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BISKINIK

The Official Publication of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

October 2010 Issue

Serving 203,193 Choctaws Worldwide

Choctaws ... growing with pride, hope and success



Delton Cox, Speaker



James Frazier, Secretary



Joe Coley, Chaplain

Council elects 2010-11 officers

The Choctaw Nation Tribal Council elected officers during its Sept. 11 regular session. District 4 Councilman Delton Cox was re-elected by acclamation to serve another year as Speaker of the Council.

See **OFFICERS**
on Page 13

Special election for District 1

The Choctaw Nation will hold a special election Oct. 30 to fill the seat vacated by the death of Councilman Hap Ward. Four candidates have filed for the District 1 seat – Thomas Rhea Wil-liston, Jonathan Anthony “Tony” Ward, Richard “Rick” Impson and Matilda Wade Paxton.

Choctaw Nation to honor veterans

The Choctaw Nation will honor its veterans with a ceremony on November 11 at Tushka Homma. The ceremony will begin at 11 a.m. Staff will be on hand at 10 a.m. on the Capitol Grounds near the War Memorial. All Choctaw veterans will receive a token of gratitude. A free meal will follow the ceremony.

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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.



The BISKINIK
is printed on
recycled paper.

Our strength will sustain future generations

Chief Pyle's State of the Nation address focuses on past and present heroes

Cooler temperatures over the weekend brought out huge crowds to enjoy all that the Choctaw Nation Labor Day Festival has to offer. A highlight of the festival every year is Chief Gregory E. Pyle's State of the Nation address as thousands gather on Monday on the Capitol grounds at Tushka Homma.

"This year's Labor Day theme is 'Heroes of the Past.' Certainly Brother Bertram Bobb is one of our past, and current, heroes," said Chief Pyle of a special presentation made to Tribal Chaplain Bertram Bobb, recognizing him for a lifetime of achievements. "Many of our past heroes were members of our military and we will always honor their service to our country.

"We have a great relationship with the military. The Choctaw Nation provides support to our troops in many ways. We continue to send care packages to our troops stationed overseas, whether they are Indian or non-Indian," said Chief Pyle. "We will provide a deployment send-off when the Oklahoma National Guard leaves for Afghanistan in January.

"We also provide help with Wounded Warrior flights. This is where we fly wounded troops to various locations around the country for medical care or to rejoin them with their families. Recently, on one of these flights, the control tower in Houston learned that a wounded warrior was on the flight and asked if they could speak to him. Our pilot, a veteran himself, gave the microphone to the soldier and told the controller to go ahead. The controller started talking to him. He thanked the soldier for his service and wished him a speedy recovery. He then said that anyone else on that frequency who wanted to say anything could go ahead. One after another, they kept talking. One pilot would get on then another. They continued lining up, all wishing the soldier well and thanking him for his service and sacrifice. We are so proud that the Choctaw Nation is able to help in this effort.

"We have to support our neighbors," Chief Pyle said. "A recent flood in Arkansas took the lives of 19 people. Several of our forestry staff volunteered to go to Arkansas to offer aid.

"Our Going Green program continues – 'sustaining our people, our traditions, our earth.' The Choctaw have always been protectors of the environment, especially water. This is extremely important," Chief Pyle stressed. "You are probably aware that others are interested in acquiring the water from Sardis Lake and some have even made a monetary investment toward that. By treaty, the tribe's water has never been given up. This is still our water, and we will fight for the protection of this natural resource for all of southeastern Oklahoma, even though it may take years to resolve.

"One of Choctaw Nation's most successful programs is the STAR program," he informed the audience. "This program, Success Through Academic Recognition, rewards Choctaw students who make good grades or have perfect attendance. Through our STAR program, we have seen a significant increase in our students' grades and school attendance. We are happy to announce that this program is now going nationwide.

"The Choctaw Nation continues to grow and prosper. Some of the new construction recently completed includes a new arts and crafts building at Tushka Homma, a new Child Development Center in Durant, new Social Services building and Wellness Center in Hugo, new scoreboards at ballfields here at the capitol grounds and a new Red Warrior statue in front of the capitol building.

Plans for future construction include new community centers and child development centers as well as a new amphitheater at Tushka Homma. The new amphitheater will be twice this size.

"Our tribal vision is 'to achieve healthy, successful, productive and self-sufficient lifestyles for a proud nation of Choctaws.' This continues to be our goal – to better serve you ... the Choctaw people. Our continued economic development will create more jobs, more revenue and ultimately more services for our tribal members. Road projects will improve access to health care, schools and jobs. I want all of our families to achieve our vision of healthy, successful and self-sufficient Choctaws.

"I want to take a moment to recognize our Tribal Council who take their responsibility to the Choctaw people very seriously," Chief Pyle said. "They continually look out for the needs of our people and we appreciate their service to the Nation. We also want to remember one of our Councilmen who passed away just last month. Hap Ward was a good friend of mine and a friend to all Choctaws. He loved his people and spent his time serving him. Although Hap can never be replaced in our hearts, a special election will be held Oct. 30 for the District 1 Council position.

"In closing, I want to emphasize that the Choctaw Nation continues to be strong. As we honor our heroes of the past, we remember our heritage and continue our traditions. Our strength and our continued growth will sustain our future generations to follow. And we will remain a proud Nation of Choctaws!"



Chief Gregory E. Pyle and Assistant Chief Gary Batton present Tribal Chaplain Bertram Bobb with a Lifetime Achievement Award.

Chaplain Bertram Bobb receives Lifetime Achievement Award

Honoring a lifetime of achievement, Chief Gregory E. Pyle and Assistant Chief Gary Batton presented Choctaw Nation Chaplain Bertram Bobb with a glittering crystal award while thousands of onlookers showed their appreciation with thunderous applause at the 2010 Labor Day Festival. The crystal stairsteps on the Lifetime Achievement Award trophy presented by the Chief were accompanied by a brass plaque that reads "Thank you for your Christian Leadership: Psalms 37:23 The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way."

Brother Bobb, at 86 years young, is the only person ever to hold the office of Choctaw Nation Tribal Chaplain. Ordained in 1954, he still stays busy every day with his ministry. His column, "Chaplain's Corner," in BISKINIK reaches 77,000 households each month and he travels extensively, both in Oklahoma and across the

United States, always sharing the Gospel and singing hymns in his beautiful, deep voice.

The Bertram Bobb Bible Camp near Ringold has a spring retreat and a long summer program for youth each year. The many people whose lives he has touched appreciate his tireless work as Director of the Christian Indian Ministries Inc. of Antlers and as a board member on the Native American Bible Ministries Inc.

As people leapt to their feet to give Brother Bobb a much-deserved standing ovation when presented with his Lifetime Achievement Award, Chief Pyle also thanked him for his dedication to the military. "Brother Bobb, as a veteran, has served our country, and he has also been instrumental in helping the Choctaw Code Talkers be recognized nationally," said Chief Pyle. "Brother Bobb was tremendously effective in the halls of Congress when we were seeking co-sponsors

See **BOBB** on Page 13



Chief Gregory E. Pyle, Jr. Miss Choctaw Nation Nikki Amos, Miss Choctaw Nation Kristie McGuire, Little Miss Choctaw Nation Mahala Battiest and Assistant Chief Gary Batton.

2010-11 Princesses are crowned

Choctaw Nation royalty reigning for 2010-11 are Jr. Miss Nikki Amos of Broken Bow, Sr. Miss Kristie McGuire of Keota and Little Miss Mahala Battiest of Wright City. The young ladies, pictured with Chief Gregory E. Pyle and Assistant Chief Gary Batton, were crowned at the Choctaw Nation Princess Pageant held Thursday, Sept. 2, the opening night of the annual Labor Day Festival at Tushka Homma.

Miss Choctaw Nation Kristie McGuire is the daughter of Harold Mc-

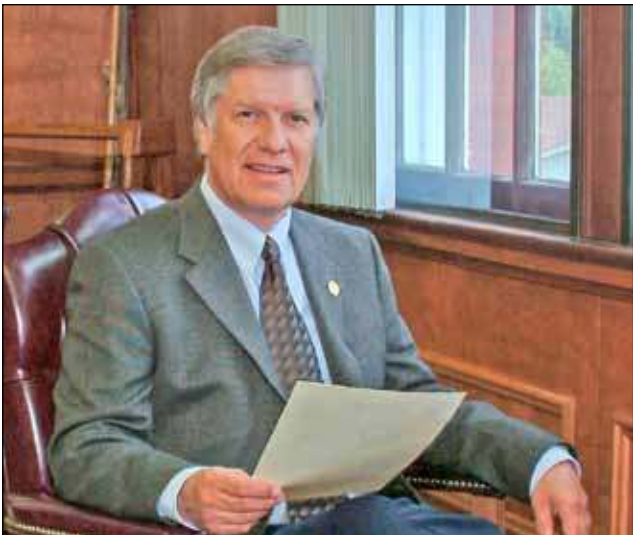
Guire. She attends the University of Central Oklahoma with a major in biology. Kristi demonstrated her storytelling skills during the talent portion of the pageant by relating a story about corn.

Jr. Miss Nikki Amos is the daughter of Mike and Vicky Amos. She attends school at Lukfata Elementary. Nikki shared a beautiful song in Choctaw, "Beulah Land," during the talent competition.

Little Miss Mahala Battiest is the daughter of Jeremy Scott Battiest and Rachel

See **PRINCESSES** on Page 13

Festival wonderful venue to show art and culture



New Cultural Center a marvelous improvement

From the desk of Chief Gregory E. Pyle

I appreciate all the workers who volunteered to help make the 2010 Labor Day a success. It has been estimated that this was the largest attendance of any festival we have ever hosted. Each year, improvements to the grounds and expansion of events help make the gathering more enjoyable than ever before.

It was a pleasure to hear the many compliments on the good looks and comfort of the new Cultural Center at the Tribal Capitol Grounds in Tushka Homma. The booth spaces were filled with items created by talented craftsmen (and women) and the pathways inside the building were

crowded with customers enjoying the fabulous wares and the air conditioning.

This was a marvelous improvement from previous years' outside pavilion shopping of arts and crafts. All arts and crafts vendors were in the same building, and all were equally comfortable. Located conveniently at the top of the hill by the amphitheater, customers could slip in and out without missing much of the concerts.

The Cultural Center is an architectural match to the cafeteria that was opened at Tushka Homma last year. Both are roofed in red (like our Capitol), and constructed with stone and earthy colors. Visitors enjoy the historic photos that are framed and displayed throughout both buildings.

This was the seventh year for the Art Show that is held in the Capitol Museum. The talent of the Choctaws who had entered their artwork this year awed me. Many of the paintings, sculptures, jewelry items, baskets and pots depicted things that brought memories of Choctaw stories and legends to my mind. The Trail of Tears, Code Talkers and animals from children's tales were just a few of the historic depictions in the art show this year. This is definitely an important event on the festival agenda each year and I encourage all Choctaw artists to enter the 2011 show.

There were two unveilings during the weekend – the first of a warrior hero in front of the Capitol Building. The second monument unveiled was in memory of heroes at the softball field – umpires, coaches and players who have supported the game over the many years since we have been hosting the tournament at Tushka Homma. I recognized a lot of names on the brass plates of the monument – some have passed on from this life. It was great to be able to remember them in this manner.

One of my favorite things each year is to listen to storyteller Tim Tingle at the Monday morning ceremony. This year, Tim's story was about the importance of protecting water, for ourselves as well as our neighbors. Since we are in the midst of an issue protecting the Sardis Lake, his cultural story fit perfectly with the present-day happenings.

It was a blessing to be able to attend the festival and see so many of the friends and acquaintances we have made over the years.

Yakoke!

Sharing heritage at Labor Day Festival



From the desk of Assistant Chief Gary Batton

Temperate weather made all the events at the annual festival extremely enjoyable, but the activities I was most drawn to over the weekend were the ones that highlighted our heritage. It was a thrill to help Chief Pyle unveil the new statue in front of the Capitol Building Museum, and it was heartwarming to see the young contestants in the Princess

pageant model their traditional dress and speak in our language.

While these events, along with the Social Dance, Stickball Games and Choctaw Village activities drew huge crowds; there was also a historically significant Sunday-afternoon event that hosted a smaller audience. The 13th Annual Choctaw Code Talker Association Board Meeting was held in the Tribal Council Chambers, attended by descendants of the men

who served our country in World War I as the original Code Talkers.

The gavel of presidency of the organization changed hands at this meeting from Evangeline Wilson, the niece of Code Talkers Mitchell Bobb and James Edwards, to newly elected president Nuchi Nashoba, the great-granddaughter of Code Talker Ben Carterby.

It was great to share information with the association that we expect to see the first Congressional medals for Choctaw Code Talkers at the end of 2011. Two of the descendants who walked the halls of Congress with Chief and myself were present at the meeting – Rev. Bertram Bobb (nephew of Mitchell Bobb and James Edwards) and Ruth Frazier McMillian (daughter of Tobias Frazier).

The association was informed that the story of the Choctaw telephone warriors continues to be told – PBS will air a documentary on Oct. 21 and Patrick Calzada is planning two books on

Code Talkers, one written for adults and one for children.

An exhibit at the Capitol Building Museum features the Choctaw Code Talkers, and a new part of that display is a trunk that was owned by Walter Veach. The contents of the trunk are laid out for view – including personal grooming items and a map of the area in France the Code Talkers were first used.

Choctaw Nation and Choctaw People have an impressive history and I am proud to be a member of this great tribe and honored to serve as Assistant Chief.

Understanding God's plan

It was good to see and visit with many of you during the Labor Day Festival at Tushka Homma. May the Lord continue to bless each of you.

It is important that we have a clear understanding of what the Bible teaches about God's plan of Salvation. When we have this understanding, we can fully praise God and thank Him for what He has done for us.

Let's review the blessings of God's wonderful Salvation.

First, Salvation is needed by all. I believe the best place to begin our study of Salvation are these familiar words from the book of Ephesians 2:8-9:

8. For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

9. Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Notice that the apostle Paul said we are saved by grace through faith. In some circles people don't like to talk about being saved. To them it just doesn't sound sophisticated.

But we must face the fact that the idea of being saved is very familiar throughout the Scripture. Therefore, we can and should feel free to use that word "saved" without any apology.

Let's look at some other passages where his word "save" or "saved" is used. Matthew wrote in Matthew 1:21 about the Birth of Jesus Christ:

21. "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."

And in Luke 19:10 Jesus Himself declared:

10. "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

And the apostle Paul wrote in 1 Timothy 1:15:

15. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

Jesus Christ is the Savior who came to save sinners. He provided for their Salvation through His Life, Death, and Resurrection.

Even though the Bible clearly emphasizes that all men are sinners, (Romans 3:23), many people in self-righteousness and pride refuse to acknowledge their guilt before a Holy God. Measuring themselves against others who are worse than they, they resent being categorized as "sinners" along with murderers, adulterers, thieves, child abusers, and pervers.

By comparison to outstanding members of societies they feel satisfied with themselves. These people fail to realize, however, that they are judging themselves by the wrong standard. You see, God is the One who sets the rules. He is holy and righteous, yes, He is perfect. Nothing less than perfection meets with His approval.

In His sight, not only are murder, adultery, and theft wrong, but also so is lying, gossiping, jealousy, envy, selfishness, pride, self-will, hatred, and any other thing you might

Chaplain's Corner



**Rev. Bertram Bobb
Tribal Chaplain**

name that violates or falls short of His Glory. They are sins, and the committing of any of them calls for punishment by God. James said in James 2:10:

10. "For whosoever shall keep the law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."

We read in Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

We read in Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Secondly, Salvation is a gift of God's Grace. Sinful man needs a spiritual cleansing. He must be forgiven

completely so that so that he is removed from condemnation to a place of acceptance by the Almighty God. The Salvation that God has provided through the gift of His love does exactly that.

Remember Ephesians 2:8: "For by grace are you saved through faith;..." Yes, Salvation is ours by grace. We should be thankful for that, because not one of us as sinners could ever save ourselves.

Grace as it relates to God might be described as His favor toward those who do not deserve it. God's grace is part of His being, His very nature. John declared in 1 John 4:8 that "...God is love."

God was not taken by surprised when man fell into sin. In fact, the Lord allowed him to do so, for reasons that are now clouded to our understanding, but which we shall someday understand.

Way back in eternity, knowing that man would sin, and concerned for the enslaved sinner, God made provision for our salvation.

Before man was created, the second Person of the Trinity, the eternal Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, planned that He would become a member of the human race through virgin birth, live a sinless life, and die to pay the price for our sins. As our substitute, He lived His perfect life and died that death in our place.

And His Resurrection from the dead was the proof that God was satisfied with the sacrifice He gave. Yes, Jesus Christ fully paid the penalty our sin demanded. We read in Ezekiel 18: 4: "...the soul that sinneth, it shall die."

Third, Salvation is received by faith. How can I share in the benefits of the salvation God has so graciously provided? The answer is – by faith. Remember Ephesians 2:8-9.

When we believe Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven, we are delivered from condemnation, and we know the blessing of God. Yes, we are saved through faith. Today, will you trust Jesus Christ as your own personal Savior?

Remember to pray for America and for our leaders. Pray for our brave men and women in service.

Thanksgiving Dinners

Antlers	November 16	6 p.m.
Atoka	November 10	12 noon
Bethel	November 22	6 p.m.
Broken Bow	November 18	6 p.m.
Coalgate	November 10	12 noon
Coalgate Community	November 21	2 p.m.
Crowder	November 17	11:30 a.m.
Durant Community	November 9	6 p.m.
Hugo	November 16	6 p.m.
Idabel	November 17	11:30 a.m.
McAlester	November 17	11:30 a.m.
McAlester Community	November 21	1 p.m.
Poteau	November 17	11:30 a.m.
Smithville	November 17	12 noon
Spiro	November 16	11:30 a.m.
Stigler	November 18	12 noon
Talihina	November 19	12 noon
Tuskahoma	November 9	6 p.m.
Wilburton	November 16	6 p.m.
Wright City	November 18	6 p.m.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

in the Choctaw Nation
– Senior Citizen Dinners & Kids Christmas Parties –

Antlers Seniors	December 15	11:30 a.m.
Antlers Kids	December 7	6 p.m., up to age 12
Atoka Kids	November 30	6 p.m., up to age 12, at the Atoka Community Center on Liberty Road
Bethel Kids	December 9	6 p.m.
Broken Bow Kids	December 7	6 p.m.
Broken Bow Seniors	December 16	12 noon
Buffalo Valley Kids	December 9	6 p.m.
Burkhart Kids	December 9	7 p.m.
Coalgate Seniors	December 8	12 noon
Coalgate Kids	December 4	2 p.m., up to age 12
Crowder Seniors	December 15	11:30 a.m.
Crowder Kids	December 11	1 p.m.
Durant Kids	December 3	6 p.m.
Eagletown Kids	December 7	7:30 p.m.
Heavener Kids	December 6	7 p.m.
Hugo Seniors	December 15	11:30 a.m.
Hugo Kids	December 3	6 p.m. at Housing Culture Center
Idabel Kids	December 6	6:30 p.m.
Idabel Seniors	December 22	11:30 a.m.
McAlester Kids	December 11	1 p.m., up to age 10
McAlester Seniors	December 15	11:30 a.m.
Poteau Seniors	December 15	11:30 a.m.
Poteau Kids	December 11	4-6 p.m., up to age 10
Quinton Kids	December 10	6 p.m.
Smithville Kids	December 7	7 p.m.
Smithville Seniors	December 15	12 noon
Spiro Kids	December 13	4 to 6 p.m., age 10 & under
Spiro Seniors	December 14	11:30 a.m.
Stigler Kids	December 10	4 to 6 p.m.
Stigler Seniors	December 8	12 noon
Summerfield Kids	December 12	2-4 p.m.
Talihina Kids	December 10	7 p.m.
Talihina Seniors	December 8	12 noon
Tuskahoma Kids	December 4	1 p.m.
Wilburton Kids	December 11	2 p.m.
Wright City Kids	December 9	6 p.m.
Wright City Seniors	December 16	12 noon

Choctaw volunteers aid elderly, clean up Oklahoma highways, earn awards

By **CHRISSY DILL**

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

The AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) builds permanent infrastructures in non-profit organizations to help effectively bring individuals and communities out of poverty. The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma plays a vital role in participating with AmeriCorps by engaging in the NSAIE (National Society for American Indian Elders) Tribal Summer Associate program, which is in its second year of existence. Summer Associates' contributions have a credible impact on those being served as well as the potential to receive benefits for their work. During the eight weeks of service, the Summer Associate volunteers were given a minimum stipend to defray their cost of living and at the end of service were given an option to receive an Educational Award that can be used by the volunteer to further their education. Of the nine members completing the Summer Associate Service, two volunteers were elected to receive the education award.

AmeriCorps VISTA has been a part of the Choctaw Nation for about seven years. Connie Hudson, NSAIE VISTA Recruit was appointed to coordinate the activities of the AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers for Choctaw Nation Aging Services. This summer, Choctaw Nation as the host agency recruited nine volunteers who worked within their communities. Majority of the volunteers were Choctaw tribal members from north McCurtain and south LeFlore counties in which they were designated to work. Two recruits became team leaders who were willing to mentor their



Kirk Tonihka, Clint H. James, Van Thomas, Phillip Green, Richard Bohanon, Connie Hudson, Eugene Jefferson, Kyle Meashintubby and Dovovan James.

teams and help them to realize the importance of volunteerism and taking care of their environment. Clinton James, previous employee of Choctaw Nation and Kirk Tonihka, an elementary school teacher at Battiest Public School, were selected as team leaders. The two volunteers were great leaders, encouraging and working side by side with their team through the hottest period of months meeting the needs of Choctaw elders, assisting tribal programs at Tushka Homma and Wheelock Academy and improving the roadside along state highways. The most prominent form of volunteer work that these Choctaw VISTA workers participated in was "elder chores services" including cleaning up elders' yards through mowing, edging and pulling shrubs among other things. For the community of Smithville, one VISTA team was provided with the necessary tools to pull tree stumps. The only female recruit volunteered her hours at the

Wright City and Idabel Senior sites helping the elders understand basic computer skills and assisted with the meals program, in addition to other activities in the community.

Although the elders were given priority, the VISTA volunteers focused on keeping our land free of waste. Choctaw Nation Summer Associate members were able to partner with "The Great American Cleanup of Oklahoma," volunteering their hours through "trash pickup" along several highways between Broken Bow and Hochatown, between Grant and Hugo and along the roadside of Choctaw Nation's hospital in Tahleah.

This organization is a local non-profit group which has been in existence since February 2010 and recently credited for picked up of 400 bags of highway trash.

The Summer Associates Program also partnered with Tribal Preservation, ODOT, Choctaw Nation "Going Green" and the

Tribal Council but special thanks go to the Aging Services department for overseeing the need of our elders. The volunteer team members contributed their hard work to aiding the elderly, improved the community centers' grounds and cleaned cemeteries and church properties as needed. They volunteered hours at the Broken Bow softball fields. At Wheelock Academy, hours were dedicated to inventorying the many historical items and did some property up-keep. At Tushkahoma the volunteers assisted with the grounds up-keeping, recycling and helping some of the elders in that area.

Now that the Summer Associates program is finished and all reports are finalized; the full-time VISTA Recruit will be given the task of assisting with the upcoming "Need Assessment" survey for compiling the needs of our Choctaw Elders for continuation of meals program for Choctaw Nation elders.

NURSERY NEWS

Mason Lane Knight

Mason Lane Knight was born Aug. 6, 2010. His parents are R.T. Knight and Rebekah Hicks, Achille. Grandparents are David and Tonia Knight, Durant; Deloyd and Ironda Hicks, Achille. Great-grandparents are Jack and Lynda Shroyer, Moore; the late Lois and Bernice Hicks, Achille; Wilson and Thelma Blagg, Achille. Great-great-grandmother is Julia Knight, Stillwater.



Hannah Avery

Andy and Rejeina Halliburton would like to announce the birth of Hannah Avery who arrived on July 26 at 9:03 a.m. Hannah weighed 7 pounds, 10 ounces and was 20 in. long. She joins her big brother Dillon Beau. She is the granddaughter of Ricky and Gayla Wade, Earnie and Lisa Halliburton of McAlester and James and Marietta Sensibaugh of Haileyville. She is the great-granddaughter of Cecil and Vivian Wade, Ceawilla Green, Earnest and Catherine Halliburton of McAlester, Skip and Kathy Sensibaugh of Hartshorne and Richard and Linda Beams of Blanco.



Hayden Nicole Forrest

Two-year-old Trinton Forrest proudly announces the birth of his baby sister Hayden Nicole, born Aug. 1, 2010, at 6:05 p.m. in Tulsa. Hayden weighed 6 pounds, 8 ounces and was 19 1/2 inches long. Proud parents are Joseph (J.D.) and Brittany (Thorson) Forrest of Bixby. Maternal grandmother is Shani Thorson and great-grandfather Bjorne Thorson of Colorado. Paternal grandparents are Cindy (Totty) Herod of Bixby and great-grandparents are Robert D. and Joyce (Allen) Totty of Bixby. Great-great-grandparents are the late Lloyd T. and Millie (Peevyhouse) Allen, who still lives in Stigler, and the late Hershel and Wilmuth (Holder) Totty of Hoyt, who are original enrollees of the Choctaw Nation.



Brooke Alexandra Blackburn

Brooke Alexandra Blackburn came into this world on March 12, 2010 at 11:13pm in the Hastings Indian Medical Center of Tahlequah. She weighed in at 7lbs 14oz with measurements of 19 3/4 inches. Proud parents are Jimmy Blackburn Jr. and Meghan Blackburn of Tahlequah. Brooke has three siblings; sister, Piper; two brothers, Jordan and Trae Blackburn. Maternal Grandparents are James and Patsy Roe of Warner. Paternal Grandparents are Jimmy Don Blackburn Sr. of Gore, and Dorothy Blackburn of Moore.



Choctaw Nation WIC

WOMEN, INFANTS AND CHILDREN



SITE	PHONE	HOURS	DAYS
Antlers	580-298-3161	8:30-4:00	Every Tuesday
Atoka	580-889-5825	8:00-4:30	Every Mon., Thurs. & Fri. 1st, 3rd & 4th Wed.
Bethel	580-241-5458	8:30-4:00	1st Tuesday
Boswell	580-380-2517	8:30-4:00	1st & 2nd Friday
Broken Bow	580-584-2746	8:00-4:30	Mon., Wed., Thurs. & Fri. 2nd, 3rd & 4th Tuesday 2nd Wednesday
Coalgate	580-927-3641	8:30-4:00	Daily
Durant	580-924-8280 x 2255	8:00-4:30	Mon., Tues., Wed. & Thurs. 3rd & 4th Friday
Hugo	580-326-5404	8:00-4:30	Mon. & Fri., 1st & 3rd Thurs.
Idabel	580-286-2510	8:00-4:30	Daily
McAlester	918-423-6335	8:00-4:30	Daily
Poteau	918-647-4585	8:00-4:30	Daily
Smithville	580-244-3289	8:30-4:00	2nd Thursday
Spiro	918-962-5134	8:00-4:30	Every Wed., Thurs. & Fri.
Stigler	918-967-4211	8:30-4:00	Every Monday & Tuesday
Talihina	918-567-7000 x 6792	8:00-4:30	Mon., Tues., Wed., & Fri.
Wilburton	918-465-5641	8:30-4:00	Every Thursday

WIC employees celebrate National Fruits and Veggies - More Matters Month



Front row (kneeling): Ami Richards, Sherri Meadows, Taleesha Melton Back row (standing): Brenda Isom, Deana Vineyard, Betty Baker, Marie Oehler, Vicki Kirkpatrick, Linda Woolbright, Tammy Kinsey and Samantha Fitzer promoted consuming more fruits and vegetables to WIC participants through fresh, canned, dried, frozen, and 100 percent juice.

Eat Better

October is "Eat Better, Eat Together" month. According to research conducted by Washington State University when families eat together the positive effects last long pass dinner time and into a healthy lifestyle which can decrease the risk of type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

Some positive results include:

- meals are more nutritious and healthful
- spending less money on food
- have more time, because the family only cooks one meal
- traditions are created by involving the whole family in meal preparation
- children and teenagers have fewer problems and do better in school

A few tips for having quality family meals:

1. Aim for 4 or more meals a week
2. Keep a sense of humor and laugh a lot
3. Cook it quick and eat it slow
4. Respect each individual's right to decide how much to eat

One fun way to involve the family in putting dinner on the table is making pizza. Yes! Pizza!

Recipe: Pepperoni Pizza

Recipe courtesy of Eating Well

Ingredients:

- 1 lb prepared whole-wheat pizza dough or pita pockets
- 1 cup canned unseasoned pumpkin puree
- 1/2 cup no-salt-added tomato sauce
- 1/2 tsp garlic powder
- 1 cup shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 oz sliced turkey pepperoni (1/2 cup)

Preparation:

1. Place oven rack in the lowest position; preheat to 450. coat a large baking sheet with cooking spray
2. Roll out dough on a lightly floured surface to the size of the baking sheet. Transfer to the baking sheet. Bake until puffed and lightly crisped on the bottom, 8-10 minutes.
3. Whisk pumpkin puree, tomato sauce and garlic powder in a small bowl until combined.
4. Spread sauce evenly over the baked crust. Top with mozzarella, parmesan and pepperoni. Bake until the crust is crispy on the edges and the cheeses have melted, about 12 minutes.

Nutrition Information: Serves 6

Calories: 280 Sodium: 602mg Total Fat: 6g
Total Carbohydrate: 35g Saturated Fat: 3g
Dietary Fiber: 3g Mono Fat: 2g Potassium: 153mg Cholesterol: 30mg Protein: 16g

Importance of family meals

Life can be tough on family dinner time. In addition to work and school schedules, there are sports practices and games, lessons, homework and friends. With all the rushing around, it's easy to slip into the fast food lane or the microwave habit.

Bringing balance back into busy evenings is well worth the effort. Your whole family will feel better when they are eating delicious, nutritious meals together. Fortunately, there are several simple steps that can help families get a tasty dinner on the table easily and quickly. It all starts with a little planning and meal time organization.

Simple steps to get your family to the table:

- Keep it simple - Meals do not need to be fancy; sandwiches, soups

WIC

WOMEN, INFANTS AND CHILDREN

and salads make quick and easy meals that everyone can enjoy.

- Keep your kitchen stocked with quick-to-fix foods - Keeping a wide variety of tasty choices on hand such as rice, pasta, beans, and frozen and/or canned fruits and vegetables make meal planning easy.

- Have a family weekly menu - Whether you write them down or keep them in your head, try to keep five to seven kid-tested, parent-approved meals for your menu. Pick meals that are easy and popular with everyone like tacos, spaghetti or slow-cooker stew.
- Get the whole

family involved in meal preparations and clean-up - Cooking will be quicker with help and children like to eat what they have helped to prepare. Assign age-appropriate jobs, like choosing the fruit for dessert, mixing pre-cut vegetables into a salad, setting the table or clearing the table after the meal.

Family meals help to create strong family bonds. Families feel more connected to each other when they eat together. Eating together can also help save money. Share food and love with your family through family meals.

Remember... Family meals create happy, healthy memories that last a lifetime!

Courtesy of: Eat Right: American Dietetic Association

New clinic helping Choctaws sleep easier

By **LARISSA COPELAND**
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Many people overlook the value of getting enough sleep each night. According to Rebecca Osbourne, a registered polysomnographic technologist at the Choctaw Nation Health Care Center (CNHCC) in Talihina, the continual lack of adequate sleep can lead to a number of health problems over time. “It can lead to congestive heart failure and it’s been linked to diabetes and high blood pressure,” she said. “A person’s memory can also be affected if they aren’t getting enough sleep.”

Recent surveys conducted by the National Sleep Foundation show that nearly seven out of 10 Americans say they experience frequent sleep problems. Sleep difficulties can stem from too little sleep, too much sleep or not enough quality sleep. Often, a person experiencing trouble during sleep may not even realize they



Rebecca Osbourne, a registered polysomnographic tech at the Choctaw Nation Health Care Center in Talihina, monitors a patient from the observation room.

have a problem. They may feel tired all the time but not realize why.

“They never get a feeling of being refreshed,” continued Osbourne.

To help Choctaws determine if their sleep habits are the cause of problems they experience while they’re awake, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma has opened a sleep clinic at the CNHCC in Talihina to perform the sleep studies necessary for a diagnosis.

The sleep clinic opened its doors to patients on Feb. 1, 2010, and typically sees an average of 32 patients a month. Patients come to the sleep clinic to participate in a sleep study after a referral from their physician and usually make two visits before treatment can begin at home. The first visit is diagnostic, to try to pinpoint the problems, and the second visit is for titration, to correct the problem.

A sleep study, or poly-

somnogram, is a 6-8 hour observation and recording that electronically transmits and documents specific activities that go on while a person sleeps. These studies are used to make medical diagnoses and to identify various sleep disorders.

Many sleep disorders exist, with more than 80 different types documented. The more common disorders are obstructive sleep apnea, insomnia, narcolepsy, restless legs syndrome, sleep walking and periodic limb movement (twitching) disorder, along with numerous others and subcategories in many disorders.

A major contributing factor for many sleep disorders is obesity because it causes pressure on the airway. With a high percentage of Choctaws who are overweight and experiencing the effects from it, the availability of the sleep clinic is beneficial in diagnosing and receiving treatment for them. This clinic is available to any Choctaw tribal member liv-

ing within the 10-½ borders with a physician’s referral for the sleep study.

The clinic consists of two separate sleep rooms and an observation room where a registered polysomnographic technologist monitors the patients.

The two rooms are set up to feel as close as possible to a comfortable bedroom instead a hospital room. They have no clocks but do have TVs that are set to turn off after a certain time. The rooms are also kept at a cool temperature is for two reasons – most people sleep better when they are in a cooler room and to prevent the adhesive on the leads (wires) attached to the patient from melting, leading to false readings.

Six hours of recorded sleep is necessary for the study.

The overnight test begins at around 9:30 p.m. with the hooking up of the leads, and ends at 6 a.m.

For a typical sleep study,

more than 30 leads are attached with adhesive to a patient on their legs, feet, chest, abdomen and head. The leads measure a patient’s stage of sleep, brain waves, chest and leg movements, snoring, grinding of teeth, and other physical movements a patient makes while sleeping, as needed to make a diagnosis. A physician can order a more intensive study as well.

The recordings taken at the clinic are sent to Health South Sleep Disorders in Fort Smith, Ark., where the records are read, scored, dictated and then sent back to the CNHCC for analysis and diagnosis. “We usually get the results back in about 3-4 weeks,” said Osbourne.

Anyone wishing to make an appointment at the clinic should consult with his or her physician. New appointments are made daily and the slots do fill up quickly. With these new treatments available to Choctaws, a good night’s sleep is now just a referral away.

MRI brings more comprehensive medical services to Talihina

By **LARISSA COPELAND**
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

July 26, 2010, marked a huge step forward in the availability of vital health care for the people of southeastern Oklahoma with the opening of a new magnetic resonance imaging, or MRI, scanner lab at the Choctaw Nation Health Care Center (CNHCC) in Talihina.

The MRI lab is equipped with a state-of-the-art G.E. 1.5 Tesla MRI scanner and is a huge step-up for the hospital, according to Patricia Glasco, one of the two MRI/X-ray/CT technicians at the facility.

“Having our own MRI scanner means we won’t have to refer patients to a third party to receive this service,” she said.

The scanner cost the Choctaw Nation approximately \$2 million but over time it will actually save money for the tribe by allowing patients to be treated at its own medical facility instead of being sent to outside clinics.

“We can do it all here now,” continued Glasco.

And for many patients that means saving them a long drive, too. This MRI scanner is one of only three available between Poteau, McAlester and Tulsa.

Chief Gregory E. Pyle says the MRI is a vital



Patricia Glasco, an MRI/X-ray/CT tech at the Choctaw Nation Health Care Center in Talihina, checks over an image of a brain created with the new MRI scanner.

piece of medical equipment and will be an asset for the Choctaws.

“The addition of an MRI machine provides one more way to ensure our tribal members have the best health care possible,” said Chief Pyle.

The images created by the MRI are useful, and sometimes necessary, in making a definitive diagnosis for a patient. MRI scanning is a noninvasive medical imaging technique used to provide doctors images of the different soft tissues of the body, and is especially useful in neurological, musculoskeletal, cardiovascular, and oncological scans.

MRI scanners create a powerful magnetic field to align the hydrogen atoms in water in the body and uses

non-ionizing radiation to create images.

“This is much better for the patients,” said Glasco, as opposed to X-ray and CT scans, which are both considered moderate to high radiation diagnostic methods.

Currently, the MRI is housed in a temporary building just outside the hospital but plans are in the works to move the lab to a permanent location in the near future.

Since the start of operations this summer, the MRI has provided services for approximately 80 patients with many more scheduled.

Appointments can be made after a referral from a physician and are open to the general public living within the CNO’s 10-½ counties.



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Tribe represented at Gulf oil spill stakeholders meeting in New Orleans



Three Oklahoma tribal representatives traveled to New Orleans to meet with officials concerning the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico and its effect on historic tribal sites along the coastline. From left, Charles Coleman, Thlophlocco Tribal Town; Dan Odess, Historic Properties Specialist; Terry Cole, Tribal Preservation Officer, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma; and Ted Isham, Director of Cultural Preservation, Muskogee (Creek) Nation.

Good Samaritans rescue woman from burning vehicle

By **STAN STAMPER**
Publisher, Hugo Daily News

In a world sometimes seemingly gone mad, where television cameras show kids beating other kids, or adults standing idly by while a criminal beats another citizen, it’s refreshing to find someone who is willing to risk his life to help someone.

That happened four miles south of Clayton last week, when Anna Mae Steely was driving her Chevy pickup southbound on Highway 2. According to Oklahoma Highway Patrol reports, her vehicle left the roadway, careened through the ditch, turned over onto its right side, struck a tree, and burst into flames.

Despite her misfortune, Steely was in luck, as the first two people to happen upon the crash were members of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and Choctaw County residents. One was traveling from Tuskahoma

to Hugo and the other was traveling from Hugo to Tuskahoma to work in support of the Tribe’s big annual Labor Day celebration. Choctaw Housing Authority employee, Steve Bowers, was northbound when he spotted the pickup on its side with fire coming from the underside of the engine compartment.

He quickly pulled his tribal pickup to the side of the road and sprinted to investigate as to whether or not anyone was in the vehicle.

The woman was hanging from the top of the vehicle suspended by her seat belt and shoulder harness and was barely conscious, Bowers said. About the time I got to the pickup, Michael Thompson (another tribal employee) came running up.

Thompson was southbound from Clayton enroute to Hugo when he saw the burning vehicle.

The two were joined by



Good samaritans, Michael Thompson, left, and Steve Bowers, came to the aid of a automobile crash victim.

Terry Grey, an employee of the U.S. Forest Service.

According to Bowers, part of the windshield had separated from its frame, and as he tried to remove the windshield wearing leather gloves, Grey raced to retrieve a fire extinguisher from his semi-truck.

As the flames licked up around the vehicle, Bowers fought to remove the windshield, as Grey extin-

guished the blaze. Thompson assisted Grey in affixing a chain to the frame of the overturned truck, and then Bowers used his Choctaw Housing Authority vehicle, a four-wheel-drive Dodge, to pull the pickup back onto its wheels.

Bowers was assisted by Thompson as they cut the woman from her seatbelt and shoulder harness and lowered her into the seat

of the vehicle before it was turned over.

After the vehicle was righted, the three men removed her from the smoldering truck and kept her conscious as she had suffered a major laceration to her forehead and was bleeding profusely.

“She appeared to be going into shock and we kept talking to her and trying to keep her alert until the EMS crew arrived,” Bowers said.

When the two men were asked whether they feared the vehicle might explode as they attempted to rescue the woman, Bowers responded, “We had to get her out. That was the only thing that crossed our minds.”

Thompson added, “All I could think about was that if I, or a member of my family was in that car, I would want someone to try and help them.”

Steely was transported by EMS to Clayton where she was picked up by a helicopter and flown to Sparks

Medical Center in Fort Smith, listed in critical condition.

Since that time, family members have reported that she has been transferred to St. Francis Hospital in Tulsa and later to a rehabilitation hospital in McAlester.

Bowers, retired from the Navy a number of years ago and has been employed by the Choctaw Nation for the past 13 years.

Thompson has been employed by the Choctaw Nation for six and a half years. He is the son of Choctaw County Tribal Councilor Perry Thompson.

Though neither of the men felt they had done anything unusual, and certainly not heroic, many American citizens would beg to differ, especially in a world where regard for other people sometimes seems so lacking.

We salute all three of them for their heroic and kind act. Good Samaritans... all.

PEOPLE YOU KNOW

Oklahoma man survives widow maker heart attack - twice

This Father’s Day will be a special one for the McDown children. They’ll celebrate the fact that their father is still alive.

“Seeing my dad on his death bed was surreal because he has always been the strongest person in my life,” reflects 20-year-old Megan McDown. “It was the most terrifying experience of my life,” admits 22-year-old Jon McDown. “It was like seeing Superman on the ground and not knowing if he was going to be able to get up again.”

For all intents and purposes, Harold McDown’s life should have ended April 20, 2009. The then 46-year-old was the picture of health. He didn’t smoke, didn’t drink, ate healthfully and exercised regularly. In fact he had just finished working out with a friend when he started to feel ill.

Recognizing the seriousness of the situation his friend rushed him to INTEGRIS Canadian Valley Hospital in Yukon. They arrived at the emergency room at 8:01 a.m. Two minutes later, McDown was in full cardiac arrest.

“The chest pain was excruciating. It felt like someone was tightening straps around my chest,” remembers McDown. The type of heart attack he suffered is so severe it is frequently referred to as the “widow maker,” with a survival rate of roughly only 5 percent.

“What caught my attention was when Linda McDown grabbed my arm and said ‘Whatever you do please don’t let him die. He’s a good husband’,” says Sean Ludlow, M.D., an emergency room physician at INTEGRIS Canadian Valley Hospital. “Normally you try to leave the personal aspects out to do what is right for the patient. You leave the emotion out and deal with it later. But I prayed as J walked into the room ‘Please God let me see a miracle today’.”

Dr. Ludlow is one-half Choctaw. He is the great-grandson of original enrollee the late Watkin Ludlow and Harriet Lewis Ludlow of Ludlow, Okla. He is the son of Bob Ludlow of Ludlow.

Happy 60th anniversary

Nathan “Sonny” Benton, Jr. and Aline “Tootsie” Scuggins were married on Oct. 9, 1950, in Lawrence, Kan., after attending Haskell Institute. They made their first home in Lawrence then later moved to Chilocco, Okla., in 1956. After retirement from Chilocco Indian School in 1980, the Bentons spent the last 30 years in Arkansas City, Kan., where they are active charter members of Hillcrest Bible Baptist Church. They have five children: Nathan III, Marilyn Walking Sky, Phillip, John and Nancy Smith. They also have 15 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. The Benton children are hosting a reception in their parents’ honor from 1 to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 9 at Hillcrest Bible Baptist Church in Arkansas City.



Happy 51st anniversary

Billie H. McCants and Frances Willis married Oct. 10, 1959, in Bakersfield, Calif. Billie is the descendant of Andrew Jackson Westbrook and Mattie McDaniels Westbrook.



Congrats, Jayna!

Jayna Noley Fields of Edmond graduated from the University of Central Oklahoma on May 7, 2010, having earned a Master of Education in Secondary Education. Her master’s thesis was entitled “Adolescent College Student Perceptions of Healthy Sleep Hygiene.” She is a member of Kappa Delta Pi, the international honor society for educators. Additional honors include Dean’s list recognition and having served as a UCO student senator representing the Native American Student Association. She plans to teach high school English and journalism. She is the daughter of James and Joyce Noley of Wilburton, and is the mother of teenage sons Cody and Christian Ornelas. Fields is married to Kenneth Lee Fields, Jr., and the couple celebrated their first anniversary on July 8. At their wedding reception, the couple celebrated their Choctaw heritage by re-enacting the Wedding Race.



Happy birthday, John

Happy 20th birthday to John James Going on Oct. 28. Wishing him a happy birthday are his mother Bertha Going of Golden; three brothers Gabriel Going, Mario Going and Kevin Carterby; Grandma Mary Carterby; Uncle John Ray Carterby; two aunts, Melinda Simpson and Martha Carterby, all of Golden



Congrats, Ross Riddle

Ross Riddle graduated from Oklahoma State University in May with a degree in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. He applied for and was accepted into OSU Medical School in Tulsa. The “White Coat” ceremony was held on Aug. 14 in Tulsa. Ross would like to thank the Choctaw Nation for its support during his undergraduate studies. Ross is pictured with Howard G. Barnett Jr (left), President, OSU Center for Health Sciences and Stanley E. Grogg, D.O. (right), Interim Dean, OSU College of Osteopathic Medicine.



Dr. Ludlow and his team had to shock McDown 15 times during the ordeal to restart his heart. “His heart wouldn’t start. He was clinically dead,” says McDown’s wife Linda. “Had they quit on him at INTEGRIS Canadian Valley, he would not be here today. They did an amazing job!”

Realizing that McDown needed more advanced care, he was transferred to INTEGRIS Baptist Medical Center in Oklahoma City. While en route, paramedics had to use a defibrillator twice just to keep his heart beating.

Once at INTEGRIS Baptist, McDown coded an additional six times. He was treated by INTEGRIS Heart Hospital cardiologist Mel Clark, M.D. “With his heart attacks he had so many cardiac arrests that at one point we were almost ready to stop resuscitation,” says Clark.

But they persisted and eventually were able to get McDown somewhat stabilized, though the prognosis was grim. The main artery to McDown’s heart was completely blocked. A stent was inserted to try to restore blood flow but it was “touch and go” for the next several days.

Showing some improvement, McDown was discharged from the hospital April 27, 2009. Without even making it home, McDown returned to the emergency room within an hour. He was experiencing a second massive heart attack. The odds of surviving this one were even lower than the first.

It was determined that McDown’s artery was again blocked. After another stent was placed, McDown’s condition was extremely critical. “My blood pressure was dangerously low and my hands and feet were ice cold as my body was beginning to shut down,” explains McDown. “But I really thought I was going to die when I started losing my sight.”

He asked to see his children, to tell them goodbye. But seeing their faces, he found renewed strength. “When my kids came I started fighting again. I wanted to live! I honestly think that if my kids had not come, I might have given up.”

Smitherman elected Healdton city manager

Ward 6 McAlester City Councilor Louis Smitherman was elected as Healdton’s new city manager on July 19. Smitherman’s grandfather was the original enrollee J.C. Riddle. He worked for Choctaw Nation Health Services in Tahihina. Smitherman plans to keep the citizens abreast of what the city of Healdton is doing and build better relations with the city and its citizens.



Happy birthday, Kolby!

Happy Birthday Kolby Ludlow! Kolby turned 7 years old on Sept. 27. His proud parents are Stephen and Crystal Ludlow of Tahihina. His aunties Naomi and Rachel Ludlow and Lavada Russell would also like to wish him a happy birthday along with his grandparents Boyd and Flo Ludlow of Tahihina and Phylbee and John Conley of Beggs.



Congrats, Luca

Luca Dorsino Falagradly recently placed second in the Colorado Junior Golf Association State Championship held at Boulder Country Club in Boulder, Colo., on Aug. 11. Only 25 of the state’s top junior golfers qualified for this championship which was based on their point accumulation over the summer of tournament play. Luca placed in several other events this past summer including a 1st place finish at Indian Tree Golf Club in Arvada, Colo., and a third place finish at the Cherry Hills Country Club shooting his career low of one under par.



Blue named TANF Director

Tracy Blue has been hired to be the Tribal TANF Director for the North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians of California. The Tribal TANF program operates in Madera, Mariposa, Merced and parts of Fresno counties. Tracy is a California Native and has family that lived in the Tahihina area. Tribal TANF is a welfare-to-work program for parents to get on their feet again, learn a new trade or to start a new business. TANF laws allow sovereign nations such as tribes to have their own programs separate from the county systems that sometimes are not culturally sensitive to the Native American needs. TANF works with schools and other stakeholders, as prevention is the key to getting our next generation of workers and business people to understand navigation in the business world.



Summer wedding

James Richards and Jessica Woods were married on July 16 at Glensheen Estate in Duluth, Minn. James is the great-grandson of original enrollee Alma (Willis) Wells and the great-great-grandson of original enrollee John Willis.



Happy birthday Kristianna

Kristianna Nicole Holder will turn 16 on Oct. 10. She will be starting Driving School and hopes to get her license. At the present she is in the 10th grade and doing fine. She goes to church on a regular basis and likes everybody she meets. Kristianna is proud to be a Choctaw.



Douglas Horstmanhof, M.D., co-director of the INTEGRIS Advanced Cardiac Care program was brought in to assess the situation. It was determined that McDown’s body was not responding to the heart medication most commonly used with stent patients. His medication was adjusted and he spent the next 15 days in the hospital until he was finally able to go home mid May. Recovery was slow at first. But miraculously, by the end of the summer, McDown was able to return to work.

“So many great people played essential roles in Harold’s recovery. We could never thank them enough for the outstanding care he was given,” says his wife. “Now he’s back to normal. Playing golf and going to the lake. We walk three or four miles a day and I can’t keep up with him!” McDown says he is in the best shape of his adult life and his doctors agree.

“Through a combination of dedicated work by him and his incredibly supportive family, leading edge medical care, and answered prayer, Harold has enjoyed a return to an essentially normal quality of life,” Dr. Horstmanhof applauds. “He has been a model of self-care and compliance, which has greatly contributed to his remarkable improvements.”

The McDowns went back to INTEGRIS Canadian Valley Hospital on the one year anniversary to thank Dr. Ludlow and the ER staff for helping to save Harold’s life. Ludlow will never forget the encounter. “To see him come around the corner healthy was amazing. Based on his condition that dreadful day, he shouldn’t be here today.” Ludlow says the event changed him as a doctor. He often thinks of the McDowns as encouragement on tough days in the ER.

The family says the experience has only brought them closer. “When you come that close to death it just makes you think differently,” says McDown. “I don’t sweat the small stuff anymore and I truly cherish every moment I have with my wife and kids.”

Happy 90th, Nina

Nina Cody Dumond of Denton, Texas, celebrated her 90th birthday on Aug. 20 at a reception given by her family.

Honoring her and joining the celebration were family and friends who traveled from Arlington, Houston, San Antonio, Arizona, Colorado, Nebraska and Mexico.

Nina was born in Ervin to William Cody and Harriett Oakes Cody. Mrs. Cody was an original Choctaw enrollee. Nina grew up in Shoat Springs, near the Ervin community. She graduated from Grant High School and attended Hugo High for post-graduate classes.

She had one brother, Gene Cody of Hugo, who passed away in 1989, and one nephew, Larry Cody of Hugo. Nina has three children, seven grandchildren (two deceased), nine great-grandchildren (one deceased) and three great-great-grandchildren.

Nina is loved and admired by all who know her.



2010-2011 Miss PAC

Seventeen-year-old Veronica Arredondo of Dallas was recently crowned the 2010-2011 Miss Pac Princess. Veronica is a member of the Choctaw tribe and attends Townview Schools. At Townview she is the president of the Project Green Program and plans to graduate in 2011. Veronica is studying science and engineering.



Keelie turns five

Keelie Ann Kannady turned five on Sept. 13. She attends Pre-K at Southside Elementary School in Coweta. Her favorite colors are pink and purple, and she likes playing with her dolls and going to the Tulsa Zoo. She is the daughter of Mitch and Melissa Kannady and the great-great-granddaughter of original enrollee Eliza Ann “Dain” Steelman.



Happy birthday

Happy eighth birthday to Aspen Winfield! Aspen likes barrel racing with her horse, Tag. She’s in second grade at Jefferson School in Riverton, Wyo. She’s the great-granddaughter of Linnie (Spring) Winfield. Her great-great-grandparents were Ella and Frank Oakes of Hugo and Lennie Spring and Chris Spring of Hanford, Calif. Her great-great-uncle is Cecil Spring of Mena, Ark.



Olsen Reunion

The annual Olsen reunion was held at the Harmony Community Center near Atoka on Sept. 4. Attending were 55 descendants of Benjamin Olsen and Sarah Ann Smallwood Olsen, who was an original Choctaw roll member. Three of her grandchildren were present, Sarah Esther Olsen Cummings of Tahihina, Tommy Olsen of Clayton and Dora Lee Olsen Barnett of Odessa, Texas. The oldest person present was Sarah Esther Olsen Cummings who is 92 years old. The youngest present were twins Benjamin and Samuel Olsen of Calera, who are 9 months old. There was lots of food, visiting and the annual auction. A good time was had by all.

Happy birthday, Tracy

Happy belated birthday to Tracy! From Mom and your sons Cody and Kendall.



Choctaw Nation pilot featured in Garmin promotional video

By **LARISSA COPELAND**
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Recently, Garmin Limited, an international company known for its GPS technologies, turned to the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma (CNO) to help it spread the word about one of its major avionics products. Al Cherry, director of flight operations for the Choctaw Nation, was chosen to take part in a promotional video released earlier this summer for the Garmin G1000, a state-of-the-art integrated flight instrument system. In the video, Cherry told of the experiences and satisfaction the CNO flight operations team has had with the Garmin G1000 in one of their aircraft.

“They flew a production crew down here to our hangar from their headquarters in Olathe, Kan.,” he said. “We spent about two hours doing the interview and getting the shots they needed.” In 2008, the CNO upgraded one of its airplanes, a Beechcraft King Air 90, with the G1000, and it was the first aircraft to be equipped with a fully functioning, fully certified system. Along with the interview with Cherry, the video also featured the Choctaw aircraft with the new instrument system. “We’ve been very satisfied with this system and were willing to talk about it,” said Cherry. “Garmin and the company that installed the system, Elliott Aviation in Moline, Ill., have used us as references in the past because we’ve been so impressed with the system and we made that known to them.” The G1000 has everything a pilot needs to fly all in one system, displayed on just three Hi-Def LCD screens. Included is the combined communications



Al Cherry, pilot and director of flight operations for the Choctaw Nation.

and navigation radio, dual WAAS (wide area augmentation system) GPS, auto-pilot system, digital charts and gauges, datalink weather reports, terrain maps database with synthetic topography vision, XM radio, and many other features – all in one system. “It just makes flying a lot easier,” says Cherry. It allows the pilots to reduce stress and stay more focused during flight, improving safety, he explained. And safety is one thing that the CNO places above everything when it comes to flying. As a former Navy aviator and regional airline pilot who holds commercial, flight instructor and airline transport ratings, Cherry said when he was hired in 2001 he was very impressed with the CNO’s stance on safety, flying and the maintenance of its aircraft. “Safety is the main concern here. You’ll find some companies that don’t live by that but it’s a priority here,” he explained. “They said, one, maintain the aircraft right or park it, and

two, there is no flight that has to go, meaning that if I’m not comfortable about a flight for whatever reason – fatigue, weather, anything – I make the call about it,” he said. “This Garmin system helps making that call a lot easier.” Another benefit to having this system is the weight saved in the aircraft by replacing the heavier instruments, gauges and radios with the lighter, more compact G1000. “We took about 150 pounds out of the nose of the aircraft,” said Cherry. “I could really feel a difference.” The flight instrument system upgrade was just one of many improvements done to the King Air 90 over the past two years. The 1993-model aircraft has received new engines, props, exterior paint job, and interior remodel, making it look and operate like new. “Over the last couple of years we’ve pretty much built a brand new airplane but at a fraction of the cost of buying one new,” said Cherry. The airplane had about

4,000 flight hours on it when the reconditioning began and will now give the CNO approximately 20 more years of service. In addition to the Beechcraft King Air 90, the CNO also owns a 2004 Cessna Citation Encore twin-engine jet for longer-distance trips or when they need more space for passengers. The CNO is the second owner of both planes. In total, they fly roughly 400 hours per year in the two aircraft. The planes weren’t acquired as luxuries for the CNO; they were purchased to fulfill a need of the tribe. Chief Gregory E. Pyle, Assistant Chief Gary Batton, and other Choctaw officials do a great deal of traveling every year to Washington, D.C., and Oklahoma City, meeting with government officials on matters pertaining to tribal issues. They also journey to areas all over the country, holding community meetings with tribal members residing outside the CNO boundaries. By owning its own planes, the CNO is able to save both

time and money, which translates into better services to its tribal members. “Even in the King Air, I can beat the airlines to Washington, D.C.,” said Cherry. “By the time Chief Pyle would have left his office in Durant, drove to Dallas, got checked in, boarded, caught a connection, I would have had him sitting in an office in downtown D.C. when the airlines were still at altitude enroute to the airport. In the Cessna, it’s even quicker. We can have him in at his meeting while the airliner would still be loading passengers. It’s very efficient (to own the planes).” “We’re also able to land at thousands of airports that the airlines don’t serve,” he continued. “We can go directly to where we need to go.” Along with flying for tribal business, the flight team volunteers their time and the planes to provide free air transportation to wounded active duty and veteran armed forces members and their families for medical purposes. “We volunteer for flights for the Veterans Airlift Command,” said Cherry. “This organization coordinates flights for wounded active duty and former armed forces members who have disabling injuries that preclude them from using normal modes of travel. We usually make about one flight a month.” Chief Gregory E. Pyle, recalling a recent event that occurred while transport-

ing a veteran, says he’s very proud that the Choctaw Nation is able to assist the wounded troops. “Recently, on one of these flights, the control tower in Houston learned that a wounded warrior was on the flight and asked if they could speak to him,” said Chief Pyle. “Al Cherry, our pilot, a veteran himself, gave the microphone to the soldier and told the controller to go ahead. The controller started talking to him. He thanked the soldier for his service and wished him a speedy recovery. He then said that anyone else on that frequency who wanted to say anything could go ahead,” continued Pyle. “One after another, they kept talking. One pilot would get on then another. They continued lining up, all wishing the soldier well and thanking him for his service and sacrifice. We are so proud that the Choctaw Nation is able to help in this effort.” In addition to Cherry, the flight operations team includes Chief Pilot Quentin McLarry, a CNO pilot since 2005, and John Wesley, who has been on-board with the CNO since 2007. The three rotate piloting the two aircraft owned by the CNO, flying the Choctaw officials as needed for tribal business. The team undergoes annual training and certifications to stay up-to-date on the aircraft they fly, along with the medical screenings required of aviators. The flight team all agrees that flying has been made easier with the Garmin system and were happy to do the promotional video to help Garmin promote a product that’s been so useful to them. Garmin began distributing the video around the world earlier this month to companies and pilots interested in the G1000 system.

Hooser honored with AARP 2010 Indian Elder award

By **CHRIS DILL**
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

On Aug. 30, Choctaw elder Ernest Hooser, his daughter Pam Morgan and friends attended the AARP (American Association of Retired Persons) Oklahoma 2010 Indian Elder Honors at the National Cowboy and Western Museum in Oklahoma City. Ernest was one of 50 Indian elder honorees coming from many different Native American tribes of Oklahoma. The evening began with a delicious buffet dinner. Soon after, the Oklahoma Fancy Dancers displayed four different styles of Native American dance including the butterfly dance and the hoop dance. The event room in the museum was the perfect setting for the banquet, where massive paintings of our nation’s beautiful landscape were displayed. The AARP Mistress of Ceremonies Cherokee Ballard greeted the proud elders by saying, “The first people of America, the first people of Oklahoma, we welcome you!” AARP Oklahoma Volunteer President Marjorie Lyons expressed her thanks to the elders saying she had “the best seat in the house, looking at all of these faces.” Following Lyons was AARP State Operations Executive Vice President Hop Backus. AARP National Board of Directors President-Elect Robert Romasco spoke of his pride as he looked over the many faces of the respected Native American elders of the audience, and he was happy



Ernest Hooser and his daughter, Pam Morgan, attended the AARP ceremony in Oklahoma City

they all could be present. After all of the thanks were expressed by the AARP spokespeople, the presentation of medals to the 50 Indian elders began. Ernest Hooser was nominated by his friends Dottie Davis and Reba Titsworth, both of Durant. Davis wrote a letter to the AARP regarding Hooser’s outstanding pride for his Choctaw heritage and his history of being an educator. Davis herself was taught by Hooser when she was in Jr. High School at Durant. “For as long as I can remember, Ernest has told us stories about his Choctaw past,” expressed Davis.

A beaming Hooser received his Honorable Indian Elder medal while shaking the hands of the AARP representatives and being applauded by many. “I feel honored,” declared Hooser. “I’m here with a group of the better people of these tribes. This is real good.” As his description in the 2010 Indian Elder Honors program reads and past student Davis speaks of him, “Mr. Hooser is an inspiration to everyone he meets.” Hooser is one of the most proud Choctaws you will ever have the pleasure of meeting, and is very happy to have received this much-deserved honor.

Labor Day Art Show winners

Paintings:

- 1st place – Two Princesses Standing by Kevin Hardin
- 2nd place – Lone Choctaw – 1700s – Hidden Behind the Beauty of the Forest with Her Brother Turtle by Janie Semple Umstead
- 3rd place – Cattle Drive by Vickie Earthman Tipton
- Honorable Mention – The Woman who Posed as Pocahontas by Kevin Hardin
- Heritage Award – Code Talker by Dylan Cavin

Graphics:

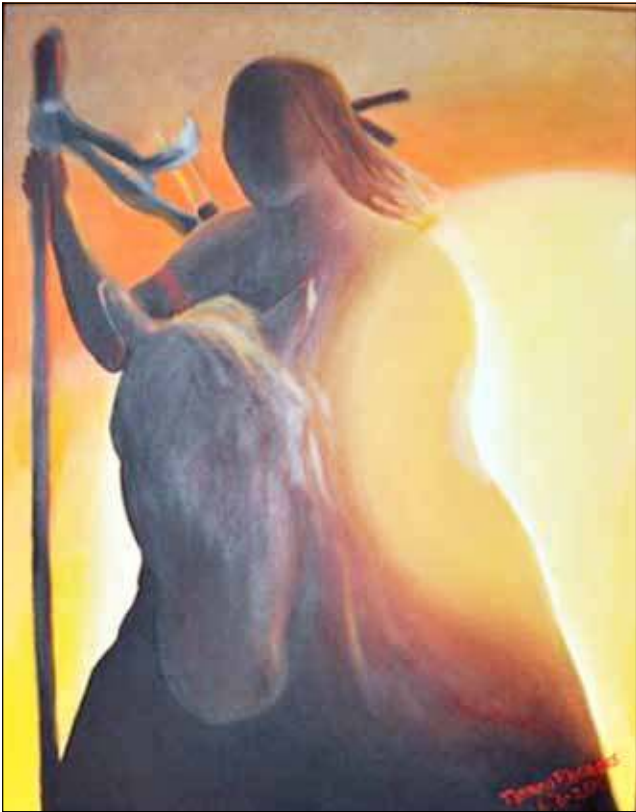
- 1st place – God’s Girl by Melanie Yost
- 2nd place – Choctaw Greeting by Gwen Coleman Lester
- 3rd place – Jenny by Carol Ayers
- Heritage Award – God’s Girl by Melanie Yost

Sculpture:

- 1st place – We Lost but We Gained by Lyman Choate
- 2nd place – The Hunters by Lyman Choate
- 3rd place – Walk On by Yvonne Huser
- Heritage Award – Ancient Traveler by Lyman Choate

Pottery:

- 1st place – Yaklush-Storage Vessel by Edmon Perkins
- 2nd place – Nuni-Fish by Verna Todd
- 3rd place – Okfuchush – Duck by Verna Todd
- Honorable Mention – Owl Vase by Edmon Perkins
- Heritage Award – Yaklush - Reproduction of 1830 Storage Vessel by



The People’s Choice award was presented to Nancy Rhoades for her painting, “Prideful Watch.” The award was determined by votes from visitors to the art show.

- Edmon Perkins
- Basketry:**
- 1st place – Choctaw X basket by Lizabeth B. Mitchell
- 2nd place – Friendship basket by Lizabeth B. Mitchell
- 3rd place – Choctaw Elbow basket by Susan Locke Charlesworth
- Heritage Award – Choctaw pouch by Lizabeth B. Mitchell
- Cultural:**
- 1st place – Timikachi Beating of the Drum by John H. Johnson White
- 2nd place – Shoboti – Shutik / The Heaven’s Smoke by John H. Johnson White
- 3rd place – Untitled by Jarvis Johnson Sr.
- Honorable Mention – Gourd Vessel with Turtle

- Lid by Cathy Nyman
- Heritage Award – Beadwork by Shirley Lowman
- Jewelry:**
- 1st place – Repousse Spirit Horse by Theresa Renegar
- 2nd place – The Eye by Robert Proctor
- 3rd place – Favorite Colors by Theresa Renegar
- Honorable Mention – Tuklo Hoshonti / Two Shadows by Erin Proctor Herbert
- Heritage Award – Stickball Jewelry by Jerry Lowman
- Best of Show:**
- Pisatuntema by Dylan Cavin
- People’s Choice:**
- Prideful Watch by Nancy Rhoades

Labor Day Festival Photo Gallery 2010



A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held Friday, Sept. 3, for the new Choctaw Culture Center arts and crafts facility on the Choctaw Nation Capitol grounds at Tushka Homma. The beautiful new facility was welcome by visitors to the festival who wanted to leisurely browse the unique creations of the vendors inside. There were 136 booths set up with items such as jewelry, paintings, baskets, quilts and various arts and crafts.



An unveiling ceremony was held Friday, Sept. 3, for the Tushka Homma “Red Warrior” statue on the capitol lawn. The statue’s face is that of Joseph Oklahombi, one of the most well known of the Choctaw warriors of World War I. His arrow is aimed toward the future.



The oldest person in attendance at this year’s festival was 95-year-old Cecil Spring of Mena, Ark.



A Red Warrior memorial was unveiled at the softball field on Saturday, Sept. 4. The monument was constructed to honor deceased ball players of Tushka Homma.



Grand door prize winners of the two 2010 GMC Sierra pick-up trucks were Patty Roberson of McAlester and Robert McDonald of Ardmore.



Norma Jacob Jones and Liz Jacob Scroggins.



Storytellers Greg Rodgers, Adeline Hudson and Stella Long.



Alma Hibbert from Wylie, Texas, visits with Chief Pyle.



Assistant Chief Gary Batton makes a special presentation to bride Debra Belt.



Quilt Show Winners

Machine Stitch:

- 1st place: Janelle Kirkes, Tuskahoma, Quilt - Hope Pride Success.
- 2nd place: (tie) Thelma Wright, Sallisaw, Quilt - John Deere.
- 2nd place: (tie) Ann Bender, McAlester, Quilt - Little Girl with Balloons.
- 3rd place: Becky Myill, Oklahoma City, Quilt - Cowboys.

Hand Stitch:

- 1st place: Robert Clay , Broken Bow, Quilt - Pine-apple Delight.
- Machine/Hand Stitch:
- 1st place: April Sessums, Marlow, Quilt - Trail of Tears.
- 2nd place: Lois Thomas, Talihina, Quilt - Plantation Lady.
- 3rd place: (tie) Becky Tisho, Oklahoma City, Quilt - Rail Road.
- 3rd place: (tie) April Sessums, Marlow, Quilt - Satin Crazy Quilt.



Bryant Rickman give Kaitlyn Maus a ride on Choctaw pony Chief Going Streak.



Olin Williams officiates the wedding of Debra Belt and Erik Garcia. The couple married Sept. 2, in a traditional Choctaw ceremony.



Nicholas Charleston, Durant.



Luksi is a crowd pleaser!



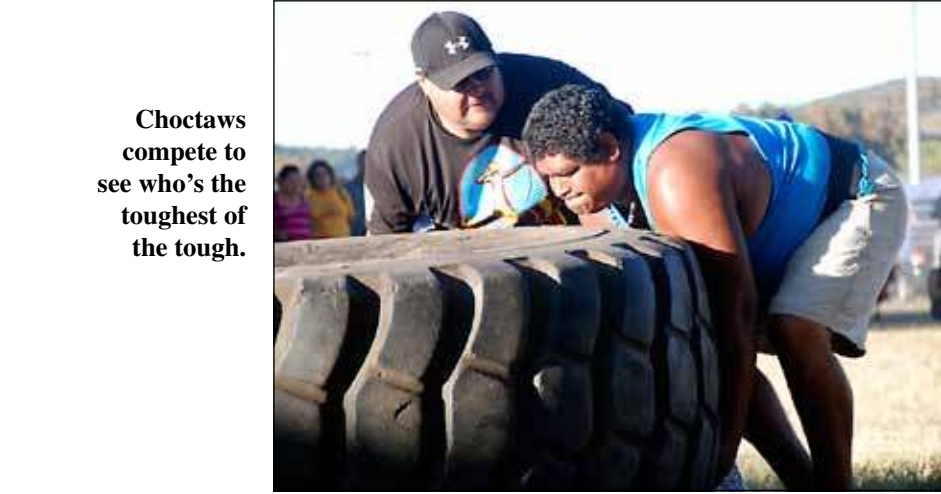
Labor Day Festival Photo Gallery 2010



Chief Gregory E. Pyle and U.S. Congressman Dan Boren join dancers Dezarac and Serena for Grand Entry.



Bryant Rickman rides Chief Going Streak and Rebecca Stair Gilpatrick rides Chisto through the village. The horses are descendants of Choctaw ponies from Blackjack Mountain.



Choctaws compete to see who's the toughest of the tough.



Gourd dancing, social dancing and stickball are enjoyed every year at the festival.



Labor Day festival photo gallery 2010



Volleyball 1st place winner - N2WIN. Team members: Tim Harjochee, Shiela Davis, Brian Culley, Melissa Culley, Neva Harjochee, Jeremy Wallace, Carey Tom and Joel Hall



18 and under (boys) 3-point contest 1st place Johnathan Diamond, 2nd place Cole McKinney, 3rd place Rylee Barton



18 and under (girls) 3-point contest 1st place Chantey Lee



Volleyball 2nd place winner - Smoke Signals. Team members: Audrey Crosby, Carl Crosby, Brett Billy, Rayburn Baker, Lincoln Barnette, Lenora Crosby, Vicky Wesley, Gloria Battiest, Shonda Wesley and Anita Ferguson



Ages 7-9 Free Throw 1st place Michael Battice, 2nd place Kolby Battiest, 3rd place Dylan Williams



Age 14-17, 3-on-3 winners - The Destroyers. Team members: Ben Robinson, Sidney Williams, Cameron Tennison, Tad Holt (also pictured: Matt Owens)



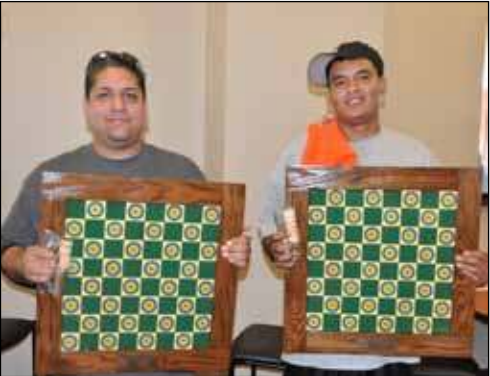
Youth checkers 1st place Sam Sears, 2nd place Casey Davidson



Men's 3-point contest 1st place Oscar Gore, 2nd place Randall Clay



Men's age 18-35, 3-on-3 winners - Ishto. Team members: Delaney Pennock, Billy Long, Nathan Turtle, Jordan Parnacher



Adult checkers 1st place Jason Baker, 2nd place Casey McKinney



Women's Doubles Horseshoes winners - Tiffanie Bohanan and Sequina Taylor



Dominoes winners (youth) 1st place Heaven Williams, 2nd place Kalli Battiest



The overall winners of the 2010 Labor Day Festival 5K race are congratulated by Chief Gregory E. Pyle and Assistant Chief Gary Batton. The top female finisher was Vanessa Parnell, age 14, who ran the race in 22:15, and the top male finisher, Matt Agnero, age 30, ran it in 16:50.



Ages 16-18 Free Throw 1st place Kaleb Jones, 2nd place Kolby Baker, 3rd place Cole McKinney



Terrapin Race winners (ages 3-7) 1st place Kail Postoak, 2nd place McKenzie Petty, 3rd place Draven Postoak



Bow shoot winner (ages 17-19) Michael Bugos



Age 10-13, 3-on-3 winners - The No-Names. Team members: Todd Dawkins, Seth Burke, Keaton Slater, Bryn Houlton, Whitney Garner, Kyle Morley



Men's Horseshoes Ringer winner - Charles Elk



Bow shoot winners (women age 20 and over) 1st place Pam Waugh, 2nd place Cyndi Houser, 3rd place Hope Jones



Ages 10-12 Free Throw 1st place Brianna Battiest, 2nd place Chas Fariless, 3rd place Tyler Walker



Women's 3-on-3 winners - Team SWAG. Team members: Lisa Wright, Evan Lee, Tara Howze, Tiffany Wheeler



Women's Singles Horseshoes winner - Tiffanie Bohanan



Tough Tough Choctaw Champion - Jered Johnson



Men's Singles Horseshoes winner - Bunky Impson



Women's 3-point contest 1st place Laura Hamilton, 2nd place Misty Madbull



Men's Doubles Horseshoes winner - Abe Locust and David Cheater



Men's age 35 and over 3-on-3 winners - Southeast Ballers. Team members: Don Tsosci, Mike Convers, Darrell Buriss, Bobby Gordon



Best-dressed terrapin winners McKenzie Petty (ages 3-7) and Jacob May (ages 8-12)



Ages 13-15 Free Throw 1st place DJ Johnson, 2nd place Tyler Hulbutta, 3rd place Adam Walker



Terrapin Race winners (ages 8-12) 1st place Jacob May, 2nd place Kadin Postoak, 3rd place Lauren Nichols



Dominoes winners (adult) 1st place Chris Griffin, 2nd place Roland Wade



Bow shoot winner (ages 14-16) Jason Bugos



Bow shoot winners (men age 20 and over) 1st place Al Gurganus, 2nd place Kenneth Bugos, 3rd place Jody Waugh



Bow shoot winners (ages 9-13) 1st place Kacey Ludlow, 2nd place Sam Jacob, 3rd place Bryant Lee

Labor Day Sports and Activities



Men's Softball Champions 2010 -- Next of Kin



Women's Softball Champions 2010 -- Young Bloods



GED students receive diplomas during graduation ceremony

By BRET MOSS

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Commencement began at 7 p.m. on Sept. 17 for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma’s (CNO) GED graduates in the Mitchell Auditorium on the campus of Eastern Oklahoma State College in Wilburton. The graduation ceremony is held for individuals who have completed the requirements to earn their GED and deserve the ceremony dedicated to the recognition of their achievements.

Prior to the processional, the audience was kept entertained with the sound of “The Revelators.” This trio of siblings from Durant consists of Bubba Johnson, Lena Scott and graduate Moses Johnson.

After the graduates were seated, Joe Coley, District 6 Councilman, delivered the Invocation. Joy Culbreath, CNO Executive Director of Education, took the stage to be the first of many to congratulate the graduates on their accomplishments.

“I’m so proud of you. What an accomplishment,” said Culbreath. She went on to mention that this year boasted a record-breaking number of 140 students earning their diploma.

Assistant Chief Gary Batton praised the graduates saying, “I don’t think you realize the hope that you give us and the people,” as he expressed his satisfaction in the fact that Choctaw members are furthering their education.

Tribal Council Speaker



and District 4 Councilman Delton Cox followed Batton on the mic and introduced the Tribal Council in attendance. Though Cox spoke briefly, he made it a point to encourage the graduates to continue furthering their education. “Make this the first step... it will improve your quality of life,” he said.

Oklahoma State Senator for District 6 Jay Paul Gumm stepped up to the podium to fulfill his role as the night’s keynote speaker. Gumm spoke as one who truly knows the value of education.

In his address he acknowledged that it is not just the graduates who deserve recognition, but the family,

friends and all the people who lent support, time and resources that aided in the completion of the task.

Speaking of the graduates, Gumm stated, “They are going to make a brighter future for themselves... for their families... for the state.” He, like Cox, encouraged them to continue their education. It will not be easy he said, but “God rarely asks us to do an easy thing.”

Gumm also thanked CNO for investing in their people with programs such as the Adult Education Program, which makes all this possible. Neal Hawkins, the Adult Education Director, mentioned that this was the 13th year for this event cel-

ebrating these achievements.

Following Sen. Gumm’s speech, the graduates began to walk across the stage to be awarded their certificates. Leading the walk on stage was the year’s highest scorer, Anthony Floyd.

For the graduates, the road to their diploma consists of 13 weeks of in-class learning twice a week, or distance learning classes three times a week for nine weeks. After the classroom education, they are required to complete the state test, which is administered by a GED examiner.

The ceremony concluded with the recessional as the proud graduates exited the auditorium.

Graduates include Justin

Adcock, Samantha Anderson, Misty Arterberry, Jessie Atteberry, Arlena Baker, Arion Barnhart-Zellers, Chester Bear, William Beatty II, Whitney Bell, Heather Bennett, Tanner Bergren, Kayla Billy, Toni Billy, Daniel Birkenfield, Caleb Black, Tonya Blake, Jonathan Bogle, Kenneth Bond, Vance Boswell, Lacey Box, Ashley Boykin, Aireal Brown, Chris Buie, Ashlea Bumgarner, LaDonna Burdette, Heath Byrd, Kerry Carpenter, Amber Carter, Steven Christie, Angela Clark, Anthony Clark, Kayla Cloud, Shawna Cody, Jimmie Colbert, Christy Conallis, Tyler Coulter, Colby Davis, Shawta Davis, Jeremy Deere, Jakob Dickieson, Roberta Dinger, Trenton Duff, Crystal Dunkin, Patrick Dunlab, Matthew Ed-

wards, Kacey Eggenburg, Angelena Fisk, Anthony Floyd, Jennifer Floyd, Ruth Garner, Magarita Gates, Jewell Gibson, Jennifer Gould, Corinne Hamm, Brentlee Haynie, Al-lana Hill, Danielle Hoffman, Brett Allen Holderm, Joseph Holloway, Charlotte Holstine, Rhonda Hooser, Asha Howell, Daniel Hudson, Donald Hughart, Betsie Hunter, Jeffery Hutchings, Darlene Inacio, Ashley Jaimes, Nathan Jamison, Heather Johnson, Moses Johnson, Ashleigh Joplin, Tyler Kelly, Paul Killingsworth, Erica Kleman, Jon Kurkendall, Bridgette Larkins, Tashena Leflore, Lauren Lindamood, Dakota Mantaghi, Jeffery Martin, Michael Marzek, Cody May, Zachary McIntyre, Joey McKinney, Sylvia Morales, Emily Morgan, April Myers, Kaylene Myers, Roy Nelson, Christopher Nelson, Felicia Ortiz, Justin Osborn, Tara Osmer, Curtis Prock, Randy Peavy, Elizabeth Quinones, Austin Ribbe, Lacey Rollings, Ariel Routh, Mark Sam, Lindsey Smauels, Michael Scott, William Scott, Stephanie Sexton, Jelsee Shelton, Tanesha Shoe-make, Jacqueline Shomo, Ben Shook, Karen Simms, Christina Sistrunk, Rachael Skinner, Adonna Smith, Amy Smith, Melissa Smith, Jonathan Sockey, Edward Spottedfeather, Sheldon Teague, Shelia Terrell, Courtney Thomas, Casey Tinkler, Allen Tisho Jr., Marky Todd, Shineesta Tonihka, Sarah Tuggle, Kevin Waldron, Jennifer Walker, Nichelle Walker-Darrow, Krista Waterman, Scott Wheeler, Michael Wiley, Diana Williams, Brandon Wilson, Rebekah Wilson, Anthony Wilson-Gasca, Lisa Wood, Nathan Woody and Ashley Young.

CAB program helps make dreams come true

The Choctaw Asset Building (CAB) program has assisted two Choctaw tribal members in achieving their dreams. Kimberly Feltman of Bryan County and Floyd Murray IV of McCurtain County have each reached their savings goals and were able to take advantage of the matching funds provided by CAB. Feltman, one of the first participants to sign up, saved \$2,000 over the course of a year. CAB was able to match her funds with an additional \$6,000, giving her a total of \$8,000 to help her reach her dream of owning a family home. “This is a huge blessing to me and my husband and our children,” says Feltman, “to know we will grow old in our new house and that our children will always know where we are if they need anything or a place to stay.”

Murray recently paid for a semester of tuition, books, and fees at Southeastern Oklahoma State University using a portion of his savings that CAB matched \$2 for each \$1 of his savings. Murray is working towards an associate’s degree in Business Management and plans on continuing with his bachelor’s degree. “Earning an associate’s degree will qualify me for several job opportunities with reasonable pay



Kimberly Feltman and Dawn Hix, CAB.

and cause the stability of my household to become sufficient. Once I earn an associate’s degree, it will also help me move closer to a bachelor’s degree which will open more possibilities for the future,” says Floyd. Murray will continue to save with the CAB program until CAB has matched a total of \$2,000 of his savings with an additional \$4,000. This will give Murray a total of \$6,000 to help pay for his education.

In order to earn the matching funds, Feltman and Murray had to meet their monthly savings goals for at least six months, satisfy the educational requirements, and complete an asset purchase plan. “The main goal of the program is to increase the saving habits and money management skills in our tribal members. The matching funds are not just given to the participants. They have to earn them by taking time out of their schedules to attend financial education classes and making sacrifices in order to meet their savings goals. Some of our participants are able to make small adjustments, while others require almost a lifestyle change in order to find the money to save,” says CAB Achievement Coach Janie Joplin, “I am so very proud of these two. While CAB may have given them a pathway, they had to set their goals and do all the hard work in order to be successful in attaining their goals.”

CAB participants are able to save for one of three assets, a first-time home purchase, to pay for a post secondary education, or to start or expand a small business. Up to \$2000 of the participants’ personal savings are matched at a rate of 3 to 1 for homebuyers and 2 to 1 for those who wish to pay for a post secondary education or to start or expand a



Janie Joplin, CAB, and Floyd Murray IV.

small business. Participants are provided with 12 hours of financial education and 6 hours of asset specific training. “We are so excited for our savers. It is very rewarding to help someone see their dreams come true. This program is such a great opportunity for Choctaw tribal members. Where else can you receive a 200% - 300% return on your investment or 12 hours of financial education free, not to mention one-on-one counseling with our achievement coach to help you with your daily budget needs. It is an amazing program,” says Dawn Hix, CAB Program Manager and IDA Coordinator.

CAB’s service area includes the 10 ½ counties of the Choctaw Nation, the counties that border the Choctaw Nation including those in Arkansas and Texas, and now Oklahoma and Cleveland Counties in central Oklahoma. Applicants must have some form of earned income and meet certain financial guidelines to qualify for the program. Information about the Choctaw Asset Building program can be found online at www.choctawcareers.com/cab.html, on facebook, or interested persons can call Dawn Hix or Janie Joplin at 866-933-2260.

To the Youth of the Nation

By Kassi Baughman, Youth Advisory Board
2nd Place Scholarship Winner (CDIB)

Upon graduation from Caney High School, I plan to attend Southeastern Oklahoma State University, majoring in pre-pharmacy. My educational goal is to complete all basic requirements within two years, while achieving a GPA of 3.8. I feel this is a goal I can accomplish due to the fact I am concurrently enrolled in high school with a 4.0 and college with a 3.67 GPA, while participating in many extra-curricular activities. After completing two years at Southeastern, I plan to transfer to Southwestern to complete a pharmacy degree.

I fully grasp the responsibility and determination it will take on my behalf to accomplish the educational goals I have set for myself. I am already acquainted with hard work and dedication. I will graduate as valedictorian of my high school class, which is a goal I set for myself upon entering freshman year. Through the last four years I have attained good study habits and a comprehension of what it takes to achieve educational goals.

I believe in myself and my abilities to accomplish any goal I set for myself. That being said, I believe I can successfully complete pharmacy education while maintaining a high GPA in a minimal amount of time. I will set aside the time needed to make education a top priority for the next several years. Throughout high school I have been involved in many extra-curricular activities and organizations and have enjoyed this social networking to the fullest extent. Now it is the time in my life when education becomes my focus.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION

ANTLERS

Market open weekdays Nov. 1-23 , except for:
Nov.3 : llabel 9-11 a.m.; Broken Bow 12-2 p.m. (market closed)
Nov. 10: Bethel 9-10:30a.m.; Smithville 12-2p.m.(market closed)
Closed Nov. 11 for holiday & 24-30 for inventory
Cooking with Carmen: Nov. 9 &19, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

DURANT

Market open weekdays: Nov. 1-23, except for:
Closed Nov. 11 for holiday & 24-30 for inventory
Cooking with Carmen: Nov. 1 & 15, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

McALESTER

Market open weekdays Nov. 1-23, except for:
Closed Nov. 11 for holiday & 24-30 for inventory
Cooking with Carmen: Nov. 3 & 12, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

POTEAU

Market open weekdays Nov. 1-23, except for:
Closed Nov. 11 for holiday & 24-30 for inventory
Cooking with Carmen: Nov. 5 & 17, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

CHOCTAW NATION FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Open 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Monday thru Friday. We will take lunch from 11:30 to 12 noon

WAREHOUSES & MARKETS

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

FOOD DISTRIBUTION SITES

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

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Cousins Rayan and McKenzie Polk pose by the Pow Wow display at Red Earth in Oklahoma City. They participated in the parade and pow wow. Rayan is the daughter of Marcus and Krissy Polk and McKenzie is the daughter of Micah and Natasha Polk.

Council officers begin new term

Continued from Page 1

Councilmembers approved District 12 Councilman James Frazier as Secretary and Joe Coley as Chaplain for the year 2010-11. Cox, Frazier and Coley were all given unanimous verbal approval.

Speaker Cox reappointed Patty Hawkins as Recording Secretary, Sylvester Moore as Sergeant-at-arms, and Bob Rabon as Parliamentarian.

Officers of the Tribal Council serve one year in their elected capacities. Re-elections are held every September.



Richard Adams and Roger Scott of the School of Choctaw Language presented teaching certifications to Kristin Pate of Calera and Joyce Cooper and Kathy Lee, both of Marlow.

Language instructors receive certification at Council meeting

Three Choctaw language instructors were presented their certifications during the September regular session of the Tribal Council. Kristin Pate of Calera will be teaching at Choctaw Nation Interlocal in Durant. Joyce Cooper of Marlow will be teaching in Marlow and Kathy Lee, also of Marlow, will be teaching in Lawton. Mel Gaines of Oklahoma City also received his certification in September. The number of tribally certified teachers has grown to over 100, with classes being held in several states.

Also approved were:

- 13 program budgets for fiscal year 2011
- funds and budgets for the Federal Transit Administration for Tribal Transit Program
- approval of Fuel Monitoring Program for Choctaw Nation Forestry
- authorizing funds for FY-10 CDBG Grant Project
- disposal of surplus equipment
- a business lease in favor of Hash Communications
- a recreational lease in favor of Rick Raney
- three grants of easement
- application for the Water Resources Management, Planning and Pre-Development Program, and
- approval of Aging Needs Assessment.

Bobb is excellent role model

Continued from Page 1

to pass legislation to award a Congressional medal to the Native American Code Talkers.”

Chief Pyle told of how all senators, U.S. representatives and their staff were respectful of Brother Bobb and how his first-hand information of Choctaw Code Talkers helped get the legislation passed and signed so that the medals are now being designed to honor them.

Chief Pyle added that it was fitting that the theme for the 2010 Labor Day Festival was “Honoring Our Heroes,” because Bertram Bobb was definitely one of his heroes. Chaplain Bertram Bobb continues to be an excellent role model for all of us. Yakoke, Brother Bobb!

Princess winners

Continued from Page 1

Battiest. She attends Wright City Elementary.

Selected as first runner-up in the Sr. Miss category is Ashlyn Choate of Broken Bow, the daughter of Russell and Annette Choate. Second runner-up is Rebeckah Boykin of Hugo, the daughter of Robert “Sam” Boykin and Jana Pisachubbee Boykin.

In the Jr. Miss category, Melissa Gueli of Tuskahoma is first runner-up. Melissa is the daughter of Clifford and Cathy Ludlow. Second runner-up is Kayleigh Powell of Durant, the daughter of Monica Blaine.

Little Miss first runner-up is Kalli Battiest of Broken Bow, the daughter of Kenneth and Kimberly Battiest. Second runner-up is Brianna Battiest of Poteau, the daughter of Christina Battiest.

Atoka quarterback expected to break school’s record

By BRET MOSS
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

The time has come to ignite those Friday night lights all over this great nation. Within Choctaw country, there are a few players that football fans should keep their eyes peeled for this season.

A distinguished competitor to whom fans should pay close attention is the 17-year-old Atoka quarterback, L.T. Pfaff. This Wampus Cat senior and member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma is not only hoping for a spot in the playoffs later this season, but is a contender to become a record-breaking player.

Pfaff is chasing the all-career record in passing yards for the state of Oklahoma, which is currently held by Owasso quarterback Paul Smith who broke the previous record in 2002. Pfaff is approaching Smith’s record, which stands at 9,574. He is less than 1,500 yards away from becoming the new record holder.

With his entire senior year ahead of him, and a record within his grasp, Pfaff is keeping his focus on what is important to him, the team and the fans: the winning season. “I’ll do what is best for the team,” declares Pfaff as he explains how the record is a secondary objective to a winning season.

Pfaff mentions that he feels little pressure about the record. “I just go out there and play the game; I let the stats come after that.” In the spirit of a team leader, he makes no plans to make adjustments to his game to help reach the passing record. “We are gonna keep running our game, doing what we have to. If we have a good running game, we will stick to that.”

Coach Forrest Mazey reflects a synonymous attitude. “We are going to put ourselves in the best position possible,” said Mazey. “The team is pretty much focused on trying to win a district championship and getting to the playoffs,” he continued.

As Pfaff stands out as a star among his teammates, he is not without humility. He recognizes that he would not be so close to a record-breaking high school career without his receivers catching the passes. Likewise, he recognized the line, which gives him time to make the most efficient passes possible.

As for the team’s talent, it “looks pretty good, we are progressing every day, and getting better and better,” divulges Pfaff. He went on to mention new freshman talent Montana Johnson as being an exceptional receiver, foreshadowing success for the years after Pfaff’s high school days.

After his senior year, Pfaff, who has been playing football since the third grade, plans to continue his pursuit of victory on college turf. “I got letters from lots of schools, but no big talk yet,” said Pfaff. His goal is to play ball for a D1 school.

When it comes to passing record playing a part in this goal, Coach Mazey’s experience knows that the record is not what matters. Though it will look good for Pfaff, Mazey plans to keep the plays tailored toward what is best for the team and what will get the win.

“He is going to be measured as winning ball games rather than the record. In the end, they [recruiters] are going to see if he can win,” declared Mazey.

Since beginning his time with the Atoka Wampus Cats in 2007, Mazey mentions that he has seen a noticeable increase in school spirit and overall showing of community pride. With a better record of wins and making it to the playoffs last year, the school as a whole has become more interested and involved, notes Mazey. To Mazey, Pfaff and the team, this record is just a perk that comes with playing well and earning wins.

Regardless of his efforts to keep the big picture in mind, those who are close to Pfaff cannot help getting hyped about the pending record. Pfaff’s family is exceptionally proud of him. “Dad is always bragging on me at work,” said Pfaff as he laughed.

Being a registered Choctaw, he also has gained the attention of Chief Pyle. “The Choctaw Nation is proud to be blessed with talented members such as Pfaff, and we anticipate one of our own holding the state record,” mentioned Pyle.

Higher Ed helps Choctaws complete educational journey

By BRET MOSS
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Every year millions of people across the United States embark on a lengthy journey towards a higher education degree. These people invest much time and effort into seeking these degrees, as well as a great deal of money.

For some of these degree-seekers, the money might be hard to come by, and this is where the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma steps up to help out its tribal members. The monetary help the members receive is a result of the efforts of the Higher Education Department of the Choctaw Nation.

“Higher Ed is a grant and scholarship program that helps students who would like to go to college,” asserted Director of Higher Ed Larry Wade who has been involved with the program for 24 years.

Last year, the Higher Ed department awarded around \$6,500,000 in scholarships that went toward various aspects of collegiate expenses such as tuition, books, housing and more. About half of that money went to in-state students, while half aided in funding out-of-state students.

The Higher Ed department is available for any tribal member who plans to attend a college or university anywhere in the United State. “Participants must be seeking some type of degree plan like Associates, B.S. and B.A. degrees,” stated Wade. “We help with graduate programs too,” all the way up to the Ph.D. level.

Over the years, Higher Ed has been able to make an increasing impact on degree seeking Choctaws. “When I first started out in the program [24 years ago] we had maybe two or three hundred and now we are up to about 5,000,” said Wade.

“Most of the increase was due to the fact that when Chief Pyle got into office he put 6 million dollars into scholarships,” said Wade as he described the increasing number of participants.

There is no specific blood quantum required to take part in the program. Higher Ed only requires that you be Choctaw, have a CDIB card and complete the application process.

In order to take part in Higher Ed, participants will need to get an application by mail or by going to www.choctawnation.com and clicking on “services,” then “departments,” and then click “education.” This will lead to a list of all the educational programs sponsored by the Choctaw Nation, and in that list, scroll down to the Higher Ed section.

In this section, the application and all other documents needed will be made available, as well as answers to frequently asked questions.

After completing the application and gathering the supporting documents, send everything to P.O. Box 1210, Durant, OK 74702.

For questions or concerns, email lwade@choctawnation.com or call 1-800-522-6170 and request the Higher Ed department.

The Higher Ed program began as a Bureau of Indian Affairs, a federal program, in the early ’70s and was later turned over to the individual tribal departments in the late ’80s.

Since its inception, this program has helped many Choctaws on their journey toward a degree. The Higher Education Program is yet another way the Choctaw Nation helps to enhance the lives of all members through opportunities designed to develop healthy, successful, and productive lifestyles.

Choctaw Nation Vocational Rehabilitation

NOVEMBER 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8 Durant 8:00 - 4:30	9	10	11	12 Idabel 9:00-12:00 Broken Bow 1:30-3:00	13
14	15 Talihina 10:00 - 2:00	16 Antlers by appointment	17 Poteau 11:30-1:00	18	19 Wright City & Bethel by appointment	20
21	22 Crowder by appointment	23 McAlester 10:00 - 2:00 Stigler by appointment	24	25	26	27
28 Wilburton 10:30-2:00	29	30 Atoka 9:30-11:00 Coalgate 12:30-2:30				

Phone: 1-877-285-6893 • Fax: 580-326-2410
Email: ddavenport@choctawnation.com

Choctaw Nation

Distance Learning Technology

GED Classes

**Beginning
October 18, 2010**
Mondays, Tuesdays
and Thursdays
9 a.m. to 12 p.m.
at the Choctaw Nation
Community Centers
in Bethel, Smithville
and Wright City

**Mondays, Tuesdays
and Thursdays
1 p.m. to 4 p.m.
at the Choctaw Nation
Community Centers
in Atoka, Coalgate
and Talihina**

Martha Childs gets ready to conduct Adult Education Classes over One-Net Distance Learning. Monitors have been set up in Choctaw Nation Community Centers in Atoka, Bethel, Coalgate, Smithville, Talihina and Wright City so students in these rural areas will have an opportunity to take the classes and earn a GED.

Distance Learning GED classes are now available at the above locations to students in the Choctaw Nation. An experienced GED teacher will instruct you, using the One-Net Distance Learning Technology. Distance Learning allows students and teacher to see and hear each other on large monitors. You will be able to interact with the teacher as she helps you prepare to take the GED test. Books, supplies and testing fees are provided. The class will meet 3 days each week for approximately 9 weeks. A CDIB (Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood) is required. For more information please contact Neal Hawkins or Kathy Springfield, Choctaw Nation Adult Education, 800-522-6170 or 580-924-8280, ext. 2319 or 2122.

Dancing to reconnect: Impact of a Choctaw pastor still seen today

By **LARISSA COPELAND**
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Though the impact of a simple decision, a simple act, can create waves of results throughout the years, often times many don't know how or where it originated. The act in this case is *dance*. Could the simple act of dancing jumpstart a revival of a culture? In the opinions of many Choctaws, the answer is yes.

The legacy of the Rev. Gene Wilson and his wife, Alicia, and their efforts to reconnect Oklahoma Choctaws with their roots is a story that needs to be told, and it is hard to do it justice in a simple article.

For many, the loss of their cultural roots is a thought that never crosses their mind, but that is exactly what happened to many of the Choctaw people following the move from Mississippi to Oklahoma on the Trail of Tears. The effects of this move caused a wave of long-lasting undoing beyond the removal of an entire people. In their new homeland they were forced to abandon their language, art, sports and most aspects of their cultural identity, and integrate into the white culture of the time. Included in this forced forsaking was the Choctaw dance.

"They were made to believe that acting Choctaw, being Choctaw, was shameful," said the Rev. Gene Wilson, originally of Eagletown and currently living in Indianahoma. "This belief became engrained in them and was passed down year after year, from generation to generation."

Over a period of about 140 years, most identifiers of the culture were either lost or buried deep in Choctaws who lived the traditions within the confines of their homes. But starting in the early 1970s, Gene and his wife, Alicia, worked passionately to do their part in reversing that trend, and they started it all with the children.

The Wilsons' story begins with him graduating seminary in 1969 after more than six years of college, internships and clinical training. He began working with the Seminole Presbyterian Churches near Seminole and Wewoka where, after receiving his first paycheck, he married his wife, Alicia. Alicia, a member of the Comanche Tribe from the Lawton area, met her future husband in Los Angeles while he was interning at the Indian Center there.

Later in 1969, he received a "pastoral call" to be on staff at the Choctaw Parish Presbyterian Churches in Idabel and was responsible for youth ministries at 21 congregations.

"I was happy. This was my home-turf," he said. "I was young and they needed a staff person to fulfill the youth ministry position so I took it on."

Soon after taking the job, the idea to visit Mississippi, the "homeland" of the Choctaw, was proposed to help reconnect with the past. "Everyone knows that Mississippi is where we came from. Oklahoma wasn't our true home," he said. "But no one really spoke about it back then."

A group of eight made the trip to Mississippi in 1970, "and that's where it all started," said Alicia. "We had no point-of-contact there, no person we knew before we went."

During their visit they attended the annual Choctaw Indian Fair in Choctaw, Miss., and were left in awe of what they experienced. It was at the fair that they came up with the idea to bring the children of the



The Rev. Gene and Alicia Wilson show off a hand-beaded belt and drum, both of which were used by the *Oka Humma Chahta Hiltha*, a Choctaw child dance group they started in the early 1970s.

churches there to experience the culture for themselves.

"Something sparked in me while I was there. We'd gone back to our homeland, but I don't think we really realized that's what we were doing. But there we were, closing the gap on all the stories we'd known," explained Gene.

"Growing up, I don't think a lot of us really knew what it meant to be Choctaw," he said.

"We bought into this stereotype about the definition of an Indian. That's what people wanted. Kids at school would tell me 'you can't be a Choctaw Indian' because I didn't wear feathers. A lot of us grew up not knowing who we were," he continued. "I always wanted to know what the Choctaws were like. (On the trip to Mississippi) I was rejuvenated and then when I saw the dances – ah, we can dance! I didn't say that out loud but inside there was an identity that was starting to be affirmed," he said, explaining why he felt the need to bring other Choctaw children there.

"Based on our experience there, when we came back, a proposal was submitted for a grant and we were funded," explained Alicia, referring to a \$2,000 revitalization grant awarded by the central office of the Presbyterian Church in New York City to the Choctaw youth ministry. "That is how the dance group came to be," she stated.

The group she is referring to is the *Oka Humma Chahta Hiltha* dance group, a large group of child Choctaw dancers formed by the couple upon their return from Mississippi. The name means "Choctaw dancers from Oklahoma."

"There was an instant connection I felt with the dancers and I began to relate to it," said Gene, who spearheaded the idea to get money for the group to visit Mississippi. "It didn't take much to learn it – one step, two step, three step – and then when we got back home and showed it to the others, they had the same response. 'Here's my identity!' They didn't just say it but that is what was occurring," he continued ardently.

"It met a need, a cultural need, and fulfilled a self-identity, and even more, a community-identity. We are one. And we closed a gap, in some sense," he stated.

Along with closing a cultural gap inside them, they also built a cultural bridge

within their community, connecting the people by bringing them together with the dance.

"When we formed this group it was made up of people from the Presbyterian Church but soon it began to pull in people – kids and adults alike – who didn't go to church anywhere and they became a part of us," said Alicia. "In a sense, and I don't think we realized it at the time, but that became part of our ministry. They were learning their culture, learning who they are as Choctaws. That was the real key."

The *Oka Humma Chahta Hiltha* dance group made the trips to Mississippi from 1971 until the mid-1980s, with only the first trip being funded by the church. Subsequent trips over the years were funded from money they all raised themselves. The most productive, active years of the group were from 1974-1977.

As part of the Presbyterian Church, they hoped to establish a contact in Mississippi from another in their church family; however, there were no Presbyterian Churches nearby. In Pearl River though, was a Methodist Church. "We met a group from the Methodist Church and asked if they had a facility that the group could stay in," explained Alicia on the group's accommodations there. "That's where we all stayed. We made a monetary contribution to the church, but I'm sure it didn't even cover the cost of us staying there. Everyone brought their bedrolls and we all just slept on the floor, all in the same building. We cooked and made all of our own meals there too. It was within walking distance to where everything was going on so we were just back and forth.

"We held group meetings at the church there," she continued, "to see what everyone had learned. We made sure the kids were learning but we also just let them go and experience things for themselves."

At home, the dance group wasn't met with warm reception at first. Over time, acceptance was earned through the elders in the church.

"It was a real struggle in the beginning," explained Alicia. "The struggle was because we had the Christian community saying it was unacceptable to dance, saying it's a sin. Gene was

even clergy then but it still took a few years before we finally became accepted," she said.

"We always danced on church property," she continued. "We went to Big Lick Church in Smithville and Oka Achukma Church near Broken Bow primarily. At Big Lick, there was a church elder that joined us and became part of the group. She spoke to her peers in her age group, and then another elder at Oka Ackukma said he would dance as well. With that, it began to open up some avenues for us within the church.

"I'm not sure what the thinking was of the early missionaries who came with the Choctaws to Oklahoma. They said dance was not acceptable. The Choctaws had to leave their dancing, their chants, their stickball," she said, explaining how the act was lost in the first place.

Several years went by after the start of the dance

storytellers in Mississippi. "We felt like we needed to do more than just dance. This was our chance to educate," said Gene.

So they developed a structured historical presentation, and along with performing dances for the students, they taught them about who the Choctaw are and how they came to be.

"We did the presentations and integrated storytelling and dance," explained Gene. "We told the origin story of the Choctaw and had the Walk Dance chant in the background. The chant really magnified the sense of the presentation. The chant grabbed the audience," he described before breaking into the poignant chant.

The presentations also included many of the other Choctaw dances and narratives that recounted the meanings.

The students and teachers found their visits engaging and educational, as evidenced by repeatedly inviting the group back and spreading the word about their visits. The group was frequently invited to new schools. They all wanted to know more. "The schools just started calling – schools from all over – wanting us to come," stated Alicia.

"A teacher in Idabel even asked if her child could learn the dances," she said. "They wanted to learn how to make the clothing too," because she knew that the group made all their own clothes.

"That's something important that we did on every trip we made back to Mississippi with the group – every year we went we learned something," said Alicia. "As the group grew larger we continued to raise money to make it back to Mississippi. We just took a bus and the whole group went. We assigned different things for them to learn. Some learned how to make the Choctaw diamond; some learned to make the dresses and shirts; some the bead work and belts; some learned the chants."

The chanting was especially important for them to learn. Chanting is a vital element of Choctaw dance. It was important to know the chants as each dance is performed with a specific chant. A couple from Smithville, Jerry and Shirley Lowman, were part of the dance group and they made it their mission to learn the chants while they were in Mississippi.

"Jerry and Shirley built a special relationship with the chanters, Tony Bell and Prentice and Annie Jackson," said Alicia. "They brought those chants back here with them."

"The Lowmans learned 11 dances and 11 chants," said Gene.

"The kids learned the chants, too," stated Alicia. "They would sing them while they were dancing and they began to identify which dance went with which chant without having to stop and say 'ok, now we're going to do this dance.' They'd just start a chant and the kids knew what to do."

While in Mississippi, the chanters invited the group to dance with them the next time they visited. This excited the kids who all got straight to work on their clothing immediately when they got back home.

"As soon as we got back to Oklahoma they started making their shirts and dresses to prepare for it. The Mississippi Choctaw were adamant that the group be in

proper Choctaw dress when performing and the kids wanted to make sure they all were. And on that next trip, our kids danced with the Mississippi Choctaws," Alicia said proudly.

They averaged about 20-25 kids who danced in the group throughout the '70s until the mid-'80s, though it wasn't always the same gathering of children. "But we did have a core group of kids who were consistent," said Alicia.

The reverend retired from the church in 2005 but from that core group of kids he brought together decades before, the tradition of dance has carried on. So many of them still take part in festivals, fairs, pow wows, and teach the dances to the next generations of little Choctaw.

Curtis Billy, who was part of the dance group, continued with the school presentations in Broken Bow with his dance group after a lot of the schools picked up on it themselves. "The JOM (Johnson O'Malley) program took over a lot of it in the public schools," said Alicia, referring to the federal funded program designed to meet the cultural needs of Native American children.

Also, Carl McKinney, one of the original Choctaw children who joined the group, now has a communal Choctaw dance group in Smithville. The discipline instilled as a child about proper attire and respect for the culture can still be seen in his dance group today. "Carl's kids have to be in full Choctaw regalia or they don't dance. No blue jeans, no sneakers. They do it right or they don't do it," said Alicia.

One of the first to join the group, according to the couple, was Eugene Taylor, who joined at 8 years old and continues to dance today in individual form. Eugene credits Gene and Alicia for where the Choctaw dance is today.

"They're where it all started," said Eugene, referring to the dancing in Oklahoma.

Eugene also praises Gene with giving him much more than just a love of tribal dance. "He's one of the few people who changed my life. He helped show me what else was out there in the world and taught me honor and respect for my elders and my culture. He did that for all the kids who danced with the group."

Presley Byington, who joined the dance group when he was around 11 years old, dances today much the same as Eugene. He also says the experiences he had as a part of the dance group made a big impact in his life. "The trips to Mississippi are where my big interest in Choctaw history began," he said. "They gave me more of an idea and interest in my own people."

Presley also expressed the importance of telling the story of Gene and Alicia because "a lot of Oklahoma Choctaws just assume that it (the dancing) had been here all the time. It's a great thing that they'll know where the cultural rejuvenation came from," he said.

The result of the Rev. Wilson's efforts can still be seen today almost anywhere that Choctaws gather, their dances so seamless one who didn't know better would never think the dance was lost for so many years. It's there though, connecting the present generation to its roots.

Because of a simple decision, a simple act, made back in the 1970s by a small town preacher to reconnect a tribe to its roots, the Choctaw dance carries on.

“When I saw the dances – ah, we can dance! ...inside there was an identity that was starting to be affirmed.”

– The Rev. Gene Wilson

OBITUARIES

James K. Womack

James K. Womack, passed away on Aug. 19, 2010. He was born January 1, 1938 in Loving. He was the son of Ernest and Johnnie Womack. James was the owner and operator of Womack Fence Co. on Hwy 10. in Hackett, Ark. He was preceded in death by his parents and five brothers, Roy, Connie, Doyle, John, and infant twin.



Survivors include his wife of 51 years, Sharon Choate Womack; one son, Kenneth Ray Womack; two daughters, Pamela Jean Womack-Canon of Checotah; Sherry Patterson of Greenwood, Ark.; seven brothers, Bill Womack of Barling, Ark., Gene Womack of Spiro, Jerry Womack of Shady Point, Paul Womack of Kyvel, Ky., Ronnie Womack of Muldrow, Michael Womack of Nashoba and Larry Womack of Nashoba; two sisters, Ramona Garrett of Muldrow and Betty Obojkouits of Pennsylvania; nine grandchildren, Eric and Evan Hefley of Alma, Ark., Jesse and Brittney Bennett of the home, Caleb Patterson of Greenwood, Christopher Womack of Colorado Springs, Colo., Carla Wittington, Tonya Hobbs, and Deana Martin of Greenwood, and five great-grandchildren.

James was very proud of his Choctaw heritage. His great-grandmother, Sarah Jane Loving Justice, was the family's original Dawes enrollee. His mother attended Wheelock Academy and his daughter, Pamela, is currently employed at Jones Academy as the school nurse.

James was a very joyful and humorous man who made life fun for his family and friends. He was always telling jokes or playing pranks on someone. He served three years as a mounted patrol officer for Sebastain County, Ark. He was an avid hunter who took numerous hunting trips with friends. When at home in Hackett, he was either watching the Western Channel, playing cards with a group of family/friends, or at the casino trying his luck on the slot machines. He never knew a stranger and always took the opportunity to take pictures with pretty girls. During the spring and summer weekends, James could be found at a local car show. He was the proud owner of a 1946 pickup truck he named, Inca. His wife told everyone, "Whatever James did, he made it fun."

Paul Floyd Webb, Sr.

Paul F. Webb Sr. lost his long battle with lung cancer on Aug. 18, 2010. He was born on Nov. 3, 1938, to Charlie Lee and Nancy Idabelle Webb.

Mr. Webb was a welder most of his life. He retired from welding in 2002. In 2006 he opened his first wrecker service, and in 2009 he opened Infinity Towing that he owned until his passing.



Mr. Webb was survived by his wife of 53 years, Wyona Ruth (Bell) Webb of the home. Also surviving are his children Paul F. Webb Jr, of Vincenza, Italy, Sharon Chambliss of Sapulpa, Rachel Williams of Tulsa, Larry Webb of Aurora, Colo., and Dustin Webb of Sapulpa; 10 grandchildren, four great-grandchildren with one on the way; his brother Virgil Webb, and sister Ann Greenwalt.

He was preceded in death by his parents. He was also preceded by one son Richard Glen Webb; three sisters, Loveta Davis, La Reatha Holland, Lois Songer and one brother Charles Webb.

The family would like to send a very special thank you to Dorothy Johnson and Jason Burns. They would also like to thank everyone for all the thoughts and prayers.

Paul Eugene Lewis

Paul Eugene Lewis, 58 of Sawyer passed away Aug. 25, 2010. in Hugo. He was born Oct. 11, 1951, in Talihina, the son of Eugene Lewis and Lahoma (Green). Lewis and had lived in the Hugo area since 1963. His parents preceded him in death as well as a son, Kevin Slaughter, who passed on June 17, 2008. Paul was a 1969 graduate of Hugo High School and was a Vietnam War Veteran serving in the U.S. Army as a supply clerk. Paul was a member of Shoals Baptist Church and loved working with the church kids group and drove the church van. He enjoyed camping, fishing, his animals, working in the garden and working on computers. His world revolved around his grandchildren. He married Wanda Anderson at Paris, Texas, in 1989.



Lewis is survived by his wife, Wanda Lewis; two sons, Stephen Lewis of Wylie, Texas and John Paul Lewis of Waldorf, Md.; four daughters, Shelly Annette Lewis-Price of Plano, Texas, Amy Michelle Lewis-Fletcher of Gulfport, Miss., Diane Elaine Slaughter of Hugo and Kendra Renee Ritchie of Hugo; four brothers, Albert Lewis of Apache, Harold Ritter, Larry Ritter and James Ritter, all of Oklahoma City; nine grandchildren along with many other relatives and friends.

Elsie Jane Wesley

Elsie Jane Wesley, 71, passed away Aug. 25, 2010, in Idabel. She was born May 30, 1939, in Stigler, the daughter of Nelson James Morris and Emaline (Wall) Morris and had lived in the Sobol area since 1955. Her parents preceded her in death. She was also preceded in death by an infant son, Charles Allen Wesley; grandson, Jason Washington; and four brothers, James Morris, John Morris, Jake Morris and Josh Morris. Elsie was a homemaker and a member of Pine Belt Pentecostal Church. As a young girl, she attended Choctaw Academy at Rufe and Wheelock Choctaw Academy near Millerton. Elsie loved her family, enjoyed cooking and entertaining her family and enjoyed going to church.



Survivors include three sons, Richard "Buck" Wesley and wife Gayle of Wright City, David Lee Wesley and wife Karen of Idabel, and Nelson "Tommy" Wesley and wife Debra of Rattan; five daughters, Ann Wesley of Rattan, Verna Washington and husband, Jamie of Idabel, Nadine Wesley of Idabel, Wanda Noah and husband, David of Idabel and Sandra Williams and husband Johnny of Holley Creek; one brother, Joseph Morris of Antlers; one sister, Stella Long of Oklahoma City; 21 grandchildren and 45 great grandchildren; two special nieces, Anna Helt and Susan Ahdokabo and two special nephews, Mike Morris and Thomas "Beaver" Morris along with many other relatives and friends.

Arthur Ray 'Uncle Boy' Mackey

Arthur Ray "Uncle Boy" Mackey was born June 18, 1944, in Hillsboro, Calif., to Raymond and Frances (Sam) Mackey. He passed away on June 28, 2010, in Okmulgee.



In 1966, Arthur joined the U.S. Army and served during the Vietnam War. He was honorably discharged in October of 1969. He married Laura Adams on Jan. 9, 1970, in Poteau. He worked as a welder and diesel mechanic for the Office Environmental Health, Indian Health Services for 31 years until his retirement in 2004. He attended Thessalonian Baptist Church.

Arthur was preceded in death by his parents, Raymond and Frances Mackey; son, Bryan Keith Adams; brother, Talton Lee Mackey; and sister, Yvonne Sue Adams.

He is survived by his wife, Laura of the home; son, Dewayne Mackey of Okmulgee; granddaughter, April Thomas of Okmulgee; brother, Raymond Mackey Jr. and wife Christine of Wister; sisters, Hilda Ruth Carshall of LeFlore, Rotha Adams and husband Daniel of LeFlore, Mary Coley and husband Joe of Wilburton, Martha Battiest and Gerald Watson of Talihina; numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and other family and friends, and his pets, Mekko, Cecleie and Chabali.

Inez DeGrace Shockley

Inez DeGrace Shockley, 86, of Talihina passed away May 27, 2010, at her residence.



Inez was born in Talihina on Dec. 31, 1923, the daughter of the late Harris and Maggie (Billy) Daney. Inez attended Wheelock Academy and Chilocco Indian Schools when she was very young. Later she worked as a nurse aide serving at Talihina Indian Hospital, Talihina Manor Nursing Home and the Oklahoma Veterans Center. She was a member of the Greenhill Baptist Church for more than 50 years and she served in many church positions. Her home was a gathering place for family and friends, which were many. Inez loved to cook and eat. Her home was filled with pictures of family and friends on every wall.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Harris and Maggie Daney; husband, Elzie Shockley; sisters, Lavada Daney, Sauline Issacs, Vivian Daney; brothers, Harris Daney Jr. and Saul Daney; sons, Jerry David Wall and Edmond Dee Tom.

She is survived by brothers, Monnie Daney, Billy Joe Daney; sons, Bob and Charlene Wall, Houston Tom Jr. and Sandy; daughter, Sharian and Charles Fremont, 12 grandchildren, a host of great-grandchildren, Dale Shannon, Courtney, Joe Don and Rachel Daney and many other nieces and nephews. She also is survived by many friends.

Houston Tom Sr.

Houston Tom Sr., 85, of Talihina passed away at his home Nov. 26, 2009. Houston was born in Talihina on Nov. 12, 1924, the son of the late Esais and Gladys (Baker) Tom. He served in the U.S. Army during World War Two, later he worked as an electrician. He loved hunting and fishing and loved to help his family and friends.



He was preceded in death by his parents; daughter, Merry Ann; son, Edmond D. Tom; granddaughter, Shelby Nicole Mathews; three brothers, Phillip Wade, L. D. Tom and Ben White; sister, Rosie Watson.

He is survived by two daughters; Sherian and Charles Fremont of Slaton, Texas, Sheri Jo and Dewayne Mathews of Talihina; two sons, Houston Jr. and Sandra Tom of Elm Mott, Texas, and Jeremy D. and Becky of Poteau; stepson, Bob and Charlene Wall of Wewoka; grandchildren, Mike Fremont, Charles Jr. and Sheanea Fremont, Leslie McClelland, Allen Mathews Jr., Justin Dewayne Mathews, Tyler Lane Mathews, Jeremy Jordan Tom, Jarron Dawson Tom, Amy Tom, Erica Tom, Sarah Robinson, Robert Wall, Melissa Wall and Bruce Tom; great-grandchildren, Brittney Fremont, Christopher Eustace, Kevin McClelland, Taryn Fremont, Emily Fremont, Ryan McClelland, Kaydence Nicole Mathews, McKenna Tom, Carson Robinson, Chloe Tom, Carson Robinson, Brendon Wall and Steven; along with numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.

Robert 'Redtop' Williams

Robert "Redtop" Williams of Hugo passed away at age 74 on Aug. 16, 2010, in Oklahoma City. He was born May 26, 1936, in Poteau to Reginald Bell Williams and Nancy Ann (Willis) Williams. His parents preceded him in death. He was also preceded in death by his wife, Mary "Tookey" Williams; one son, Harrison Pete Williams; one daughter, Ramona Williams; and two brothers, James Kenneth Williams and Harrell Leo Williams.



Bob attended Goodland Indian School. After graduating from Goodland as valedictorian of his class, he attended Southeastern Oklahoma State University and later enlisted in the U. S. Air Force. After his years of service for his country, he later became an "artist" in the occupation as a brick mason. He lived and worked in the Dallas area, then later moved to Hugo, where he lived the past 34 years of his life. Bob enjoyed spending time with his family and giving inspirational lectures to his children and grandchildren when he felt they needed one.

He is survived by his four daughters; Judith "Rocky" Davidson and husband David of Hugo, Jana Boykin and husband Sam of Hugo, Jodi Williams of Oklahoma City, and Teri Williams-McKey and husband Alton of Oklahoma City; one son, Mark Abbott and wife Lucille of Tulsa; two sisters, Ramona McCready and husband Bill of Seneca, Mo., and Virginia Johnson of Poteau; three brothers, David Bell Williams and wife Sue of Pocola, Earl Neal Williams and wife JoAnn of Gilmore, Texas, and Reggie Don Williams and wife Barbara of Idabel; 12 grandchildren, five great-grandchildren and one great-grandchild on the way; several nieces and nephews; honorary family members Laura "Sissy" Sumner of Hugo, and Deena Jo Smith of Oklahoma City; special friend, Lota Wanna Moore of Midwest City, along with many other relatives and friends.

Rue McClanahan

"Golden Girls" star Rue McClanahan passed away at age 76 on June 3, 2010, in New York-Presbyterian Hospital in Manhattan as a result of a cerebral hemorrhage. Her son, Mark Bish; sister, Melinda McClanahan; nephew, Brendan Kinkade; and niece, Amelia Kinkade, were with her, and other family members and friends were there in spirit. In November 2009 Rue had heart-bypass surgery and suffered a stroke a week later. In 1997 she was treated for breast cancer. She gave numerous lectures on her personal experience as a cancer survivor to cancer support groups and gave many humorous presentations on aging gracefully. She also fought tirelessly for animal rights.



Rue was born in Healdton on Feb. 21, 1943, to Bill and Rheua Nell McClanahan. She launched her acting career in New York in 1957 and made her Broadway debut in 1969 in the musical "Jimmy Shine," which starred Dustin Hoffman. In the early 1970s Rue segued from the New York stage to Hollywood and landed a role on the soap opera, "Another World." Then in 1972 TV producer Norman Lear, who had spotted her in a dramatic role in the 1969 Off-Broadway production of "Tonight in Living Color," cast her in a guest shot on "All in the Family." This led to her role as Vivian, Bea Arthur's ditzy best friend, in "Maude" that aired on CBS from 1972 to 1978. She then played the up-tight spinster Aunt Fran in "Mama's Family" from 1983-1984.

When "The Golden Girls" debuted on NBC in 1985, Los Angeles Times Critic Howard Rosenberg praised the sitcom about four single retirees living together in Miami as a TV rarity, a comedy that offered a meaningful portrayal of post-middle-age women that was also "very funny." She was set to play the part of the naïve Rose when Jay Sandrich, who directed the pilot, suggested she swap parts with Betty White, originally cast as the man-hungry Blanche. Bea Arthur, as the outspoken Dorothy, and Estelle Getty, as Dorothy's blunt elderly mother, rounded out the cast. The bawdy show became a massive hit and stayed on the air until 1992. The show seized the No. 1 rating its first night in 1985, stayed in the top 10 for six seasons, and captured numerous Emmys, one of which went to Rue in 1987 for Outstanding Lead Actress in a Comedy Series. She was nominated for the Outstanding Lead Actress three other times.

In real life, Rue married six times and recounted her amorous adventures in her 2007 autobiography, "My First Five Husbands and Those Who Got Away." "People always ask if I'm really like Blanche," she wrote, "I say, 'well, consider the facts: Blanche was a glamorous, oversexed, self-involved man-crazy Southern Bell from Atlanta and I'm not from Atlanta'." But according to her sister Melinda, "Rue wasn't a vamp in real life. She liked to grow tomatoes and make quilts and read and was devoted to her son, Mark Bish, and to my children, her four nieces and nephews. I had a wonderful relationship with my big sister even when we were little kids, and we could always make each other laugh. When she received her Emmy in 1987, Rue said 'and I would like to thank my sister Melinda, who taught me what funny is!'"

Rue was a native Oklahoman and attended school in Durant and Ardmore and graduated summa cum laude from the University of Tulsa in 1956. Her sister says, "Part of her heart remained in Durant and Ardmore, and she loved going back for class reunions with her schoolmates who were life-long friends." Her mother, Rheua-Nell McClanahan, was a beautician and owned beauty salons in Durant and Ardmore and her father Bill McClanahan, was a general contractor in Ardmore. Her grandmother, Ida Alice (Allie) Airington Medaris, lived for many years in Kenefic and Achille, then Borger, Texas, and was an original Choctaw enrollee.

Arthur R. Fisher

Arthur R. Fisher, 62, of Broken Arrow, passed away Aug. 4, 2010. Born Oct. 20, 1947, in Talihina to Israel and Bernice (Jefferson) Fisher. Arthur grew up in McAlester and graduated from McAlester High School in 1965. He then attended Southeastern State College in Durant until enlisting in the U.S. Army in 1967. He trained at the Defense Language School in Monterey, Calif., as a radio interceptor and served in Germany during the Vietnam War. After receiving his honorable discharge, Arthur returned to Southeastern State College where he received his bachelors degree in 1974. Shortly after he went to work as an examiner for FDIC in the banking commission office until his retirement. He lived his adult life in Broken Arrow. Always an excellent student, he enjoyed reading books on Choctaw and military history. He also enjoyed travel to historical sites and sporting events, whether in the United States or abroad. He was a member of Zion Baptist Church.

Survivors include one sister and brother-in-law, Patricia and Larry James, McAlester; one brother and sister-in-law, Bruce Neil and Anna Fisher of Wagoner. Also nieces and nephews, Matthew James of McAlester, Amanda Ward of Krebs, Susanna Fisher and Judy Fisher, both of Wagoner, and Kyle Buffman, Mancelona, Mich.; aunts, Phoebe Allrunner of Albuquerque, Reola Fisher of Liberal, Kan., Emma Fisher of McAlester; uncle Richard Morris of Lawrence, Kan. and numerous cousins.

Arthur was preceded in death by his parents and a sister, Judy Buffman.

Bradley Keith Smith

Bradley Keith Smith, 51, a longtime Wapanucka-area resident, passed away on Aug. 29, 2010, in McKinney, Texas. He was born on June 23, 1959, to Edgar and Susie Ann (Simmons) Smith, at Mt. Shasta, Calif. Brad graduated from Wapanucka High School and went on to marry Christy Taylor on April 11, 2007, at Boggy Depot. Brad worked in the oil field as a derrick hand and then went on to help the elderly. He loved riding motorcycles, his horses, gardening, fishing, antiques, going to garage sales, collecting and hunting for old coins with a metal detector. He loved Jesus very much.



Brad is survived by his wife, Christy Smith of the home in Wapanucka; children Kate and Erica Smith of Tulsa, Shayla Cooper of Claremore, Holland Brown and Joseph Smith of Wapanucka; granddaughter, Peyton Nicole Smith of Tulsa; brothers, Ron Smith and wife Lorie of Wapanucka, and Gary Smith of Redding, Calif.; father-in-law Raymond Taylor of Boggy Depot.

He was preceded in death by parents, Edgar and Susie Ann (Simmons) Smith; sister, Renna Dee Smith; stepmother, Shirley Ann Smith.

Making a Choctaw bow

Dear Iti Fabvssa,

I was wondering if you could tell me about the process for making a Choctaw longbow. Any help would be appreciated.

Bess

Dear Bess,

Thank you for your great question! January’s edition (2010) of “Iti Fabvssa” focused on the form, history, and effectiveness of the Choctaw bow and arrow. Due to space constraints, we had to leave out a description of how Choctaw bows are made. Thanks to you, we can now present that information.

Through time, and in different places, Choctaws have used many different varieties of hardwood to make bows, however two woods in particular have been especially popular. In Mississippi, before Removal, hickory was the most commonly used (c.f. Adair 1775:331). After Removal, Oklahoma Choctaws found themselves in the heart of bois d’ark country, and have come to make most, but not all, of the bows from it. Both hickory and bois d’ark are excellent bow-making materials because these woods have a high density and because they very quickly snap back to their original shape when they are bent and released. This means that a bow properly made from these woods can shoot an arrow with a lot of speed and force.

Not just any hickory or bois d’ark tree will work for bow-making. Most bow-makers prefer trees that are relatively straight, free of large knots, and free of grain twist. Examining a tree’s outer bark can usually tell a lot about the properties of its underlying wood before it is cut. Most bow-makers prefer to select and cut trees during the winter (see Swanton 2001:49) because at this time of year the sap is down, and the outermost growth layer in the wood is dense and hard.

Through time, most Choctaw bow-makers have probably used one of two basic techniques to transform raw wood into a working bow. The older of these two involves doing most of the shaping right after the tree is cut down, while the wood is still green (see Beverley 1705, reproduced in Swanton 1946:577). Green wood is softer and easier to work than is dry, seasoned wood. This difference is night and day if the bow-maker is using stone tools. With the “green wood” technique, the bow is roughed out to near its final shape, and then allowed to quickly dry under controlled conditions that prevent it from warping. The fine-shaping of the bow is done only after the wood has become dry and hard. With this technique, a living tree can be transformed into a powerful, seasoned bow in less than two weeks



Iti Fabussa

time. A few Choctaw bow-makers are currently revitalizing this ancient green wood / stone tool technique, using a combination of still-surviving information and personal experimentation. However, for the last three centuries, most Choctaw bow-makers have used metal tools. Today, steel tools are most often combined with a technique that involves cutting wide trees down and splitting them into bow staves. The ends of the staves are sealed to prevent cracking, and the wood is set aside to slowly cure for up to several years. Bow-making is begun only when the thick pieces of wood are fully dry.

Whether using stone or steel tools, green or seasoned wood, the same basic steps must be accomplished



to make a good bow. Bow-makers usually start by shaping the “back” of the bow, the side that faces away from the shooter. Most Choctaw bows were and are made in such a way that the back side of the bow exposes only one growth ring in the wood. This helps to make the bow durable – as a bow is bent, the side facing away from the shooter is experiencing tensional forces that try to pull the wood grain apart. Having only one growth ring exposed on the back side of the bow minimizes inconsistencies in the wood, making it much harder for tension to find a weak spot to pull up a splinter and break the bow.

Hickory bows are made from the sapwood of the tree. To create a hickory bow back that exposes only one growth ring, one simply strips off the outer and inner bark, leaving the outermost growth ring of wood exposed. In other words, the very outer part of the wood becomes the back of the bow. Bois d’ark bows are made from the tree’s inner heartwood. The bark and white sapwood must both be removed from the outer part of the tree, exposing the outermost layer of yellow heartwood. This becomes the back of the bow.

After the back of the bow has been shaped, the sides of the bow are usually roughed out. The thickest part of most Choctaw bows is at or near the handle.

With the green wood technique, for the entire length of the bow, the sides are uniformly trimmed down only to the intended widest dimension of the finished bow (Baker 1994). This gives the wood a straight, board-like shape that will prevent it from warping sideways as it dries. Only after the wood is fully dry (see below), will the tips of the bow be narrowed down. Conversely, with the dry wood technique, the bow’s tips are usually narrowed as soon as the back of the bow has been shaped.

The “belly” side of the bow is what faces the shooter. It is shaped through a process known as “tillering.” Tillering is where the skill of the bow-maker really comes into play. Wood must be removed in just the right proportions so that the bow will bend in an even arc. Moreover, just the right total amount of wood must be removed so that the finished bow will have the desired draw length and draw weight. This is accomplished by incrementally shaving off small amounts of wood from the belly side of the bow. Periodically, the bow is carefully bent to evaluate its strength and the shape of the arc it makes. Then, additional wood is removed accordingly. This process is repeated dozens of times, and with each, the bow is bent slightly farther, and slightly farther. With the green wood technique, tillering is completed approximately half way while the wood is green. Then, the emerging bow is



lashed down to a flat surface along its entire length to prevent warping and set in the shade until the wood dries. This happens rapidly because by this stage, the bow is already pretty thin. Drying the wood before the later stages of tillering is important because bending the wood too hard or too far while it is green will strain it and cause permanent damage to the bow. After the wood has become fully dry, the tips of the bow are narrowed down and then tillering is completed. With the dry wood technique, tillering is usually done right after the bow’s sides are finished.

During or after tillering, nocks are cut in the bow tips to hold the string. Surviving old Choctaw bows from different parts of Choctaw Nation have different styles of nocks that include several shapes and arrangements of double and pin nocks. After the nocks are cut in, most bows are sanded and/or burnished. The latter is done by rubbing the bow forcefully on all surfaces with a hard, smooth object, such as the side of a deer antler or a smooth rock. These steps

make the bow very smooth and pleasant to touch, and can help reduce the chance of the bow breaking.

With the high humidity of Mississippi and Oklahoma, it is necessary to seal the wood in order to protect it from moisture. This is important because shooting a bow that is even slightly too damp (something you can’t necessarily discern by touch) can permanently weaken it. One of the most common sealing methods (e.g., Speck 1909:20) is to gently warm the finished bow and repeatedly rub bear or opossum fat into the wood. Bows made from certain woods including hickory, can also be heat-treated as a part of the same process (St. Louis 2008). To do this, the belly side of the bow is held next to a bed of hot coals, close enough to the heat that the wood becomes too hot to touch, but not so close that it scorches.

After half an hour, the belly side of the bow should start to become an even brown color, at which point it is taken away from the fire. This process thoroughly dries the wood and also shrinks the cells on the belly side of the bow, permanently making them less able to absorb water. This makes the bow more springy and powerful. Interestingly, early European accounts tell us that Natives living in the Southeast could make a bow any color they desired and with surfaces so shiny that they were reflective (Garcilaso 1993:305 [1596]). This was probably done by coating the bows in varnish made from tree sap mixed with pigments. This would also help to protect them from moisture.

As we mentioned in our January article, Choctaw Nation sponsors a team that uses traditional Choctaw bows in inter-tribal archery competitions. Choctaw bow shoots are held on the Tushka Homma Council House Grounds on most second Saturdays.

As a part of these, talented Choctaw bow-maker Les Williston periodically teaches classes on making Choctaw bows. For information about these, please call

the Cultural Events Department.

This is by no means the full story on the Choctaw bow. Be on the lookout for future Iti Fabvssa articles about making Choctaw bowstrings, arrows, and arrowheads.



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Choctaw Nation
Historic Preservation Department
to host
Native American
Repatriation Summit III

Durant Casino
Oct. 25-27, 2010

The Native America Repatriation Summit (NARS) represents a coalition of federally-recognized Tribes from across Oklahoma and beyond on issues of mutual interest and concern involving the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. In this meeting, the Tribes will be formulating joint resolutions to take before the NAGPRA Review committee in Washington D.C., in a cooperative effort to make it easier for Tribes to reclaim our sacred objects and rebury our ancestors. For more information, please contact Cyndi Houser 1-800-522-6170 ext. 2559

Choctaw Traditional Pottery Class

Times and Locations:

– Durant –
Oct. 17, Nov. 7, Nov. 21 – 5:30-9:30 p.m.
Cultural Events Building, 4451 Choctaw Rd.

– Poteau –
Oct. 18, Nov. 8, Nov. 22 – 5:00-9:30 p.m.
Poteau Field Office, 208 B Street

– Idabel –
Oct. 19, Nov. 9, Nov. 23 – 2:30-4:30 p.m.
Idabel Field Office, 2408 Lincoln Rd.

– Atoka –
Oct. 7, Oct. 21 – 5:30-9:30 p.m.
Atoka Field Office, 1410 S. Gin Rd.

– Antlers –
Oct. 20 – 6:00-9:00 p.m.
Antlers Community Center, 400 SW Quest

CHOCTAW TRADITIONAL
POTTERS' EXPO.

SATURDAY, NOV. 27th; 10AM-8PM
CHOCTAW RV PARK (east of the event center), DURANT, OK

- Drop in and meet the Tribal artists who are revitalizing Choctaw pottery
- View and purchase functional, wood-fired pieces made from natural Oklahoma clays
- See a live firing demonstration

Choctaw Nation Historic Preservation 1-800-522-6170 ext, 2216



Blaine following path to playing golf with the pros

By BRET MOSS

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

If you were to look through a scrapbook of an athlete with true and unmistakable talent, you would find words such as “wins” and “champion.” That is exactly the case with 19-year-old Cody Blaine of Durant. Blaine, a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, is a graduate of Durant High School, where he was a star performer on the golf team. Sinking putt after putt and nailing the long drives has earned Blaine a reputation as a considerable golfing talent in the local area.

Blaine began golfing in April of 2003 and has been perfecting his game ever since, winning titles and trophies along the way. This all began when he was encouraged by his friend, Chad McCarty, to pick up a club and give it a try.

“One day we just went out and played golf... I just started hitting the ball good,” humbly explained Blaine as he reflected on his beginnings in golf. After spending that day on the course, Blaine was hooked.

His newfound fascination with golf came as a surprise to his mother, Monica Blaine. When he told her he wanted to join the golf team and asked for a set of clubs for his birthday, she knew it was serious.

During his junior high and



high school years, Blaine tore through the competition. “There were only four tournaments my seventh grade year, and I won all four of them,” stated Blaine as he remembered his earlier years of golf.

In 2004, at the Choctaw/Chickasaw golf camp in Kingston he qualified for the National Native American Jr. Golf Championship which was held at the Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Fla. His three-round score placed him first in

his age division and overall. This score helped bring back the team trophy to the Choctaw Nation.

In December of the same year, he was invited to the Doral-Publix International Jr. Golf Classic in Miami, Fla. It is one of the top Jr. Golf Tournaments in the country, representing 45 states and 38 countries, and boasting over 600 golfers. Cody placed 10th as he represented the State of Oklahoma and the Choctaw Nation.

As Blaine moved into high school sports, he continued collecting trophies and leading his team toward numerous wins, as he did in 2008 when he led his team to victory in the Durant Lions Golf Classic. In this, along with multiple other competitions, he demonstrated his talent throughout his high school career.

In his freshmen, junior and senior years of high school, he was invited to the state tournament. His senior year he placed 10th in the state tournament and made the All-State team. While on the All-State team, he helped the East All-State team to win out over the West team. That was his last tournament as a Junior Golfer.

He continued his success by winning the National Native Youth Golf Championships at the WinStar Golf Course in Thackerville soon after his graduation in 2009.

Blaine has competed on 28 courses throughout the state of Oklahoma and 10 out-of-state courses, gracing locations such as Orlando, Fla., Lakeside, Calif., and Santa Fe, N.M. He has also traveled internationally to compete in the sport he loves.

Through his success in golf, Blaine has realized his dream in life is to play professionally in the PGA. Since his graduation, he has continued to pursue his dream of becoming a professional golfer.

He is now playing for the First Nations Golf Association (FNGA), which is a non-profit organization dedicated to developing American Indian golfers. FNGA is better known as the Native Pro Circuit.

He recently finished up his most recent tournament at the Choctaw Masters, held in Choctaw, Miss., where he won Overall Grand Champion. He will be returning once again in late November.

The FNGA is a great stepping-stone on his path to PGA stardom. If he does well in this circuit, he will be able to move up to the National Golf Tour, which is a prerequisite to the PGA. If he does well there, it is on to the big league for Blaine.

Along with the FNGA in his path towards pro status, He has also qualified with Cory Gilbert, his golfing partner, for the ESPN National Golf Challenge. The challenge was sponsored by ESPN Regional Television Network and was presented by Calloway Golf.

Blaine plans to keep moving forward toward the accomplishment of his dream. His objective now is “to keep practicing, do better in these tours and get noticed,” says Blaine.

While chasing a dream, it might be easy for one to forget those who made it possible. That is not the case for Cody Blaine. He humbly remembers the individuals,

whose encouragement and support have made it possible.

“I wouldn’t be able to do any of this without my family,” stated Blaine. “They always went with me and supported me.” Blaine is specifically grateful for his grandmother Lorene Blaine, grandfather Silas Blaine, sister Kayleigh Powell, uncle Junior Blaine, his mother Monica Blaine, as well as many other family members.

As she witnesses her son mature into a gifted athlete, Monica Blaine states, “He is doing what he has dreamed of doing, I’m a very proud mother and enjoy getting to travel with him every chance I get. It is something special to witness first hand him winning a major tournament.”

Chief Pyle and the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma have been a great aid on the road to golf success as well. “The Choctaw golf camps helped me out a lot,” Blaine elaborated. Cody is especially grateful for Chief Pyle, Assistant Chief Batton and the Tribal Council for their interest and support in helping him to achieve his goal of one day being a professional golfer.

Blaine’s advice for anyone who is in pursuit of being a golf champion is to practice a lot, have friends that like to play, and “make sure you have good support from your family.”

Rachelle DiNardo says farewell after her 2009-10 reign

Wow! What an incredible journey this past year has been as Miss Choctaw Nation. This journey took me to California, Texas, Mississippi, and to several towns here in Oklahoma. I will forever treasure the memories at Labor Day, Trail of Tears Walk, Veterans ceremonies and pow wows, conferences, Ivy League College event, Choctaw Language High School graduate ceremony, JOM conference, National Victim services with cultural immersion conference, Oklahoma state events, California Okla Chahta Gathering, Choctaw weddings, District 11 dinners, Chief Pyle and Councilman Pate birthday party, parades, Native American Awareness Expo, visiting those in the hospital, other tribal festivals and pageants and served as Head Lady dancer for the pow wow held at Jones Academy. I served as Bacone’s princess pageant judge, and at Bacone College activities and grand openings.

It was several years ago that first I competed for Choctaw district princess. I didn’t win that year but I tried again and experienced the opportunity of being Junior Miss Choctaw Nation 2006, followed by Miss Choctaw Owa Chito 2007.

I will always remember the times when I traveled with Miss Choctaw Nation 2006 Courtney Baker to many Choctaw district gatherings and Miss Choctaw 2007 Kandace Folsom reviewing the jingle dress dance style with me and giving me advice for pageants. I always remember Elizabeth Wright, Miss Indian Oklahoma 2005, my mom and I preparing for pageants District 11, Indian Oklahoma, and the Sunburst pageants. I know my cousins Girlie, Autumn and I will remember winning Owa-Chito and Our Diamond Miss pageants in our age categories. All of these times helped me become more prepared for the Miss Choctaw Nation 2009 pageant.

It seems only yesterday winning the District 11 Choctaw pageant then representing my district at the Choctaw interview competition. At the interview I wore a beaded jewelry set my great-great-grandmother original enrollee Francis Willis made. While at the Choctaw Labor Day pageant I carried a small Choctaw basket my great-grandmother Alice Ward made. I sang the National Anthem in the Choctaw language for the talent competition and dedicated the performance to our veterans. Then I stood



with all the District princess on stage. I remembered all the people that had helped me get to this point. Each of them teaching or giving me some advice or providing me with items. My name was called; I took a step forward and accepted the crown. Bob Pate placed the Great Seal of The Choctaw Nation crown on my head and I walked for the first time experiencing a dream I had dreamed of.

My journey started as a young girl watching items made by my family: Choctaw food, shirts, dresses, flutes, baskets, and beaded jewelry. I listened to stories and history as told by Grandma Jean DiNardo. I sang Choctaw gospel with Great-grandpa Lee Roy Ward while he played the piano. Watched my Great-grandma Alice Ward make baskets, My Uncle Rev. Floyd Peters made a Choctaw flute and taught me how to play. I went to beading class and Aunt Nancy Peters helped me with beaded jewelry; My cousins Alex, Girlie, Autumn, Kallie, Lucas Battiest and I participated at Broken Bow AILYC pow wows,

Wheelock and Five Civilized Tribes festivals. I visited the Nanih Waiya mound and family in Mississippi. I played stickball and danced Choctaw social dances with my cousins Melody, Onna, Hallie Denson, my brother Preston and Standing Pine dancers. My Mother and Aunt Barbara Cates took me to Native Choctaw Cultural museums in Mississippi, Oklahoma and Washington, D.C. I traveled with my family, Kim Peters-Battiest, Janice Ward, Terry Loman, Barbara and John Cates and Grandma Jean to many pow wows in Oklahoma and Texas. I experienced the Gathering of Nations Pow wow in New Mexico. My family and I went with Les Williston and Sara Sharp to several Stomp dances. I witnessed my Grandmother Jean shake traditional turtle shells and I learned to wrap my legs good before I started shaking my own can shells to avoid blisters. Les showed me how to make stickball sticks and Curtis Billy let me help the children at Choctaw Nation Culture camp with pottery clay. I attended Choctaw Language classes in Wilburton in 2004 and at Bacone College. All of these events in my life including my cousin Consuelo Splawn’s Choctaw wedding gave me the understanding of how Choctaw culture is a vital aspect of what it means to be Choctaw.

This past year was one of many accomplishments. I just graduated from Hartshorne High School and left Jones Academy Indian Boarding school. I entered Bacone College in Muskogee. I received a \$1,000 scholarship as Miss Choctaw Nation 2009, \$600 scholarship as Miss McAlester first runner-up, a four-year 100 percent tuition scholarship offered from Bacone College President for being Miss Muskogee Azalea Festival Queen, being a Muskogee Arrowhead

Mall commercial model, Miss Muskogee Independence, Junior Miss Choctaw Nation 2006, Miss Choctaw Ouachita 2007, and top 10 Miss Teen Oklahoma USA. At college I became a part of the college cheerleading squad. We won the National cheerleading competition. I was honored as most outstanding freshman student as selected by Bacone staff and it included a \$500 scholarship. It was my honor to serve as Head Lady dancer for Bacone’s powwow held at Jones Academy.

Thank you Chief Pyle, Assistant Chief Batton, Councilman Bob Pate and the Tribal Council for giving Choctaw young ladies the opportunity to represent their tribe. Thank you Faye Self, Elaine Thomson, Vickie McClure, Connie Courtwright for all you did for us. Thank you Jerry Lowman for the sterling silver Choctaw stickball sticks; to Aunt Aline Ward and Suzanne Heard for the words of wisdom and to borrow Aunt Aline’s moccasins; to Mr. Reed for making the cedar box to keep the Choctaw crowns in; to Nathan Elliot who embroidered my Choctaw sash

with my name and for driving your sports cars for Stephanie, Juanita and I to ride in parades; to Benji Grants for the beaded fans; to my Aunt Betty Ross and mom for the several Choctaw dresses; to Grandma Jean DiNardo for the beaded moccasins and cousin Kim Battiest for repairing my moccasins during my reign; to the Denson family for other beadwork and baskets and helping me backstage during the pageant when I wanted a different dress for each competition. To Choctaw Color Guard member Terry Lowman and my family for the finances, travel and items for giveaway during this past year. Thank you Daddy and Mom for getting me where I was asked to be. To My Lord and savior for blessing me with opportunities, for my family and my tribe.

To Stephanie, Junior Miss Choctaw 2009, you are a good role model and good with children. I’ll remember the hours we shared in the airport how you were like a big sis to Juanita. To Juanita, Little Miss Choctaw 2009, you and your brothers are good Choctaw gospel singers. I’ll remember

the events, the rides at the carnival and the gospel singings we shared. And thank you for helping me share the Choctaw culture with Bacone students.

To my successor, Miss Kristie McGuire of District 5 – Congratulations Miss Choctaw Nation 2010!

Have fun on an amazing yet memorable year visiting and speaking with so many interesting people.

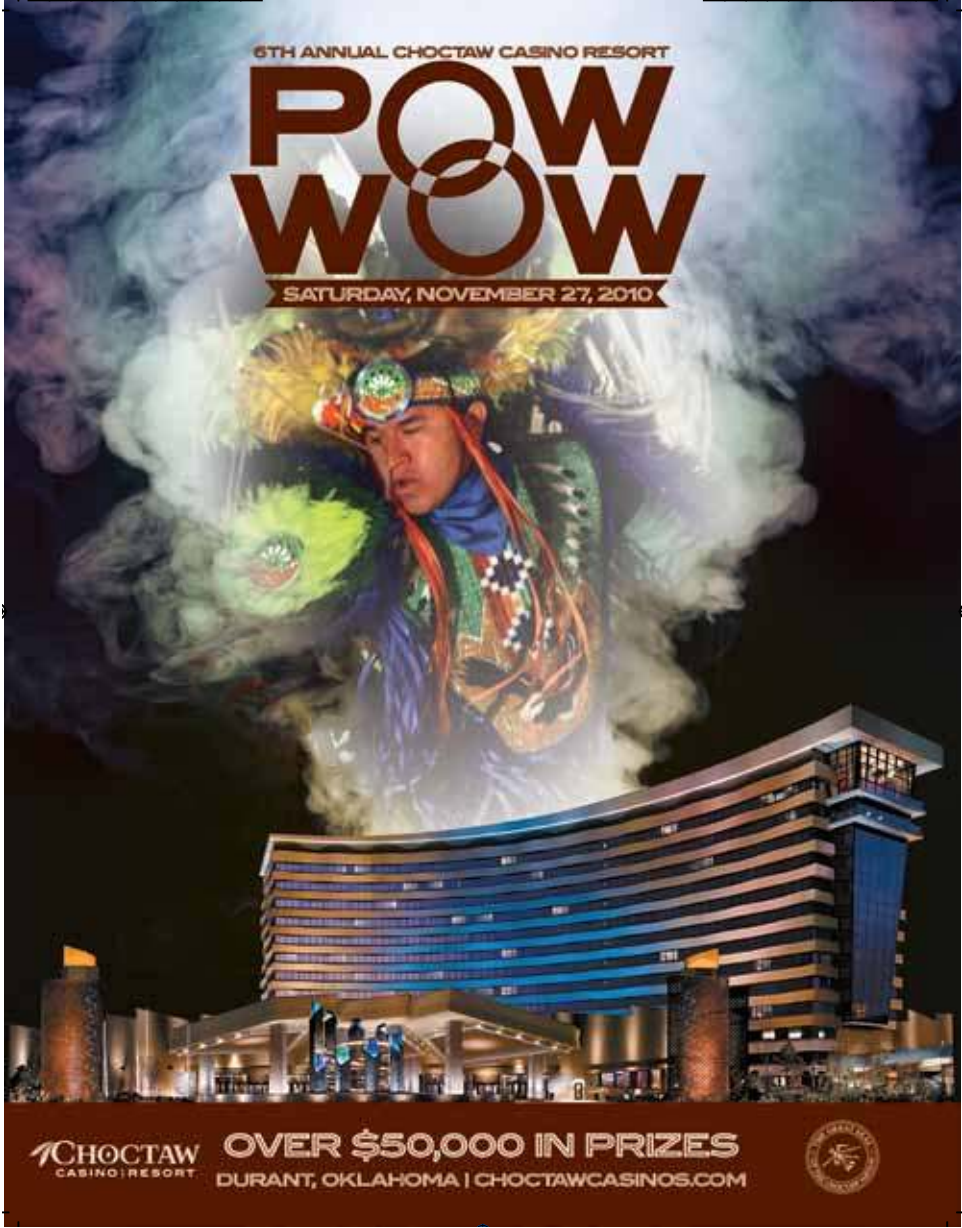
A few words of wisdom: always walk in the beauty of the Choctaw culture, while living in the present.

To be born a Choctaw is something that distinguishes us from every one else. We are blessed to be Choctaw. People who overcame many obstacles and hardships to become a proud nation. Growing in education, health, government, business, jobs and community services.

To quote Chief Pyle, “Choctaws growing in pride, hope and success.”

Yakoke.

**2009-2010 Miss Choctaw Nation
Ashton Rachelle DiNardo**



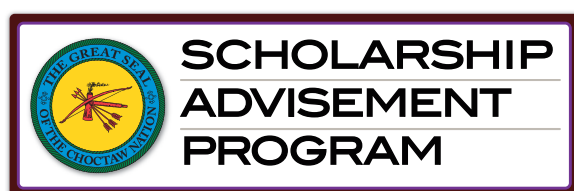
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