incredible assets to the Board, to FRAC, and to our network of anti-hunger advocates across the country.”



Whittlesey has a long track record of overseeing successful campaigns for corporations, federal government agencies, and national non-profit organizations. She previously served on the staff of Vice President Walter Mondale, and subsequently on the campaign and transition staffs of several Democratic Presidential and Vice Presidential candidates. She has been inducted into the National Capital Public Relations Society of America Hall of Fame, selected as a PR News’ Top Women in PR and to Leadership Greater Washington. Whittlesey is a graduate of the University of Oklahoma and is an enrolled member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. “We truly appreciate all that has been accomplished under Dan’s leadership and look forward to his continued contributions now that he has passed the gavel to Judy,” said Weill.

Choctaw Nation Vocational Rehabilitation						
June 2016						
Durant - Monday, Wednesday and Friday		Broken Bow - Monday, Wednesday and Friday		Idabel by appointment		
Phone: 580-326-8304; Fax: 580-326-0115		Email: ddavenport@choctawnation.com				
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6 Durant 8:00-4:30	7 Talihina 10:00-2:00	8 Antlers by appt.	9	10 Wright City by appt.	11
12	13 Durant 8:00-4:30	14 Poteau 11:30-1:00	15 McAlester 10:00-2:00 Stigler by appt.	16	17 Broken Bow by appt. Idabel by appt.	18
19	20 Durant 8:00-4:30	21 Wilburton by appt.	22 Broken Bow by appt. Idabel by appt.	23	24 Atoka by appt. Coalgate by appt.	25
26	27	28	29	30		

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Choctaw Nation

3702 CHOCTAW ROAD DURANT OK

BUSINESS

Aquaponic Farming Made Available to All by Choctaw Brothers

By TINA FIRQUAIN

Choctaw Nation

Kaben Smallwood and brother Shelby Smallwood started their alternative farming business, Symbiotic Aquaponic in May 2012. When the brothers were younger, they were taught traditional farming from their grandfather.

Both brothers are members of the Choctaw Nation, as well as their father and grandfather. They started their business keeping their heritage in mind.

“There has always been a connection between agriculture and fish for the Choctaw people,” said Kaben. “We are taking this modern technology to mirror traditional farming.”



Photo Provided by Kaben Smallwood

A 40 sq. ft. backyard model of the Symbiotic Aquaponic System.

Aquaponics is a type of farming that enables anyone to grow fish and plants together using one integrated system.

Shelby researched, designed and developed a grow bed that is food-safe and affordable. The bed is also waist high which means no bending over. Elders, children and anyone can use the system easily and efficiently.

“Our goal was to build at a low cost so it can be more accessible to everyone,” said Kaben. “We want to see this being used in every backyard in the nation.”

Right now there are 10 Symbiotic Aquaponic systems in place in Oklahoma. Six are placed for schools varying from public schools, colleges and technical schools. Two have been sold to non-profits and two families bought systems for their personal use.

What the Smallwoods are selling is not just a product, they are selling an experience.

Kaben said, “We consider ourselves ‘social entrepreneurs’ because we are using Aquaponics to help build food security. We are also trying to educate people on the benefits from Aquaponics.”

All grow beds are 20 square feet and are used in all systems designs. The smallest system is 20 square feet and the largest system they have designed is 1,000 square feet.

The smaller system sells for \$1200, but Kaben said it will pay for itself in two to three years and the possibilities of use are limitless. The 20 square foot grow space can produce around 250 to 500 pounds of food.

Most edible freshwater fish can be used and the grow bed can be used for produce or horticultural plants.

Even though it might seem like a high price, the way



Photo Provided by Kaben Smallwood

(left to right): Dr. Steve Smith President of Eastern Oklahoma State College, Shelby Smallwood, Kaben Smallwood, Regina Greuel-Cook, Janice Smallwood, Gary Smallwood and Lt. Gov Lamb.

the bed and system was made has a low environmental impact, which helps keep the cost down.

The Smallwoods are talking to insurance companies and the Choctaw Nation to see if there is a way to cut cost even more for Choctaw members.

As of now, if someone wanted to purchase an Aquaponic system, but couldn’t pay one lump sum, they could pay half to purchase and reserve then pay the rest upon completion of installation.

For further information or questions, email info@sym-bioticaquaponic.com, all emails will go to Kaben directly.

Statewide Renovations Meets all Construction Needs throughout Oklahoma

By TINA FIRQUAIN

Choctaw Nation

Cooper Smith opened his new company, Statewide Renovations and Supplies Inc. in 2013. Since then his business has been hard at work all over Oklahoma doing a wide variety of construction.

Growing up, Smith helped his father with construction work. This shaped his choice in what role he wanted to play in the company.

“I knew that if I was going to do construction, I wanted to do the sales side,” said Smith. “I enjoy working with the people and helping them.”

Smith will also personally help with insurance claims and gives free inspections.

Statewide has done a lot of roofing, but they can take on any construction need. They do interior and exterior work, win-

dows and skylights, drywall and painting.

The company will work with commercial and residential properties and provides 24 hour emergency services.

Smith has his construction crew; he stocks up on any furnishings like cabinets and tile and has a warehouse full of equipment. This means that Statewide does not subcontract and most everything is always in stock.

Customers will talk to Smith directly and he treats every one of them as a friend.

“I was told stories when I was younger and I was always told that if I was going to do something, I needed to do it the best I could,” Smith said. “That is how I run my business and always will.”

To contact Statewide Renovation call (888) 214-0300 or Cooper Smith at (405) 824-1436.



Photo Provided

(front, from left) Consuelo Splawn, Connie Courtright, Sarah Trusty, Linda Goodwin, Vicki Perez and Teola Dura. (back, from left) are Tasha Mitchell, Bruce Frazier, Jimmy Smith, Randy Hammons and Darryl Brown. Perez, Smith, Brown and Trusty work in the Elder Advocacy Program.

Choctaw Nation Elder Advocacy Program Honored in D.C.

During the National Crime Victims Service Awards Ceremony held in Washington D.C. on Tuesday, April 12, the Choctaw Nation Elder Advocacy Program, a part of the Victim Services Department, was given an award for “Professional Innovation in Victim Services.”

Victim Services was given the award for the development of an innovative professional partnership with the Oklahoma Department of Human Services Adult Protective Services to address elder abuse in Indian Country and alleviating some of the challenges related to Oklahoma’s checkerboard Indian Country jurisdiction.

The Memorandum of Understanding between the Choctaw Nation and the Oklahoma Department of Human Services Adult Protective Services was developed and signed in 2005.

“Through the MOU we were able to set boundaries as to our referral process, we work closely with APS sharing cases to see that all Tribal elders in the 10 ½

counties receive service’s needed,” Senior Director of Victim Services Linda Goodwin said.

“Fewer elders slip through the cracks and are now receiving services in a manner that is true to their culture and needs. If the elder is a victim of crime, we can provide emergency food, clothing shelter and courtroom advocacy. We are also a referral service,” continued Goodwin.

The Victims Assistance Program serves elders, or vulnerable adults who are victims of crime. Goodwin’s staff consists of Vicki Perez, Director Victim Assistance/Elder Advocacy; Jimmy Smith, Elder Advocate; Darryl Brown, Elder Advocate; Sarah Trusty, Elder Advocate; Bruce Frazier, Victim Advocate; and Consuelo Splawn, Victim Advocate.

All advocates under the Choctaw Nation Victim Services Department are Certified Advocates through the Oklahoma Attorney General’s Office and/or the Oklahoma District Attorney’s Council.

OFFICE SITES:

Durant
(580) 924-7773

Antlers
(580) 298-6443

McAlester
(918) 420-5716

Broken Bow
(580) 584-2842

Poteau
(918) 649-0431

Please call to schedule an in-person appointment.

Next Step

Mission

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

Eligibility Requirements:

- One Choctaw Tribal Member in household
- Reside in Choctaw Nation Service Area
- Must be a Working Household (must be in household for 6 months)
- Over income for Food Distribution

The Next Step Initiative is designed to assist Choctaw tribal members who are working, on social security, retirement, or disability. If you have been denied food distribution for making too much money, the Next Step Initiative may be able to help.

Eligibility requirements include:

- One Choctaw tribal member in household
- Reside in the Choctaw Nation service area
- No one in household can be participating in SNAP
- Must be a working household
- Some exemptions apply such as Social Security and disability
- Over income for food distribution eligibility

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 Ext. 2161 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:

Broken Bow Field Office • May 13 • 9:30–11 a.m. & 1 p.m.–2 p.m.

Choctaw Nation

2016

Farmer's Market

Fresh | Local | Organic

The Choctaw Nation Farmer's Market begins on May 1 and runs until Oct. 31. The Choctaw Community Centers in Durant, Atoka, Antlers, Hugo, McAlester, Broken Bow, Idabel, and Stigler all hold farmer's markets every Wednesday from 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m. or when the produce sells out.

Assistance Available

The Choctaw Nation WIC clinics will begin issuing WIC Farmer's Market checks on May 2. You do not have to have a WIC appointment to receive your FMNP check. Just go to your nearest WIC clinic and ask for your farmer's market check.

Senior applications are available at all community centers and will be a first-come, first-serve basis as funding is limited. You may also call 1-800-522-6170 Ext. 2303 to request an application to be mailed to your home.

Contact: 1 (800) 522-6170 or (580) 924-8280 Ext: 2303

CHOCTAW NATION

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

2ND ANNUAL CHOCTAW

SMALL BUSINESS ACADEMY

FOR SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

2016

JUNE 14TH & 15TH

A CONFERENCE FOR CHOCTAW SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS & ENTREPRENEURS

Join us at the Choctaw Casino & Resort - Durant for a two day intensive training for both start-up and expansion businesses that will be focused on providing the tools and resources to be successful!

\$49 Registration Fee / \$24.50 For Choctaw CDIB Card Holders

SPACE IS LIMITED - REGISTER TODAY AT WWW.CHOCTAWNATION.COM

For more info contact bhamilton@choctawnation.com or 580-924-8280 ext.2901

SPORTS

March Mania Basketball Tournament Open To All Departments

When the final game of the Choctaw Nation March Mania Employee Basketball Tournament ended, the Tribal Thunder were the Varsity first place winners and the JV team, Southern Choctaws held the top spot in their division.

The tournament was held on Saturday, March 19 in Talihiina.

This is the 11th year the Choctaw Nation employee basketball tournament has been held and the first year the tournament was open to all departments within the Choctaw Nation.

Seven varsity teams and four junior varsity teams played in the tournament.

Previously, the tournament was called the Choctaw Nation Health Services Authority Employee Tournament and was only open to CNHSA employees due to facility limitations.

The yearly tournament started through a grant with CNHSA to increase physical activity.



Stamper Signs With Southeastern Golf Team

Bailey Stamper has signed a national letter of intent to become a member of the SOSU Savage Storm golf team. Stamper signed during formal signing ceremonies in Collinsville, where Stamper has played for the 5-A Collinsville Cardinals

the past four years. Stamper is proud to be the sole golfer on the team representing Oklahoma. He is pictured with his parents, Elizabeth and Brian Stamper along with coaches Ben Davis and Bob Pratt.

Cheerleader Part of London's 2016 New Years Day Parade

Taylor Brown, 16, a cheerleader for the Eureka High School Loggers in Eureka, Calif., tried out and made the UCA All American Cheer Team during a summer cheerleading camp in Santa Cruz, Calif. As part of the team she traveled to London, where she met up with other cheerleaders from across the Unites States.

Brown was able to travel to London after a lot of fundraising and donations. The UCA All American Cheer Team participated in London's 2016 New Years Day Parade. In addition to the parade, Brown was able to experience the different sights of London.



Sells' Reserve Grand Champion Goat Sets World Record

Cody Sells, 13, Taylor, Texas, a seventh grader, set a world record at the 2016 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. Sells, a member of the Williamson County 4-H club, sold his Reserve Grand Champion Goat for \$147,000. The buyers who set the world record price were Dean Law Firm, Michelle Iverson Jeffrey, KCEF Foundation and Pamela M. Logsdon, CPA.



Adonis Fox Signs Letter of Intent for University of Arkansas

Choctaw tribal member Adonis Smith from Kingston recently signed a Letter of Intent to play basketball at the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith. His mother, Ramona Fox said the beginning of the year they found out he really wanted to commit to UAFS. She said when Adonis visited the school it was more like home so he made a commitment to do whatever it took to get there.

Larry Fox, Adonis' father, said his son has wanted to play since middle school and they thought he might be able to play college sports.

Adonis, who plays center, said the team already had shooters and not everyone wants to play defense. He said defense is easy for him and he likes to block offensive players' shots.

According to Larry Fox, Adonis put in a lot of work to get where he is at. He said either him or his wife would drive their son to the gym all year round.

Adonis said his parents have always told him it is possible to work hard and succeed.

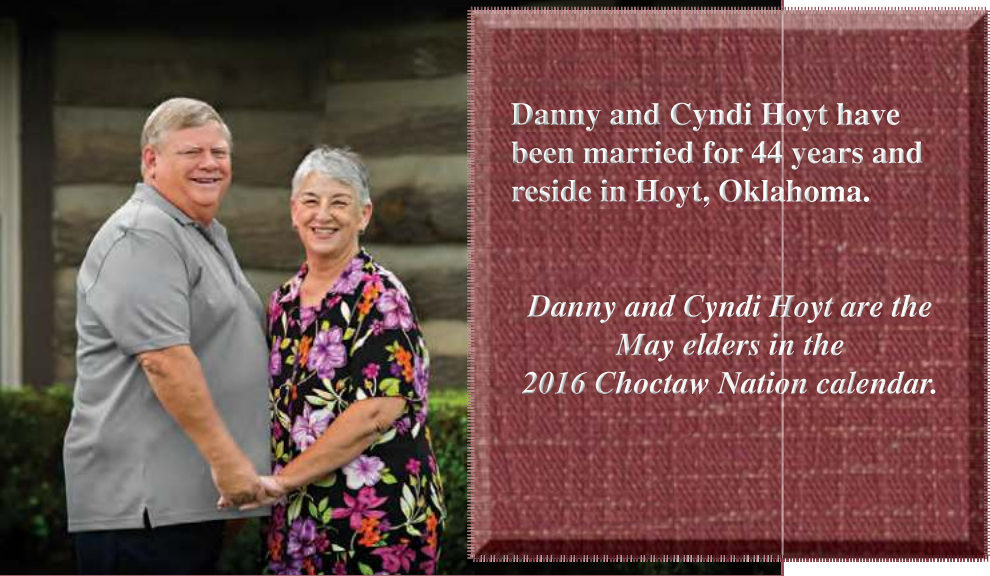


Watson Inducted Into Oklahoma Softball Hall of Fame

Sheila Watson was inducted into the Oklahoma Amateur Softball Association Hall of Fame on Saturday, Jan. 30, in Yukon. She was inducted into the Master's class after being nominated by Stan Payne of Hugo.

Watson's start in softball came when she joined a women's fastpitch league in Talihiina when she was 13 years old. Her grandfather, David Watson, was influential in teaching her how to play the game. Wendy and J.D. Ward also coached Watson, who played college softball at Bacone College as a pitcher and catcher.

Afterward, she played on the Native circuit on the Chahta team coached by her husband, Jay and played alongside her cousins. Watson semiretired from playing softball at age 45 and she fully retired at age 50.



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◆ CHOCTAW ◆
NEWS & EVENTS?

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- Birth announcements
- Obituaries
- Tribal Council updates
- Choctaw success stories
- And more!

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

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Abentley@choctawnation.com

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

Visit the Choctaw Nation on:

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[@ChoctawNationOK](https://twitter.com/ChoctawNationOK)

Student School & Activity Fund

Need Money to Buy School or Activity Clothing?

- \$100 assistance available nationwide for Choctaw tribal members attending 3 year old daycare to 12th grade high school students
- If you have not applied since Oct. 1, 2015, apply now for 2015-16 school year before it ends!
- Apply online at ssafapplication.choctawnation.com

Deadline Ending Soon: June 1, 2016

Funding will begin for 2016-17 school year July 1, 2016.

2016 YOUTH DEER HUNT
CHOCTAW NATION TI VALLEY RANCH
OKLAHOMA DEER GUN SEASON

NOW IS YOUR CHANCE TO WIN AN ENTRY TO THE 2016 CHOCTAW NATION YOUTH DEER HUNT. CHOCTAW YOUTH AGES 10-15 ARE ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IN A DEER MANAGEMENT HARVEST. ALL ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY AUGUST 1, 2016. TWO HUNTERS WILL BE DRAWN FROM EACH CHOCTAW DISTRICT ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2016 AT THE CHOCTAW LABOR DAY FESTIVAL. (DO NOT NEED TO BE PRESENT TO WIN!)

REGISTRATION ENTRY FORM
PLEASE RETURN TO PO BOX 837 DURANT OK 74702

NAME _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____

ADDRESS/CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE# _____

RULES: MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY ADULT (PREFER THEY HAVE A LEGAL STATE HUNTING LICENSE). MUST BE CHOCTAW CDIB HOLDER. MUST ABIDE BY ALL STATE HUNTING LAWS AND REGULATIONS. MUST HAVE SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED AND HAVE THE APPROPRIATE DOCUMENTATION FOR THE OKLAHOMA HUNTER EDUCATION CERTIFICATION. FOR DETAILS ON OKLAHOMA HUNTING REGULATIONS VISIT: WWW.WILDLIFEDEPARTMENT.COM
FOR QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL DALE JACKSON AT (580) 924-8280 EXT. 2738

Community Meetings

Grapevine



Children gather to listen to a story told by the Choctaw Language Department during the Grapevine Choctaw Cultural Community Meeting on April 2.



Paige Abney and 7-month-old Owen Abney take a break before Chief Gary Batton's speech during the Grapevine Community Meeting.



Desiree Towzen, 7, checks out Les Wiliston's traditional Choctaw weaponry booth during the Grapevine meeting.



Jordan Eagle Road helps Courtney Freeman of Willow Park, Texas, with her beadwork during the Grapevine Community Meeting beading class.



Artist Kim Davis of Longview, Texas, presents Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. and Chief Batton with his handmade woodwork.

Rogers



Siblings Bruce and Kris Barnes of Rogers, Arkansas, check out the booths. Their grandfather Ben Hampton was a Choctaw Code Talker.



Marie Sartin of Clever, Missouri, met her online Choctaw language instructor Lillie Rogers at the Rogers meeting. Marie has participated in the class since August 2015. She enjoys connecting with her roots through language and plans on passing what she learns onto her family.



Molly Shaffer and 3-year-old Parker Manzo of Bentonville, Arkansas, learn about traditional pottery during the Rogers Community Meeting.



Brad Joe, along with Chief Batton and Assistant Chief Austin Jr., lead the Grand Entry during the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Community Meeting in Rogers on April 23.



Marilyn Cates of Bergman, Arkansas, enjoys making jewelry during the Rogers meeting.

A NEW WEBSITE FOR CHOCTAWS

Read the Biskinik, download applications and more!

THEY'LL KNOW WE ARE CHOCTAW BY OUR

Culture

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Choctaw Royalty

*1 June 5, 2:00pm Idabel Community Center	*7 May 22, 2:00pm Wright City Community Center
*2 May 6, 6:30pm Broken Bow Community Center	*8 May 27, 6:00pm Hugo Community Center
*3 May 5, 5:00pm Talihina Community Center	*9 June 3, 6:00pm Choctaw Event Center
*4 May 14, 4:00pm Poteau Community Center	*10 June 4, 3:00pm Atoka Community Center
*5 May 25, During Sr. Lunch Stigler Community Center	*11 April 22, 6:00pm McAlester Community Center
*6 May 26, 6:00pm Wilburton Community Center	*12 May 19, 6:30pm Crowder Community Center

*District winners will compete Thursday, September 1 at the Tuskahoma Labor Day Festival.

Olive Branch



Tina Leflore Izagurrie and her family Michelle Tudon, Sophia Tudon, and Dawson Izagurrie visit with Lillie Roberts of the Choctaw Nation Language Department during the Olive Branch Meeting. Tina attended Jones Academy from 1983 to 1989. Lillie worked as a cook at Jones during that time.



Lawrence Battiest demonstrates traditional Choctaw pottery making for Johnney Turner of Memphis, Tennessee, during the Olive Branch Community meeting on April 21.



James Treadway, Anna Treadway, and their son Jay of Gosnell, Arkansas, explore the weaponry booth during the Olive Branch Meeting.



Gennavie Tom helps Brenda Sutton of Memphis with her beadwork during the Olive Branch Community Meeting. Brenda's grandfather Joseph C. Riddle was an original enrollee of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.



Brad Joe, Lillie Roberts, Sharon Dodson, Keosha Ludlow and J.J. Jacob sing a Choctaw hymn during the Olive Branch Meeting.

Photos by Kendra Germany

PRE-HOMEOWNERSHIP EDUCATION

ARE YOU CONFUSED ABOUT HOME LOANS?

FIRST TIME HOME BUYER?
IS THERE A FINANCE PACKAGE AVAILABLE THAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU?
NOT SURE WHERE TO START?
NOT SURE ABOUT YOUR CREDIT?

Come to our pre-homeownership class to learn the important steps in the home buying process.
No Fees. All materials furnished.

****If you are already approved for a home loan, have applied for a home loan or have requested an application, but not completed the counseling requirement.**

Please contact Service Coordinator **Shelbie Crow**
scrow@choctawhousing.com
580-426-7521 ext. 318
580-379-4968

Housing Authority of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
P.O. Box G
Hugo, Oklahoma 74743

Are You at Risk for DIABETES?

Predabetes means your blood glucose is higher than normal, but not yet diabetes. Choctaw Nation Lifestyle Coaches are inviting you to be a part of a program that has been proven to prevent diabetes.

The program provides the following:

- A CDC provided curriculum
- Weight loss & stress management
- Trained lifestyle coach
- Group support
- 16 weekly sessions
- 6 month follow-up session

Choctaw Nation Ruben White Health Clinic
109 Fern Ave
Poteau, OK 74953
(918) 649-1100

If you want to join a program that will help you lose weight and cut your risk of diabetes in half, contact us. Classes have already begun.

OKLAHOMA INDIAN LEGAL SERVICES, INC. (OILS)

Attorneys will provide **free** Will preparation services for eligible tribal members who own interest in Indian Trust or Restricted Land.

WILL PREPARATION CLINIC

MAY 23, 2016 – MONDAY

10:00 A.M. TO 3:00 P.M.

AT

CHOCTAW NATION COMMUNITY CENTER
2408 Lincoln BLVD.
Idabel, Oklahoma 74745

Call Norma for an appointment time slot
At 1-800-658-1497 (8 am-5 pm)

*You must have an appointment to meet with an attorney
Choctaw Nation Legal Services, Inc. is a non-profit law firm and is not a law firm. Legal Services Corporation. For additional information regarding other legal services, call Oklahoma Indian Legal Services, Inc. 1-800-658-1497

Housing Authority of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Has relocated to:

**207 Jim Monroe Road
Hugo, OK 74743**

Phone numbers & extensions remain the same.

CHOCTAW NATION ARTS & MUSIC FESTIVAL

CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA
SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN
WASHINGTON D.C.

MEET CHOCTAW ARTISTS LINDA BRYANT & KATHY STURCH

Linda Faye Roebuck Bryant of Aurora, Colorado, is a Choctaw Artist. Linda is originally from Oklahoma and draws inspiration for her artwork from her Oklahoma roots. Her artwork consists of graphite drawings, oil and watercolor paintings, as well as pottery. Linda also creates cultural artwork including gourds, talking sticks and medicine bags. Her Native culture is often an influence in her final work.

Linda's artwork has been displayed at the Community College of Aurora, as well as at Choctaw festivals and events. She has presented Choctaw Cultural presentations to several schools, including an international school in Taiwan.

Linda believes in the importance of teaching and sharing the history and culture of Native Americans.

Choctaw Artist, Kathy Sturch, is a watercolorist with long time experience in painting, teaching, and in business. She resides in Durant.

The National Resources Conservation Services selected Kathy's artwork as the National Native American Poster for 2008 and 2012 with distribution throughout the United States. She was included in the Choctaw Cultural Awakening book and her painting "A Father's Influence" was included in the 2014 Choctaw calendar. Kathy has won numerous awards for her art, and her work hangs in both private and public collections. Currently, she exhibits in the Choctaw Welcome Center in Colbert and The Country Framer in Durant.

Kathy is a member of the Texoma Arts Association in Durant and is registered with the Choctaw Nation Artist Registry.