



Labor Day  
Festival  
photos

Pages 8-12



BISKINIK  
P.O. Box 1210  
Durant OK 74702

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

PRESORT STD  
AUTO  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
CHOCTAW NATION

# BISKINIK

The Official Publication of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

September/October 2012 Issue



Choctaw Nation: CHRIS DILL

## Celebrating family, culture, tradition Labor Day Festival and Pow Wow 2012



DELTON COX  
SPEAKER



THOMAS WILLISTON  
SECRETARY



JOE COLEY  
CHAPLAIN

### Tribal Council elects officers

The Choctaw Nation Tribal Council chose officers for the 2012-13 year during its Regular Session Sept. 8 at Tvshka Homma. Speaker Delton Cox, Secretary Thomas Williston and Chaplain Joe Coley were chosen by the panel of Councilmembers to serve another year in their positions.

See COUNCIL Page 3

#### ◆ What's inside

Columns .....	2
Nursery News .....	4
Food Distribution .....	4
Notes to the Nation .....	5
People You Know .....	6
Education .....	7
Obituaries .....	14-15
Iti Fabvssa .....	17

#### 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.

### A secure future for Choctaws is focus of Chief Pyle's State of the Nation Address

"We are a mighty nation of Choctaws," said Chief Gregory E. Pyle in his State of the Nation Address at the Choctaw Nation Labor Day Festival, "and we've always had a proud legacy. Our ancestors were very brave, very strong, very firm. They kept the heritage alive over centuries and centuries. They came here and the first thing they did was build churches and schools. Today we're about saving what they started."

He went on to speak about successful programs initiated by employees, such as the Going Green Program. "Saving our earth means a lot to us," he said. "I never dreamed three years ago that I would be standing here telling you that we just passed over one million pounds of material through the Choctaw Nation Recycling Facility!"

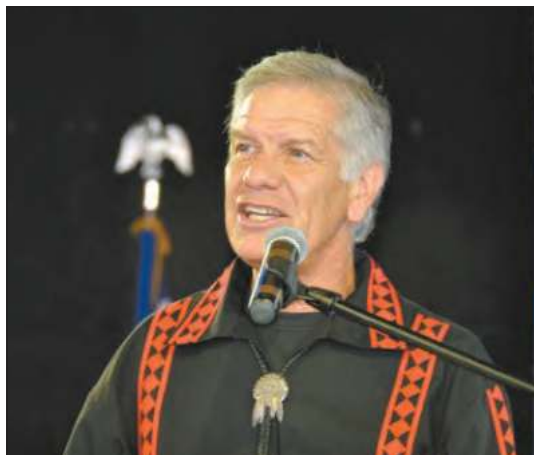
These recycling efforts are one example of the many ways Indian people, Choctaws in particular, have been protectors of the environment throughout history. "Water especially," said Chief Pyle. "We are engaged in a great battle but I think the opposition is starting to understand more and more about what we want. We are showing them that it's all based on fact and what will happen if it's removed too fast."

He told about the devastating effects the drought had on the Kiamichi River in 2011. "Last year, for only the second time in history, the Kiamichi [River] stopped flowing," he explained to the audience. "It's unique because where the water came out of the spillway from Sardis Lake and hit the Kiamichi, it went down it and was able to keep running. Our fish stayed alive and our water flowed, and it helped people keep water in their homes."

But upstream, before the river runs into Sardis Lake, it was a much different story.

"Just immediately upstream in a place called Dry Creek, which is only about three or four miles away, [the river] was dry. There was no water flowing at all. I walked down there myself to see that."

He shared stories as told to him by his father who had also lived through a



Choctaw Nation: LARISSA COPELAND

CHIEF GREGORY E. PYLE

“We will sustain our  
great heritage for  
many years to come.”

— Chief Gregory E. Pyle

disastrous drought and who also saw the Kiamichi River run dry.

"My dad lived through the Great Depression and he told me stories about how there were just pools of water in Antlers," he said, "and they would take men out there with shovels and picks and go from that hole way back out there on nothing but dry land and they would spend all day digging six to eight foot trenches. Water would come through the trenches up to the hole, and then they would dig another one, and then another one, and another. That's only twice in 100 years."

He went on to speak about the great things that have happened for the Choctaw Nation over the past year, focusing on the Choctaw people's health, welfare, education, and jobs. "The Choctaw health care keeps on growing," he said. "This year alone we've opened a Talihina Eye Clinic, and just a few weeks ago over in Stigler we opened our first-ever dental clinic. We opened a behavioral health clinic in Idabel, and have made renovations at the hospital. We've also made great strides in increasing the size of our pediatrics and the pharmacy to better serve our Choctaw."

Chief Pyle acknowledged that tribal members need many things, one of which is jobs. He explained one particular Choctaw program, Career Development, which is helping Choctaws across the nation move up in the job market.

"We've started a process where we work with the Tribal Council for funding and increased many, many opportunities for jobs," he explained. "One way we can help Choctaws is through the Career Development Program. This year, 3,400 people nationwide completed our Career Development Program. That's part of the story. The other is the average person who goes through our Career Development only spends about six to eight months there and then they're ready to get a national certificate, where they can go anywhere in the United States and get a job. The other part is with that certification that person can increase their salary by an average of \$9,000 per year. That's real success. That's job creation."

He went on to emphasize the reason all the services and opportunities were available to Choctaw members and that is because of the fortunate success

See ADDRESS Page 3

## Choctaw princesses crowned for 2012-13

The Choctaw Nation Princess Pageant was held opening night of the annual Labor Day Festival in Tvshka Homma, crowning the 2012-13 princesses. The reigning royalty for the next year are Miss Choctaw Nation Cheyenne Murray of District 9; Jr. Miss is Cheyenne Shomo, District 2; and Little Miss is Josephine Gilmore of District 9.

In the Miss division 1st runner-up is Rachel Hogan, District 5, and 2nd runner-up is Victoria Battiest, District 2. Jr. Miss 1st runner-up is Neiatha Hardy, District 12, and 2nd runner-up is Kayleigh Powell, District 9. Little Miss 1st runner-up is Savannah Herndon, District 8, and 2nd runner-up is Whitney Griffith.

Photos by Rainette Rowland



MISS  
CHOCTAW NATION  
CHEYENNE MURRAY



JR. MISS  
CHOCTAW NATION  
CHEYENNE SHOMO



LITTLE MISS  
CHOCTAW NATION  
JOSEPHINE GILMORE



# Widespread interest in Choctaw culture is tremendous blessing



From the Desk of Chief Gregory E. Pyle

One of the greatest moments of the 2012 Labor Day Festival was seeing so many people wearing Choctaw clothing during the Monday festivities! For over a year, the tribe has officially made the first Monday of each month “Heritage Monday” and we have put forth a conscious effort to dress traditionally, greet people in the native language and share our unique culture through dance, history, song and food. For people to embrace “Heritage Monday” at Tvshka Homma and wear their Choctaw shirts and dresses to the State of the Nation ceremony was a tremendous blessing to me and I was elated to see the interest.

During the month of November, which has long been recognized as Native American Heritage Month, the Choctaw Nation Cultural Services Department is planning a series of classes that will enhance our knowledge of Choctaw heritage. Each Wednesday in November at the Tribal Complex in Durant, the Cultural Services Department will host an opportunity to learn an ancestral skill or hear a lecture about our history.

Our Cultural Services Department provides classes in making baskets, pottery, beadwork, cornhusk dolls and other cultural items not only at the offices in Durant, but throughout southeast Oklahoma and at community meetings around the country. Other facilities in the Choctaw Nation also plan Heritage Days and sometimes cook traditional food for the employees to enjoy.

My long term vision is that every generation in the future is more self-sufficient and successful than the generation preceding. To achieve this, it is important we understand the culture and history of the Choctaw people.



Choctaw Nation: CHRISSY DILL

**Dr. Ian Thompson demonstrates how to make Choctaw pottery.**

## Stickball helping increase awareness of our heritage



Photo by Rainette Rowland

**Men and women are both becoming more involved in learning and playing the sport of stickball. A women’s exhibition game was held Sept. 2 prior to the championship game of the annual Labor Day Festival Stickball Tournament at Tvshka Homma.**

From the Desk of Assistant Chief Gary Batton

Stickball and the history that surrounds it have always been fascinating – it is a competitive sport, rich in legend for our tribe. Choctaw stickball has reached a new intensity for me this year. The Choctaw Nation played for the third year in the World Series at Mississippi, which is a tremendous accomplishment.

The two games that I sweated through on the field this summer weren’t competition level – no trophies at stake – but they meant a lot to me! I joined Councilmen and other players at the U.S. Capitol for an exhibition game beside the Smithsonian and just recently, was invited to don a team shirt at Tvshka Homma and play with friends and acquaintances who have fought for the ball on the



Choctaw Nation: BRET MOSS

**Assistant Chief Gary Batton joins an exhibition game on the Capitol lawn.**

Tribal Capitol lawn for years! Much to my thrill (and surprise) I even scored!

Encouraging people to participate in activities like this increases the awareness of heritage as well as increasing the desire to become more involved. This is why Chief Pyle and the Tribal Council create opportunities such as

the youth camps for stickball and cultural immersion. When the young people begin to learn the sports, culture, dance and art of our tribe, they become more interested in the history of the tribe.

Our tribe is blessed to have so many stickball players, both male and female, who participated in the recent La-

bor Day tournament. Spectators were treated to some great games this year at Tvshka Homma.

Many more opportunities to learn about Choctaw heritage will be available this year. Please take the time to participate. Yakoke to all who are involved in sharing the Choctaw culture!

### Chaplain’s Corner

## Taking a stand of faith

Our annual Choctaw Nation Labor Day gatherings are a blessing for our Choctaw People. It brings memories of family gatherings in our rural churches.

I remember clearly services were held from Friday evening through Monday mornings each weekend in the late 1920s and early 1930s. The singing, preaching and teaching were in the Choctaw language.

I am thankful for this early training. Proverbs 22:6 is so true: “Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”

When we trust Jesus Christ as our personal Savior we are born again into God’s family, as babes in Christ. As Christians we will never be perfect on this earth until Jesus Christ returns then we will be like Him.

The Lord Jesus wants us to grow up to be more like Him daily. How does this happen? He wants us to study His Word. The Word is Spiritual food for Spiritual life.

We need to learn the kind of faith God talks about in the Bible, not by the human viewpoint. Human viewpoint means to look at the difficulties in life through the limits of human ability. The Divine viewpoint means to look at life and its challenges through God’s ability and His Power to work through you.

I believe that there are many examples of all of this in the Bible. Let’s look at an example for a moment, but the most important thing to learn is this, that we are to live by faith and not by sight. From the time we are born we learn to relate to life and our reality through our five senses – what we see, hear, taste, smell, feel. That’s all we know. And when we are born into the family of God, the Spiritual Rebirth, we enter into a new possibility, a new realm, the Divine viewpoint and its reality are all based on what God says. God wants us to crack through this barrier, this faith barrier to where we are living in the light of what God says is true. Then we are no longer limited to our human abilities – hopeless things.

Now, here is an example from the Bible where this is taught. Back in the days of Israel when David was a young child, a young shepherd boy. David wrote most of the psalms and became the King David. While he was shepherding his father’s sheep, his father called him in to come and to take some food to his brothers fighting in Israel’s army against the Philistine.

David left his sheep with the keeper and he was excited to go see the battle. He went to the battle field and when he gets there he sees two armies, each on a hill with a valley in between.

Then he saw a giant, 9 foot 6 inches tall, one of the great warriors of the Philistine army. This giant defied the whole army of Israel and cursed them by his gods.

We read from 1 Samuel 17:8-9, “And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them, Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us.

No one from the Army of the Israelites would take up the giant’s challenge.

In 1 Samuel 17:26 David asked the men standing near him: What shall be done to the man that killeth the Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?

Right away we notice something different about David’s feeling, because David saw this situation not through the human imitation of being able to defeat a 9 foot 6 inch giant. He saw it through the eyes of what that giant had done. He defied the armies of Israel. He had defied the fact that God would work through one of his children who believed in Him. He worked through him with power.

When David’s oldest brother heard him say that, he got very angry. You could expect this when you start living by the Divine viewpoint even fellow believers will start contesting when you get upset because he had this faith. The faith that gets over that what’s beyond being human senses because it’s based on the promises of the Word of God.

David said, “I only asked a question.” In 1 Samuel 17:31-33 this is what David said: “And when the words were heard which David spake they rehearsed them before Saul: and he sent for him. And David said to Saul, Let no man’s heart fail because of him, thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine and Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.

Now what’s that: That’s the human viewpoint that the King of Israel was saying. David as a young boy could not go up against this giant in human abilities but there was something in David that God had developed. He was tending sheep all by himself, kind of fearful for a young teenage boy, he was probably about 16 to be out in the wilderness alone with a bunch of sheep which are bait for all the wild animals out there. While out there like this David learned some lessons, he saw himself as a shepherd taking care of his father’s sheep. That was his job. That’s something God also had appointed him to do.

In verse 34 David said to Saul: “...Thy servant kept his father’s sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: and I went after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth; and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God.



**REV. BERTRAM BOBB**  
Tribal Chaplain

David learned from his experience in the wilderness that when he was doing God’s Will, he could depend on the Lord to fight through him and do the impossible.

Looking through the promises of God we learn that the Lord works through the one who is seeking to do God’s Will. David killed a lion and a bear.

David took his experience that he believed in the God of Israel and that belonged to the God of Israel, so he knew that the Lord was his Shepherd.

We read in 1 Samuel 17:37: “David said moreover, the LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.”

David took his experience of God being faithful in the past and believed in God for the present. He did not see that 9 foot 6 inch giant in his human ability. David saw that giant through God’s ability to deliver him. David saw Goliath, this great warrior, insulting the God of Israel, and he knew that the God of Israel would defend anyone who would go out to defend His Name. When David was that, that Giant was good as dead.

King Saul said to David in Verse 37: “...Go, and the LORD be with thee.”

What a picture we have here. Here’s a whole army of Israel holding back and here is the young shepherd boy with one lone difference between them. David had the Divine viewpoint of life. He was living by faith which is the ability to act in the light of the unseen, the ability to believe God’s promises as so real, and God keeps His promises.

Saul armed David in his armor, we read in verse 39: “And David girded his sword upon his armor, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved it. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. And David put them off him.”

David said I can’t go out in these. He said to Saul, “I’m not used to them.”

And we read in verse 40, “And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd’s bag which he had, even in a script; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine.

Will you read in your Bible these verses in 1 Samuel 17:31-47? These are some of the greatest statements found in the Bible. Here is David saying these things by faith. He knew that one man and God is a majority, he is giving us something that really happened. And God still does these things today to the one who will claim His Promises.

David took this stand of Faith, now he steps out on this stand of faith. And we close with these two verses 48 and 49: “And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and drew nigh to meet David, but David hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth.”

The Spirit of the living God was behind that stone and saw that it hit the mark. David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and stone. And this is what we need in our world today. God is going to act when someone goes out to defend His Name. And God is going to act when one of His children against all odds believes His Promises and takes a stand for Him.

God bless you. Pray for America.



# Wind Horse Family Counseling Center ready to serve McCurtain County residents

By **BRET MOSS**  
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma (CNO) officially opened the doors of the Wind Horse Family Counseling Center with a ribbon cutting ceremony on Aug. 21.

The center, located at 1303 Lynn Lane in Idabel, near the Idabel Children’s Clinic, will provide drug and alcohol counseling, as well as mental health help in areas such as trauma, grief counseling, depression, or anxiety.

Any CDIB cardholder will be able to receive help with any one of these disorders from qualified mental health professionals. Lisa Meredith, who heads operations at the center, has over 20 years of experience in the field of mental health and substance abuse treatment. Her associate, M. Jane Wilson, has also had extensive experience in the field and both are ready to make an impact in the Idabel area.

As the ribbon was cut and doors opened on the facility, new possibilities to aid the people of McCurtain County were realized. “We really want to expand our counseling opportunities and incorporate many types of coun-

seling services,” said Wilson as she explained her hopes for the impact of the center. “We are always looking to improve our services and expand,” followed Meredith.

The center will be open to appointments, walk-ins, and emergency calls when needed. In cases of emergency, anyone seeking help after hours will need to call the hospital emergency room at 918-567-7000 and someone will reach the on-call worker and have them return your call.

Based on the assessed need of the area, Meredith expects to see between 50 and 100 patients per week. A receptionist will aid Meredith and Wilson with the flow of patients. Plans to add a third member to the counseling team are in effect as well.

A facility such as this has been a goal of District 1 Tribal Councilman Thomas Williston for some time. During his 25-year law enforcement career in McCurtain County, Williston has seen much heartache associated with alcohol and substance abuse.

With the high rate of substance abuse in the area, many individuals feel the direct and indirect effects. Children, spouses, family and



Choctaw Nation: BRET MOSS

**District 1 Councilman Thomas Williston, surrounded by officials and members of the Choctaw Nation and the Idabel community, cuts the ribbon to the Wind Horse Family Counseling Center.**

friends all suffer mentally, and sometimes physically, when someone they care for becomes involved in these types of activities.

Idabel’s Assistant Chief of Police John Martin describes the mental state of substance abusers as a cycle. Once they get involved, it is hard to break that streak. “We are hoping this is an intervention that will get them out of that system,” stated Martin.

It is the hope of all involved in this effort, that the resources and aid provided by the facility will give those who feel

they are trapped by addictions or mental ailments, the power to pull themselves out of their rut and break the cycle.

“We want to be there to give a hand to people,” said Assistant Chief Gary Batton as he gave his remarks before the ribbon was cut.

The Wind Horse Family Counseling Center is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. To make an appointment or more information about the services provided at the counseling center, please call 580-286-7025.



Choctaw Nation: LISA REED

**The School of Choctaw Language has three new instructors – Betty Thomas, Colina Hickman and Brian Hicks. The three were presented their certificates during the Tribal Council’s Regular Session on Sept. 8. Betty will be assisting with community classes in McAlester and Brian will be holding classes in Idabel. Colina is starting a children’s class at the Durant center. Pictured are Councilman Ted Dosh, Speaker Delton Cox, Councilman Bob Pate, Betty Thomas, Colina Hickman, Brian Hicks, Community Language Director Richard Adams, Assistant Chief Gary Batton and Councilman Thomas Williston.**

## COUNCIL

*Holds regular August session, officers elected in September*

Continued from Page 1

Speaker Cox reappointed Patty Hawkins as recording secretary, Sylvester Moore as sergeant-in-arms and Bob Rabon as parliamentarian. Taking the helm as committee chairmen are Ron Perry, Committee 1, and Tony Messenger, Committee 2.

Three Choctaw School of Language instructors received certification at the monthly meeting – Brian Hicks, Colina Hickman and Betty Thomas. Hicks will be holding community classes in Idabel and Thomas will

be assisting with classes in McAlester. Hickman is starting a children’s class in Durant to be held in conjunction with the adult classes so that the young people who accompany their parents or grandparents to class will have an opportunity to learn at their level.

The first on the agenda for new business was a Council Bill approved for the Choctaw Nation Head Start Policy and Procedures and Staff Handbooks. Supplemental funding for the Head Start program was approved to renovate Poteau’s existing playground. A donation of used playground equipment was also okayed for the Rowena McElroy Home Day Care in McAlester.

Also approved in new business:

- Membership to the National Congress of American Indians.
- Two grazing leases, one in Latimer County and one in

McCurtain County.

- The disposal of miscellaneous surplus equipment.
- Application to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services/Indian Health Services/Tribal Self Governance Program/Planning Cooperative Agreement to address the need to extend comprehensive primary and preventive health services to the geriatric population which currently has limited access to such services.
- Several budgets for Fiscal Year 2013 including the estimated consolidated Tribal Government Programs, Women, Infants and Children (WIC), Rural Utility Services Telemedicine and Distance Learning Grant, Jones Academy Programs, Health Services Programs, Tribal Transit Program, the Bus and Bus Facilities Livability Program and the tribe’s General Fund.

In the Council’s Aug. 11 session at Tvshka Homma, Council members discussed

many key issues concerning Choctaw members as well as approved the following items on the agenda:

- The annual budget for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma’s Educational Talent Search Program
- Budget modification to WIC Program
- Budget modification to Capitol Projects
- Budget modification to General Fund
- Funding for the Community Services Block Grant
- Funding for Low Income Homer Energy Assistance Program
- Adopting Certain Codes for use by the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Worker’s Injury Administrator and in the Court of General Jurisdiction of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.
- And Jones Academy’s Student/Parent and Employee Handbooks for the Residential and elementary school for school year 2012-13.

## ADDRESS

**‘We are a mighty nation of Choctaws’**  
– Chief Gregory E. Pyle

Continued from Page 1

of all the Choctaw Nation ventures. “Our businesses are doing well here. Oklahoma has the third best economy in the United States of America. Without our businesses, we wouldn’t be able to have all of our staff or provide many of the benefits and opportunities for tribal members. Career Development started from 100 percent Choctaw Nation funds. Our hospital was built 100 percent from Choctaw Nation funds. Our education budget this year alone was \$22 million dollars. We sent over 5,000 students to college. We sent another 3,000 to Career Development and the story goes on and on. We are a blessed nation.”

He ended his address by recognizing “a group of 12 men who work tirelessly” for districts they serve – the Tribal Council. He also took a moment to speak about former Councilman E.J. Johnson, who passed away this year, and asked the audience to join him in a moment of silence for the late councilman from Atoka County.

“The Choctaw Nation continues to be strong,” he said in closing, to a standing ovation, “We are striving to learn and teach our culture for our children. We will sustain our great heritage for many years to come.”



Choctaw Nation: LARISSA COPELAND

## Award-winning painting donated to Choctaw Nation

Chief Gregory E. Pyle is presented a framed painting on behalf of the tribe by Choctaw artist Kathy Sturch of Durant, pictured left, and Natural Resources Conservation Service’s (NRCS) representative Jamey Wood. The painting entitled “Weaving Together” by Sturch was chosen as the winner of the NRCS Native American Indian Heritage Month Poster contest and will be made into a poster that will be distributed and displayed around the country during Native American Heritage Month in November.

The theme for this year’s NRCS contest was “Tell me and I’ll forget. Show me and I may not remember. Involve me and I’ll understand.”

Sturch tells the story of the painting as “Experienced Choctaw hands gently guide little fingers as they weave together – weaving not only a basket but stories—stories from the past and new stories of today. As the little hands grow into bigger experienced hands, they can weave baskets of courage and hope just as our fathers did.”

“My father taught me to be proud of my Choctaw heritage,” says Sturch, “and now I share what I have learned with my children and grandchildren.”

## Conservation cost-share program year 14 sign-up announced

The Bryan Conservation District has set the application period for the Oklahoma Conservation Cost-Share Program Year 14 to begin on Oct. 15, 2012, and end on Nov. 15, 2012. The program offers financial assistance of construction of new farm ponds at the rate of 75 percent of the total cost. Landowners can make application of the cost share at the Bryan Conservation District office located in the Durant USDA Service Center, 200 Gerlach,

Suite A from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Because of limited funds, a ranking system will be used to determine who is approved if more applications are received than can be funded. “This system ensures fairness to landowners and ensures that cost-share funds are used to meet conservation priorities,” said Jeff Brown, Conservation District Board Chairman.

Some restrictions apply in the program. Land tracts must be 20 acres or more and have

at least \$1,000 of soil-dependent products sold annually.

All applicants will be notified if they are or are not approved for funding.

In order to qualify for payment, the application must be approved and a performance agreement must be signed by both the participant and the District before any installation work begins.

This program, authorized by the Oklahoma State Legislature in 1998, is administered at the state level by the Okla-

homa Conservation Commission and at the local level by the Conservation District.

The District takes applications and helps participants complete the necessary paperwork for payment.

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides technical assistance for the program.

Landowners with questions about the program are invited to visit the Bryan Conservation District office or call on 580-924-5464.



# Choosing Whole-Grain

10 tips for purchasing and storing whole-grain foods

Whole grains are important sources of nutrients like iron, magnesium, B vitamins, and fiber. There are many choices available to make half your grains whole grains. But whole-grain foods should be handled with care. Over time and if not properly stored, oils in whole grains can cause spoilage. Consider these tips to select whole-grain products and keep them fresh and safe to eat.

## 1. Search the label

Whole grains can be an easy choice when preparing meals. Choose whole-grain breads, breakfast cereals, and other prepared foods. Look at the Nutrition Facts labels to find choices lower in sodium, saturated (solid) fat, and sugars.

## 2. Look for the word “whole” at the beginning of the ingredients list

Some whole-grain ingredients include whole oats, whole-wheat flour, whole-grain corn, whole-grain brown rice, wild rice, and whole rye. Foods that say “multigrain,” “100% wheat,” “high fiber,” or are brown in color may not be a whole-grain product.

## 3. Kids can choose whole-grains

The new school meal standards make it easier for your kids to choose whole grains at school. You can help your child adapt to the changes by slowly adding whole grains into their favorite recipes, meals, and snacks at home.

## 4. Find the fiber on label

If the product provides at least 3 grams of fiber per serving, it is a good source of fiber. If it contains 5 or more grams of fiber per serving, it is an excellent source of fiber.

## 5. Is gluten in whole-grains?

People who can't eat wheat gluten can eat whole grains if they choose carefully. There are many whole-grain products, such as buckwheat, certified gluten-free oats or oatmeal, popcorn, brown rice, wild rice and quinoa that fit gluten-free diet needs.

## 6. Check for freshness

Buy whole-grain products that are tightly packaged and well sealed. Grains should always look and smell fresh. Also, check the expiration date and storage guidelines on the package.

## 7. Keep a lid on it

When storing whole grains from bulk bins, use containers with tight-fitting lids and keep in a cool, dry location. A sealed container is important for maintaining freshness and reducing the possibility of bug infestations or moisture.

## 8. Buy what you need

Purchase smaller quantities of whole-grain products to reduce spoilage. Most grains in sealed packaging can be kept in the freezer.

## 9. Wrap it up

Whole-grain bread is best stored at room temperature in its original packaging, tightly closed with a quick-lock or twist tie. The refrigerator will cause bread to lose moisture quickly and become stale. Properly wrapped bread will store well in the freezer.

## 10. What’s the shelf life?

Since the oil in various whole-grain flours differs, the shelf life varies too. Most whole-grain flours keep well in the refrigerator for 2 to 3 months and in the freezer for 6 to 8 months. Cooked brown rice can be refrigerated 3 to 5 days and can be frozen up to 6 months.

# HAPPY 40th BIRTHDAY WIC PROGRAM!

The national Women Infants and Children organization began its services on Sept. 26, 1972.



# Choctaw Nation WIC WOMEN, INFANTS and CHILDREN



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



Free help

Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline

**1 800**

**QUIT NOW**

784-8669 OKhelpline.com


# NURSERY NEWS

Zoë Townsend




Zoë Kathryn Issi Townsend was welcomed into this world at 8 p.m. on Sept. 6, 2012, in San Diego, Calif. She is an animated and attentive baby who weighed 7 pounds 7 ounces and was 20 inches long at birth. Zoë Kathryn is the daughter of Justin and Marjorie Townsend; granddaughter of Lora Townsend-Politi, David Politi, and Patrick and Dense Fidelia; great-granddaughter of Patricia and the late Coleman Townsend. She was also welcomed from afar by many of her family and friends.

Cayden Longsine




Cayden Lee Nelson Longsine was born at 5:38 p.m. on Aug 1, 2012, at Mercy Hospital in Independence, Kan. Cayden weighed 7 pounds 5 ounces and measured 20.5 inches. Proud parents are Chris and Laure Longsine.

Camran Knight



Linda and Lee Knight of Hugo announce the birth of their grandson, Camran Lee Knight. He was born at 7:13 p.m. on May 7, 2012, at the Choctaw Nation hospital in Talihina. He weighed 8 pounds 1 ounce and measured 21.8 inches. He is the son of Rickey and Stacey Knight of Hugo and is the little brother of Hannah, Cierra and Kierra.

Abigail Perez



Abigail Renee Perez was born at 10:57 p.m. on June 12, 2012, weighing 6 pounds and 6 ounces and measuring 20 inches long. Her proud first-time parents are Sarah and Andrew Perez of Frederick. Her proud grandparents are Lori Perez (Hicks) and Braulio Perez are overjoyed with this blessing. Her uncle Carlos Perez, great uncle Galen Hicks (Dino), and great-grandfather Paul Leyja also welcome her to the world.

# Keeping your tailgating tasty and healthy

Fall, what a wonderful time of year. The fresh crisp air and slightly cooler temperatures lead one to feel relaxed and...fire up the grill for some tantalizing tailgating football fair! Eating healthy is not always the first thought that comes to mind when one hears, “Tailgate BBQ before the big game!” However, the food served at the next tailgate party can be healthy and flavorful. Serving up lean meats accented with a spicy yet fruity sauce, grilled vegetables that have been marinated in an herbed vinaigrette and a tossed fresh fruit salad with pecans and citrus dressing. Wow, all this flavor and good for you nutrition as well. Having well-balanced meals provides the nutrients the body needs to help decrease insulin resistance, heart disease and cancers. Check out the recipe for grilled chicken with cherry-chipotle barbecue sauce from eatingwell.com to the right. It is a wonderful way to kick up the flavor at the tailgate without the guilt or heartburn.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION

ANTLERS

Market open weekdays Nov. 1-27 , except for: Nov. 12 (holiday), Nov. 21 (closes at 1 p.m.), Nov. 22 and 23 (holiday).  
**Nov. 7 :** Idabel 9-11 a.m.; Broken Bow 12-2 p.m. (market open)  
**Nov. 14:** Bethel 9-10:30; Smithville 12-2 (market open)  
**Closed** Nov. 28-30 for inventory  
**Cooking with Carmen:** Nov. 1 &13, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

DURANT

Market open weekdays Nov. 1-27, except for: Nov. 12 (holiday), Nov. 21 (closes at 1 p.m.), Nov. 22 and 23 (holiday).  
**Closed** Nov. 28-30 for inventory.  
**Cooking with Carmen:** Nov. 8, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m. and Nov. 21, 10 a.m. - noon.

McALESTER

Market open weekdays Nov. 1-27, except for: Nov. 12 (holiday), Nov. 21 (closes at 1 p.m.), Nov. 22 and 23 (holiday).  
**Closed** Nov. 28-30 for inventory.  
**Cooking with Carmen:** Nov. 7 & 19, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

POTEAU

Market open weekdays Nov. 1-27, except for: Nov. 12 (holiday), Nov. 21 (closes at 1 p.m.), Nov. 22 and 23 (holiday).  
**Closed** Nov. 28-30 for inventory.  
**Cooking with Carmen:** Nov. 5 & 15, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

CHOCTAW NATION FOOD DISTRIBUTION

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

WAREHOUSES & MARKETS


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

FOOD DISTRIBUTION SITES

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


In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, political beliefs, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Adjudication and Compliance, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call 800-795-3272 (voice) or 202-720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Ella White




Will and Leah Allen White of McAlester were blessed to welcome into their home a beautiful baby girl on March 26, 2012. Her name is Ella Elizabeth. She weighed 8 pounds 7 ounces and measured 21.8 inches long. Her maternal grandparents are Charles and Vanessa Frazier Allen of Tannehill. Paternal grandparents are Roger White of McAlester and Laurie Kirkpatrick Brown and Jason Brown of Arpelar. Her maternal great-grandparents were the late Rev. Edmond Frazier Sr. and the late Ella Mae Frazier. All of her family welcomes her to the world and loves her very much.

Boston Tapp



Boston Charles Tapp was born at 2:48 a.m. on July 24, 2012, at the St. Francis Hospital in Tulsa. He weighed 7 pounds 1 ounces and measured 19.5 inches long. His parents are Jamie and Heather Tapp of Wagoner. He was welcomed home by big sister Kamdyn Ann “Kat” Tapp. His grandparents are Diana Leader Banker and Steve Banker of McAlester, and Terry Tapp of Paden; great-grandparents are Helen Clifford Leader and the late Charles Leader of Bowlegs; and great-great-grandma is Mary Lois Clifford of Ada.

Brielle Heitt



Briton and Ramona Heitt of Norman announce the birth of their daughter, Brielle Kay Heitt. Brielle arrived at 3:30 p.m. on July 4, 2012, at OU Medical Center in Oklahoma City. She weighed 6 pounds, 14 ounces and measured 19 inches in length. Paternal grandparents are Martin Heitt of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and Paige Martin of Norman. Maternal grandparents are Robert Hale and Ramona Hale of Norman. Living paternal great-grandparents are Jim Heitt of Cedar Rapids, Mary Doyle of Bella Vista, Ark., and Sally Warner of Norman. Living maternal great-grandparents are Geneva Simmons of Norman, and Benjamin Espinosa of Midwest City. Deceased great-grandparents are Dorothy Koos, Gerald Warner, and Louis Hale.

Recipe of the Month

Grilled Chicken with Cherry-Chipotle Barbecue Sauce

Recipe from eatingwell.com

**Ingredients:**

- 1 cup fresh or frozen (thawed) dark sweet cherries, pitted and chopped
- 1/2 cup reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1/3 cup cherry preserves
- 1/3 cup ketchup
- 2 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons minced canned chipotle chiles in adobo sauce or more to taste
- 1 1/2 teaspoons dried thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon ground allspice
- 2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken breast, trimmed

**Directions:**

1. Stir cherries, broth, preserves, ketchup, vinegar, chipotle peppers, thyme and allspice in a small deep bowl. Transfer to a shallow nonreactive dish large enough to hold chicken. Add chicken and turn to coat well. Cover and marinate in the refrigerator for at least 2 hours or overnight.

2. Preheat grill to high. Oil the grill rack. Remove the chicken from the marinade. Transfer the marinade to a medium skillet.
3. Bring the marinade to a boil. Reduce heat to a simmer and cook until the sauce is reduced by about half, 12 to 15 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, reduce the grill heat to medium and grill the chicken until cooked through and no longer pink in the middle, 7 to 9 minutes per side. Let the chicken cool slightly; serve with the sauce.

**Nutrition Facts:** 180 Calories; 3g fat; 1g sat fat; 1g mono fat; 63mg cholesterol; 15g carbohydrates; 24g protein; 1g fiber; 179mg sodium; 272mg potassium

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

Thanksgiving/Christmas Food Voucher Info

Choctaw Nation Outreach Services will begin taking applications for Thanksgiving and Christmas Food Vouchers beginning Oct. 15, 2012, through Nov. 5, 2012. Please note the deadline for applications will be Nov. 5, 2012, at 4:30 p.m. Any completed application received after that date will only receive a Christmas voucher. You will only need to fill out one application to receive vouchers for both Thanksgiving and Christmas.

To apply for a food voucher, you must submit the application, copy of Tribal Membership, address verification (ONLY GAS, WATER OR ELECTRIC BILLS WILL BE ACCEPTED) and income verification. Applicants must reside in the 10.5 counties.

Applications will be available from any Outreach Services worker or community centers, however, if you have any questions you may contact the Outreach Services Office at 877-285-6893. Completed applications can be turned in to any Outreach Service worker, local community center or you may mail them to Choctaw Nation Outreach Services at P.O. Box 88, Hugo, OK 74743. NO FAX COPIES WILL BE ACCEPTED.

The Outreach Services staff will be mailing out the Thanksgiving vouchers for those who qualify on Friday, Nov. 9, 2012, and Christmas food vouchers will be mailed out on Friday, Dec. 7, 2012.



# NOTES TO THE NATION

## Family receives assistance

I wish to thank Choctaw Nation Social Services for all the help they have given me and my family. Words are not enough to express our gratitude and may God richly bless each and every one of them.

**Brenda Jenkins**

## A heartfelt thank you from Ruth

On May 24, I had foot surgery at the Choctaw hospital in Tali-hina, where I received excellent care. This meant several trips back to see the doctor, and I was taken care of by the Choctaw transportation bus.

I just want to say thank you for providing this service and for the way the Choctaw people are taken care of. My father, an original enrollee, did not have a large amount of financial resources, but he left us something even better: our Choctaw heritage.

My family has also been recipients of education provided by the nation. Chief Pyle, you are a chief concerned with your people and I deeply thank you. May God continue to bless you and your leadership in the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

**Ruth (Bohanon) Boydston**

## Emergency Assistance greatly appreciated

I would like to extend a big thank you to the Choctaw Nation Emergency Assistance program for helping with my family's utility bills. We've needed a lot of electricity to cool our house when the temperature is 115 degrees or more. It has been extremely challenging to make ends meet these days. We all can only hope that things will begin to get better soon. I am proud of my Choctaw heritage. Again, thank you very much.

**Michael Snyder, Arizona Choctaw**

## Thankful for educational support

I wish to express my appreciation of the Choctaw Nation's generous spirit and kindness in providing scholarships in the pursuit of my Master's degree from Lamar University. I was able to complete my Master's in Educational Leadership and have accepted a position as Assistant Principal at O'Banion Middle School in Garland, Texas.

With this scholarship, I was able to achieve not only my educational and career goals, but I'm able to influence the lives of young people of today in their own educational pursuits. Both of my parents were educators and served as excellent role models. I can only hope to inspire others as they have with me.

The Choctaw Nation also serves as an excellent role model as it allows young people to experience success and shape the future of Oklahoma, as well as the nation, with its financial support. Its value of education is evident by these gifts. Many would not be able to encounter this type of success without its vision and support.

Once again, I thank you and appreciate the Choctaw Nation in being a true leader in the development of young people and investing in the future.

**Mary Hardin**

## Tina earns bachelor's in elementary education

I would like to thank the Choctaw Nation and Larry Wade of the Higher Education department for the financial assistance while going to school at East Central University. I graduated on May 12 with a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education with a GPA of 3.87. Thanks to the financial aid provided by the Choctaw Nation, I was able to graduate with no student loan debt.

Shortly after graduation, I accepted a position at an area elementary school. I will be teaching fifth grade. I am looking forward to the next part of my journey, but I could not have made it this far without the help of the Choctaw Nation and the Higher Education department.

**Tina E. Martin**



**Gregory E. Pyle**  
*Chief*

**Gary Batton**  
*Assistant Chief*

The Official  
Monthly Publication  
of the  
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

**Judy Allen, Executive Director**  
**Lisa Reed, Director/Editor**  
**Melissa Stevens, Circulation Director**  
Larissa Copeland, Assistant Editor  
Karen Jacob, Purchasing Coordinator  
Bret Moss, Copy/Production Assistant  
Chrissy Dill, Copy/Production Assistant

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

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

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

The BISKINIK is a nonprofit publication of the Choctaw Nation.

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

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

BISKINIK 2012

## Thank you, Higher Education

Thank you to Chief Pyle and the Higher Education program. I am currently a sophomore at Everest University. I will be forever grateful for the outstanding assistance and cooperation I have received in order to further my education, reach my goals and achieve my dreams. I am excited to know that one day I will be able to give back to my tribe. I have always wanted to help my native people, as they have been there for my family during our time of need. Thank you, again!

**Angela K. Deatherage**

## Austin appreciates support

Sherry Davis and her son, Austin, would like to thank the Choctaw Nation for the support towards Austin's education at Rose State College. He is enjoying great success at his institution, where he has been elected to serve on the student senate and recently attended the Student Leadership Retreat in Tulsa. He has also been featured on billboards and publications in the area advocating Rose State.



## Thanks for birthday card

I would like to thank Chief Pyle for the birthday card that was sent to me back in July. It touched my heart and I am really thankful for the thoughtfulness. It was designed by Choctaw's own Jane Semple Umsted. The artwork was so beautiful. I like looking at the Choctaw woman's traditional clothing on the card. Thanks again!

**Amber Wooten**

## Grateful for education

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Choctaw Nation for helping me to complete my education. As a disabled veteran, the road to reach my goal was a long and continuous struggle. I thought I was too old and too poor, but with the tribe's help and financial assistance, I was able to see my dream come true. I received my bachelor's degree in English at Regent University this past May.

My future goals include using my knowledge to teach and to complete a current book project. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.



**Georganne Bickle**

## Thank you for help with medical school

I just want to say a heartfelt thank you to the generosity of the Choctaw Nation in helping to fund my college education. I have just recently graduated from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences with a Doctorate of Pharmacy. I could not have succeeded without the support and encouragement of the Choctaw Nation. Thank you, and God bless.

**Heather Ashley Tinnell**



*November 10!*

**IVY LEAGUE**

*& Friends*

CHOCTAW STUDENT RECRUITMENT

"...by attending this event, I think you learn a lot more than just requirements to get into Harvard; there are other learning opportunities."

-Jo McDaniel, Choctaw Nation Scholarship Advisement Program Director

**CHOCTAWNATION-SAP.COM**

**800-522-6170 EXT. 2523**

SCHOLARSHIPADVISEMENT@CHOCTAWNATION.COM

## Veterans Pow Wow

**Oct. 13**

**Talihina High School -**  
**Old Gymnasium in Talihina**

**Co-hosts: Talihina Indian Club**  
**and Red Path Warrior Society**

**2 p.m. - 10 p.m.**

Emcee: Vernon Tehauno Jr.  
Head Man: Justin Yearby  
Head Lady: Yolanda Bluehorse  
Head Gourd: Don Stroud  
Head Singer: Pat Oyebi  
Arena Director: Randy Frazier  
Assistant Arena Director: Eric Gaines  
Color Guard: Choctaw Nation Color Guard

**2 p.m. - Gourd Dance**  
**5 p.m. - Break**  
**6 p.m. - Gourd Dance**  
**7 p.m. - Grand Entry**

Open to the public. All veterans, color guards, drums, dancers and princesses are invited.

Vendor contact: Harry and Carol James 918-567-2539.  
Pow Wow Coordinator: Eugene Folsom 214-941-4702.

Pow wow committee and school district not responsible for accidents or thefts. Alcohol and illegal substances are not allowed.

## Events

### Anderson family reunion

The Lejah and Marie Anderson family reunion will be held Oct. 6 at the cafeteria on the Choctaw Nation Capitol grounds at Tuskahoma. Lunch will be covered dish served at noon. All friends and neighbors are invited to attend.

### Dwight Mission School reunion

The Dwight Mission School reunion will be held Oct. 6 with registration starting at 8:30 a.m. until 10 a.m. Coffee, juice and donuts will be served. The meeting will start at 10 a.m. with a free lunch at noon. Attendees are invited to bring their family, friends and share their experiences while on the hallowed grounds.

Please RSVP to Chairperson Levada Wildcat (Smith) at 918-773-3096 or 580-920-3152 or by fax at 580-924-4148.

### Wild onion, Indian taco dinner

A wild onion and Indian taco dinner will be held Oct. 6 at 11 a.m. at the OK Choctaw Tribal Alliance, located at 6320 S. Youngs Blvd. in Oklahoma City. There will be a children's dance exhibition and Choctaw singing.

### Coalgate Choctaw hymn singing

The Coalgate Choctaw Language class will have Choctaw hymn singing and a traditional potluck meal beginning at 6:30 p.m. on Oct. 8 at the Choctaw Nation Community Center in Coalgate. Everyone who cherishes Choctaw hymns is invited to attend. Please bring your favorite dish and join us for a wonderful evening of singing, fellowship and traditional foods. Contact Paula Carney at 918-697-2483 or the Choctaw community center at 580-927-3641 with questions or for more information. Please help keep our Choctaw hymns alive!

### James family reunion

A family reunion for the descendants of Jacob Jackson and Ila Mae James will be held Oct. 13 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Robbers Cave State Park in Wilburton. All family and friends are invited to attend.

If further questions, contact David James at 918-260-6885 or by email at choctawdavidjames@gmail.com, or contact Derrell James at 918-260-3095 or choctawderrell@gmail.com.

### Haskell alumni annual reunion

The Haskell Alumni Association of Oklahoma is holding an annual reunion Oct. 26-28 at the Park Inn Hotel at the Tulsa Airport. All Haskell graduates are invited to a fun-filled weekend to visit with former classmates, dinner, and dance.

Congratulations to the class of 1962 on 50 years, which will get together for special recognition on Oct. 26.

If you have further questions, call 918-835-9911 or 800-670-7275. If you are a member of the organization, you will receive further information in the mail, if not, you may call Flo Tanner SpottedBear at 918-948-2505, Loretta Burgess at 918-633-7030, or Carmen McKosato Ketcher at 918-333-7483. Hope to have the best turnout we've ever had, see you there!

### Searching for missing family member

The Carney family is looking for a missing family member. Tara Cossey has been missing since June 6, 1979, from San Pablo, Calif. Any information would be greatly appreciated and should be directed to Detective Melissa Klawuhn, Contra Costa County Sheriff's Office, at 925-313-2657 or by email at mklaw@so.cc.county.us.

**The Carney Family**

### Seeking to reconnect with relatives

My name is Alexis Hernandez and I am seeking to reconnect with all my relatives of the Watson family. My father is Ronald D. Watson, one of many children of Juanita Watson. I have a sister by the name of Jennifer Watson. We lost contact a few years ago. I would very much appreciate and truly consider it a blessing to get in touch with one another once again. So please, anyone with information, feel free to contact me. My phone number is 805-944-8144.

### Looking for relatives

I am looking for descendants of original enrollees Alfred Tupper, my grandfather, and Jolum Tupper, both from the Eubanks and Antlers areas. My grandfather served in World War I and lived in the Lennox area, east of Talihina. He is buried in the Good Springs Church Cemetery in Lennox.

I would like to find relatives from the Alfred Tupper family. My name is Floyd Johnson, son of the former Lena Mae Noah of Lennox. I live in Holdenville and I can be reached at 405-379-3722 or 405-712-9482.

### Seeking old friend for platoon reunion

My name is John F. Druding of Clementon, N.J. I was in Vietnam in 1968-69 with a Native American by the name of Billy W. Nelson. I know he is a Choctaw. He talked about his home in Oklahoma often. A group of men from DCO3/8 4 Inf. Division, myself, Carson Waterman, Bruce Boenning, Steve Sullivan, Jim Handress, Darold Muhs, and Clyde Larson, his old platoon, are trying to get a reunion together and would like to find him. If anyone knows of him, please contact me at 856-673-6462. Thank you.

### Thank you for scholarships

We would like to thank the Choctaw Nation for the scholarship support that Sarah Mixon received from the tribe during her four years at Oklahoma State University. Sarah graduated in May with a Bachelor of Art degree in Economics and a minor in Middle East Studies. She will begin an internship in the Middle East in September. Her family is very proud of her and are very thankful for all the support she received from the Choctaw Nation to achieve her goal.

**Susan Mixon and family**



# PEOPLE YOU KNOW

## Happy birthday, Hudsons

Happy birthday to Camden and Carys Hudson. Camden’s birthday was July 28, he turned 9 years old. Carys’ was on Aug. 10, she turned 6 years old. They are the children of Sean and Cheryl Hudson of Ardmore and the grandchildren of Eddie and Mary Kay Cantrell and Richard and Conchieta Hudson of Ardmore. They are the niece/nephew of Jeremy Cantrell of Austin, Texas.



## 50th anniversary

Pat Hoover and her husband, Bill, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with a traditional Choctaw wedding on June 10. The Theta chapter of the Native American Alpha Pi Omega sorority performed their swan dance for the couple. Their youngest daughter is a member of the sorority. Their children cooked traditional food and the ceremony was attended by friends and family. The couple has six children, 13 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.



## New Business Award

The Chamber of Commerce of Broken Bow presented the New Business Award to Rhonda’s Flowers and Gifts. Rhonda just opened her shop in downtown Broken Bow. The community wishes the best of luck to her and much success in her new business.



## Tribal Transit Summit a success

The Oklahoma Tribal Transportation Council held its fourth annual Tribal Transit Summit and Bus Rodeo at the Choctaw Casino and Resort in Durant on June 25 through the 28th.

The purpose of the event was to bring transits from all over the state together for training, information sharing and a bus rodeo. Featured speakers were Assistant Chief Gary Batton and Oklahoma House of Representative member T.W. Shannon.

A golf tournament was held, with the profits going to the Lyle Deere Memorial Scholarship fund. This is a yearly scholarship for Native Americans that live in Oklahoma. Attendees were treated to a stickball demonstration and a traditional meal was prepared by Choctaw Nation CHRs.

Drivers in the bus rodeo were required to perform a pre-trip inspection, wheelchair securement, take a written test and drive an obstacle course. Representing the Choctaw Nation Tribal Transit was William Frazier. William took first place and will be sponsored by OTTC to compete in the state championship bus rodeo in October in Oklahoma City.



## Happy birthday, anniversary

Happy birthday to Michael “Danny” Daney (pictured) on Sept. 23. He enjoys camping, fishing, pow wows and his dog. Also, happy 17th wedding anniversary to Michael and Lynda Daney on Sept. 29 from Lynda, Baby Boy, Buffalo Buff, Shonna, Autumn, Buzz, Number 9, Bo, Mandy, Tee, Lee, “The Wolf Gang,” and Buffalo Woman Apryl.



## Dylan turns 10

Congratulations to Dylan Michael Garcia for turning 10 years old on July 7. Dylan is anticipating entering fifth grade at Patterson Elementary in Hillsboro, Ore., this fall. His special interests include science, history, baseball and basketball. He descends from original enrollees Henry Frank Oakes and Christopher Columbus Spring. He is also related to the LaFlores, McCoys and Bohanons of the Choctaw Nation. His immediate families of Oregon and California have ties to Portugal, Wales and Germany. They all wish him well, from his dad, Kevin; his mom, Elizabeth; brother, Trey; sister, Amber; VoVo, Stan; VaVa, Nancy; and grandpa and NaNa, Sam and Paula.



## Happy birthday, Pauline

Pauline (Labor) Robertson of Bayfield, Calif., celebrated her 94th birthday on July 14. Two of her children and their spouses, three of her grandchildren and their spouses and four great-grandchildren took her to the “Bar-D-Chuckwagon” in Durango, Colo., for an evening of fun, food and entertainment.

Pauline was born in Bennington on July 14, 1918, to Virgil Labor (original enrollee) and Pearl Kelley Labor. She is very proud of her Choctaw heritage.



## Bryce turns 5

Pictured is teacher Ms. Snelson with Bryce Caldwell, a last-year graduate from kindergarten in Dewar. Bryce, who turned 5 on July 31, had a big birthday celebration with family and friends that included a big water slide and cookout. His proud parents are Mark and Erin Caldwell and siblings, Alex and Caleb.



## Happy birthday, Melody

Melody Rayne Thorne celebrated her 11th birthday on July 21 at home with family. Her parents are John and Marie Thorne. Her grandparents are Gene and LaHoma Murphy Crauthers. Melody played softball and is an “A” student at Northern Elementary School in Moore. Great-grandparents are the late William T. and Ella Murphy of Idabel.



## Happy birthday, Evelyn

Evelyn German (May) was born Aug. 4, 1922, to Amanda Owen and Marvin German in Darwin. Evelyn married the late Alvis May and they lived a few years in Antlers before moving to Texas. They moved back to Antlers and finished their life together for 61 years.

Happy birthday to Evelyn on Aug. 4; she turned 90 years young, from Carolyn, Bob and extended family.



## Tyler and Jennifer wed

On April 27, Jennifer Simas and Tyler Anderson were married on the beaches of Maui, Hawaii. Many friends and family joined them for the occasion. Parents are Jeanne and Daren Trent and Robert and Paula Simas. Jennifer’s grandparents are Norman and Opal Ludlow and Robert and Marge Simas. Her late great-grandmother is Julia Tims. Tyler’s mother, Melody, and grandparents, Ted and Peg Halstengard, were in attendance. Uncle Mark and his family were present, as well as Jennifer’s cousin, Gloria Starr of Oklahoma, who made the trip; they all enjoyed the big day and the visit to the islands.



## Happy birthday, Aubri

Aubri Lynn Browning of Bowlegs celebrated her 10th birthday on July 21. She is in the fifth grade at Bowlegs Elementary School. She loves to play basketball and softball. Some of her favorite things are the OU Sooners, the OKC Thunder and her little dog, Sandy.

Aubri is the daughter of Justin Browning of Bowlegs and Amber Coon of Seminole. Her grandparents are Jimmy and Kay Leader Browning of Bowlegs and Susan Gentry and Jimmy Dean Harjo of Bowlegs. Her great-grandparents are Helen Clifford Leader of Bowlegs and the late Charles Leader. Her great-great-grandma is Mary Lois Gore Clifford of Ada.



## Happy birthday, Kat

Kamdyn Ann “Kat” Tapp of Wagoner turned 2 years old on June 2 with a birthday party in her home. Kat is the daughter of Jamie and Heather Tapp. Her grandparents are Diana Leader Banker and Steve Banker of McAlester and Terry Tapp of Paden. Her great-grandparents are Helen Clifford Leader of Bowlegs and the late Charles Leader. Her great-great-grandma is Mary Lois Gore Clifford of Ada.



## Michael turns 1

Michael Oran III “Bubba” celebrated his first birthday on July 21. He is pictured with his “Poppa,” Michael Hoover. He likes to dance to drum music and eat his Aunt Kristin’s grape dumplings.



## Happy birthday, Jason

Jason Morris turned 43 years old on Sept. 19. Jason likes off-roading and he coached baseball. His sons, Kendal and Bryant, are very good baseball players. Jason played as a young man and was chosen to play on the Central California 15-year-old all star team. They went to Ohio to play in the 15-year-old World Series and he hit a home run when they played Canada.

Jason’s family wishes him a happy birthday, from his wife, Trish, sons, and dad, Eldon.



## Happy birthday, anniversary, William

Phil Shinn and family would like to wish his dad, William G. Shinn, a happy 88th birthday with peace and happiness. From his sons, daughters-in-law, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

They would also like to wish dad and mom, Sylvia Dunham Shinn, a happy 70th wedding anniversary on Sept. 11.

## Hannah turns 5

Hannah Elu Storie celebrated her fifth birthday twice, once in Oklahoma at her grandma Betty Work’s home in May, and her second celebration was on her birthday at her home in Ellijay, Ga., on June 16. Her theme in Oklahoma was “princesses” and “pandas” in Georgia. Hannah is the daughter of Darlene (Work) and Jeff Storie.



## Happy birthday, Papa

Happy birthday from Gabrielle Satterfield of Antlers to her “Papa,” Randall Fred Frazier, who was born Aug. 26, 1954.

## Sisters named Poppy Princesses

The American Auxiliary held its department convention at the Biltmore Hotel in Oklahoma City on July 6-8. During this end-of-year convention, many awards were given to the eight districts in Oklahoma as well as to specific units in each district.

This year, two Choctaw sisters earned the title of Poppy Princess in their age groups respectively. Alexis Futischa was awarded the 2012-13 Little Miss Poppy title. To earn this title, Alexis completed many hours of volunteer work, submitted a scrapbook showing her work throughout the year, promoted the American Auxiliary Poppy Program, wrote an essay over the memorial poppy and turned in a detailed history of her volunteer work over the year. Little Miss Poppy is open to junior American Legion Auxiliary members between the ages of 7 and 12. Alexis was also awarded with Junior Member of the Year for her devotion to veterans and community service. She also holds the title of District 11 Little Miss Choctaw Nation. She is a nine-year member of the American Legion Auxiliary and is eligible for membership through her grandfather, Roy Futischa (Air Force), great-grandfather Jack Taylor (Army) and great-great-grandfather Cecil Taylor (Navy).

Jordyn Washington earned the title of Tiny Tot Poppy Princess. She volunteered many hours doing work for her community, local school and veterans. Tiny Tot Poppy Princess is open to Junior American Legion Auxiliary members age birth to 6 that promote the Poppy program throughout the year. Jordyn has been in the American Legion Auxiliary since birth and is eligible through her father, Curt Washington (Army), great-grandfather Jack Taylor (Army) and great-great-grandfather George Washington (Army).

Alexis is the 9-year-old daughter and Jordyn is the 3-year-old daughter of Curt and Jacqueline Washington of McAlester. The sisters are the granddaughters of Cindy Taylor and Jimmy Reeder of Coalgate, Sheron Washington of Detroit and Curtis Washington of Checotah.

Alexis is also the daughter of Jonathan Futischa, granddaughter of Roy Futischa and the late Barbara Futischa of Ada. She attends Emerson Elementary in McAlester, where she is happy to be going into the fourth grade. Jordyn hopes to start school this fall and make new friends.



## OKDHS recognizes Hugo resident Summer Moffitt

The state of Oklahoma saved more than \$38 million last year as a result of hours and service donated by volunteers. The Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) recognized those volunteers in a state awards ceremony held recently at the Oklahoma History Center.

The 30th Annual Volunteer Awards Ceremony, “A Symphony of Service,” honored a number of Oklahomans for their outstanding contributions. OKDHS Interim Director Preston Doerflinger presented opening remarks, and the event was hosted by OKDHS Chief Administrative Officer Sandra Harrison and Communication Coordinator Sheree Powell.

“I am very pleased to be a part of some great things going on at the Oklahoma Department of Human Services,” said Doerflinger. “It is an honor to be here, and I want to personally thank each of you for your time and for your service.”

Hugo resident, 11-year-old Summer Moffitt, received the “Leader of Tomorrow” award for school-age children. The award is for those who benefit the community or individuals in an ongoing and meaningful way.

Moffitt has contributed nearly 400 hours of volunteer service, working to help children as well as adults in her community. She was honored by the Court Appointed Special Advocates Program (CASA) for her donations to less fortunate children. Moffitt visits nursing homes and utilizes her talent for singing and performing sign language for residents.

During the summer months in Pushmataha County, the Antlers Wildlife Museum sponsors a community event called “Pickin’ on the Porch.” Moffitt sings the Lord’s Prayer and “Amazing Grace” while also performing sign language.

She was also voted “Little Miss Choctaw Nation” for 2011-12.

More than 100 people attended the ceremony, including volunteers, their family and friends and several state legislators.

“I have the best job at OKDHS,” said Karen Jacobs, Coordinator of the OKDHS Office of Volunteerism. “I work with and recognize individuals and organization who have given so generously to their neighbors and to their state. They certainly do not do it for any glory or recognition, but simply because they have a gentle and caring nature. These individuals truly represent the best of what makes Oklahoma so special.”



## Happy birthday, Richard

Happy birthday to Richard R. Bronaugh on July 25, who turned 61 years old. Richard is pictured with his son, Brandon Bronaugh, and daughter, Amber Crissy.



## Happy birthday, Jera

Jera JuliAnn Davis of Texarkana celebrated her 12th birthday on June 27. She is the daughter of Keith and Sharon Davis of Texarkana. Her grandparents are Earl and Ann Davis and Donald and Bobbie Scott of Idabel. Her great-grandmother is Evelyn Mills of Atlanta, Texas.











Chief Pyle and Assistant Chief Batton congratulate the newly crowned Choctaw royalty, Miss Choctaw Nation Cheyenne Murray of District 9, Jr. Miss Cheyenne Shomo of District 2, and Little Miss Josephine Gilmore of District 9.



The Choctaw Nation Color Guard leads the procession during Grand Entry at the Pow Wow on Friday night at the Labor Day Festival.



Members of the Choctaw Tribal Council and the Choctaw Princesses unveil a bust of Chief Allen Wright, who was chief from 1866-1870. The bust is in the historic walking path located in front of the Choctaw Nation Capitol and Museum in Tvshka Homma.

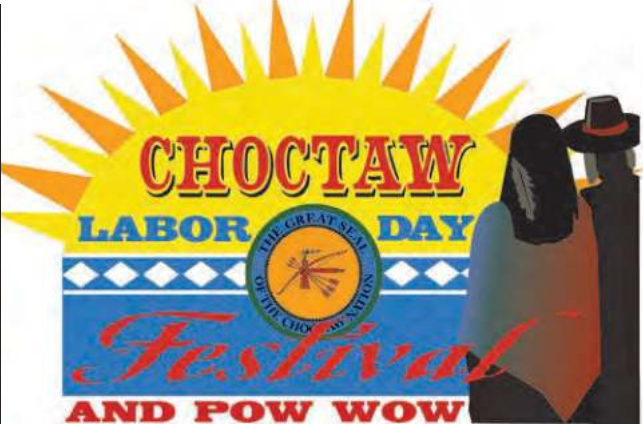


Choctaw Nation Historic Preservation Department employees create pottery during the festival using traditional methods.

Photos by JUDY ALLEN, LISA REED, BRET MOSS, LARISSA COPELAND, KAREN JACOB, CHRISSY DILL and RAINETTE ROWLAND  
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma



Chief Pyle and Councilman Thomas Williston wish Team Tvshka Homma luck prior to the championship game at the Choctaw Nation's 2nd Annual Stickball Tournament.



As a show of respect, pow wow guests and gourd dancers toss cash at the feet of Durant resident Frank Watson, who was the eldest gourd dancer taking part in this year's pow wow.



Chief Pyle and Assistant Chief Batton during the Pow Wow Grand Entry on Friday night.



Steve McKinney, Miss Choctaw Nation Cheyenne Murray, and Assistant Chief Batton lead the players onto the stickball field.



Some last minute touches before the pow wow.

For more Labor Day photos, 'Like' the Choctaw Nation Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/choctawnationofoklahoma](http://www.facebook.com/choctawnationofoklahoma)

Photos are also available for download on our Smugmug photo page. Scan this code with your smartphone to go there now.





# Choctaw Nation Labor Day Festival and Pow Wow 2012



Choctaw artist Jane Semple Umsted shows off a piece of her work on the Choctaw Code Talkers.

Right, Silversmith Johnson Bobb of Antlers works in the Choctaw Village, with festival guests looking on as he hammers away at a piece of silver.



Below, Tough Tough Coordinator Jeremy Loper from Choctaw Nation Fixed Assets is known to give "motivational pep talks" to participants during the competition.



Choctaw dancing in the Village.



Children have a great time learning Choctaw words in the Choctaw Village.



Shopping for Native crafts in the Choctaw Village.



Toby Billy of Norman works on a stickball stick.



Gourd dancing before the pow wow.

Below, Debra Billy of Norman hand-sews a traditional shirt in the Choctaw Village while grandson Anthony Billy of Tecumseh keeps her company.



Grand entry time!



A young girl enjoys her time dancing at the pow wow.



Brily Lee, 4, of McAlester, and his father, Chan, learn traditional flint napping.



Luksi is always a big hit with the kids!

For more Labor Day photos, 'Like' the Choctaw Nation Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/choctawnationofoklahoma](http://www.facebook.com/choctawnationofoklahoma)

Photos are also available for download on our Smugmug photo page. Scan this code with your smartphone to go there now.







Tvshka Homma's Bobby Baker Jr. flies over a member of the Mississippi Warriors team.



Presley Byington dances in the Grand Entry on Friday evening.



Two young boys are all smiles as they participate in the Grand Entry at the pow wow on Friday night.



Hailey and Embery Ensey enjoy their time at the pony rides.



Olin Williams officiates a traditional Choptaw wedding for Virgil Stone and Ranell Scott Stone of Shreveport, La., on Sept. 1 in the village at Tvshka Homma.



Case Smallwood has a blast at the playground.



Many participate in gourd dancing on the Capitol lawn (above). Choptaw social dancing takes place in the village (below).



Three-on-three tournament sees a lot of action.



Councilman Tony Messenger escorts two young Choptaw ladies in the Grand Entry.



Battling for the spike in the volleyball tournament.



Betheny Pisacchubbee-Cole rides Choptaw horse Jasper.



Taryne and Rachelle Williams spend some time at the playground.



Elias Ramirez of Wister relaxes.

For more Labor Day photos, 'Like' the Choptaw Nation Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/choctawnationofoklahoma](http://www.facebook.com/choctawnationofoklahoma) Photos are also available for download on our Smugmug photo page. Scan this code with your smartphone to go there now.





# 2012 Labor Day Competition Winners



## Volleyball



Pictured: Volleyball 1st place- “Choctaw Housing Authority.” Phyllis Little, Monica Fulsom, Lori Hamilton, Joey Burger, Nick Gunville, Brandon Willis, Sheila Davis, Amber Howlingcrane, Joseph Anderson.  
2nd place- “The Crew.” Paul Roberts, Mike Scott, Lena Scott, Sean Gentry, Rayburn M. Baker, Vickey Wesley, Taloa Daney, Sarah Trusty, Thomas Hardy.

## Tough - Tough Choctaw



This year’s Choctaw Tough-Tough winners are, from left, champion Jarrod Johnson, who finished the five-event course in 4:45; second place (and last year’s winner) Chris Hawk, who finished in 5:05; and the recipient of the “Fighting Heart Award” Lynsey Thomas, who, even after a 600 pound tire fell on him during the course, didn’t quit and finished the course.  
Out of 25 participants to enter the event, only five finished the physically demanding course.

## Horseshoes



**Youth Singles Horseshoes**  
Pictured: 1st place- Michael Maben  
2nd place- Noah Lindsey  
3rd place- Jordan Pittman.



**Women’s Singles Horseshoes**  
Pictured: 1st place- Tiffanie Birchfield  
2nd place- Ava Hilton  
3rd place- Susan Robinson.



**Women’s Doubles Horseshoes**  
Pictured: 1st place- Tiffanie Birchfield and Stephanie Bohanan  
2nd place- Sue Tait and Thelma Johnson  
3rd place- Ava Hilton and Dali-lah Hilton.



**Men’s Singles Horseshoes**  
Pictured: 1st place- Nicky Slabaugh  
2nd place- Mike Mings  
3rd place- Danny Adams.



**Men’s Doubles Horseshoes**  
Pictured: 1st place- Nicky Slabaugh and Mike Mings  
2nd place- Bunky Impson and Danny Adams  
3rd place- Robert Briley and Wayne Baker.



Women’s Ringer, Sue Tait.



Men’s Ringer, Bunky Impson.

## Basketball



**9-11 age group:**  
Pictured: 1st place- “Oklahoma Impact” Elijah Gibson, Deland Cobb, Morningstar Roberts, Andrea Underwood, Theran Smith, Coach Sara Willie.  
2nd place- “Sharp Shooters” Joshua Jones, Talon Bohannon, Keona Ludlow, Amberlee Battiest, Kaden Johnson.  
3rd place- “Mini Ballers” Braden Shaw, Brody Himes, Jocelyn Smith, Taiana Langley.



**12-14 age group:**  
Pictured: 1st place- “Weekend Warriors” Matthew Hilinski, Monte Carpitcher, Kamry Walker, Connor Williamson, Dylan Williamson, Coach Clay Williamson.  
2nd place- “Tribal Brothers” Jody Trusty, Keegan Bohanan, Toche Taylor, Alex Clay, Brooke Trusty.  
3rd place- “Sooner Storm” Presli Penz, Bryce Brister, Dallan Cheek, Lance Minyard.



**15-17 age group:**  
Pictured: 1st place- “Native Thunder” Trenton Davis, Jacob Birdshead, Kanan Wisdom.  
2nd place- “All Pros, No Rookies” Caleb Jones, Oscar Rivera, Devin Johnson, Jonathan Hurd, Devin and Jon.  
3rd place- “Silo” Kannon Dry, Kendall Shives, Alexander Steve.



**Women’s:**  
Pictured: 1st place- “Native Thunder” Nola Runyan, Laura Hamilton, Jalena Walker, Catie Newport.  
2nd place- “Wolf Pack” Kayla Davis, Sheena Hamman, Tara Howze, Lisa Wright.  
3rd place- “Tushka Hoyos” Naomi Smith, Misty Madbull, Christy Sapulpa-Myers.



**Men’s:**  
Pictured: 1st place- “Runnin’ Skins” Christopher Valliere, Kurt Taylor, Caleb Taylor, Randall Clay  
2nd place- “USA” Calvin Davis, Shane Richardson, Denarius Darby  
3rd place- “A-Team” Alan Clay, Michael Clay and “Hawk”



**Old Timers:**  
Pictured: 1st place- “Southeast Ballers” Bobby Gordon, Darrell Burris, Don Tsosie, Mike Converse  
2nd place- “Skins” Ben Coffee, Brent Shaw, Rayburn Taylor  
3rd place- “Wheat Bread” Dwayne Hornbuckle, Steven Battice



**Free throw 8 and under:**  
Pictured: 1st place- Cale Clay  
2nd place- Christaysia Denson  
3rd place- Jaiden Smith



**Free throw age 9-11:**  
Pictured: 1st place- Brandon Davidson  
2nd place- Calesa Murdock  
3rd place- Devin Hembry



**Free throw age 12-14:**  
Pictured: 1st place- Ricky Griffith  
2nd place- Jack Daigle  
3rd place- Paden Blackord

## Checkers & Dominoes

Right: Winners of the dominoes tournament are 1st place, Casey Bigpond, left, and 2nd place, Tom Williams.



**Free throw age 15-17:**  
Pictured: 1st place- Tiffany Gantt.  
2nd place- Tyler Hulbutta.  
3rd place- Cameron Hammond.



**Women’s 3 point** 1st place- Naomi Smith.  
2nd place- Laura Hamilton



**Men’s 3 point** 1st place- Broderick Crawford.  
2nd place- Dwayne Taylor



Left: Winners of the checkers tournament are 1st place, Sylvester Moore, left, and 2nd place, Casey McKinney.

For more Labor Day photos, ‘Like’ the Choctaw Nation Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/choctawnationofoklahoma](http://www.facebook.com/choctawnationofoklahoma)

Photos are also available for download on our Smugmug photo page. Scan this code with your smartphone to go there now.





# 2012 Labor Day Competition Winners



## Stickball



This year's stickball tournament saw four teams over three days. Warriors, pictured left, a Mississippi team, claimed 1st place. Choctaw Nation's team, Tvshka Homma, pictured below, took 2nd place and Okla Hannali earned 3rd place.



## Vehicle Winners



Delbert King of Talihina wins a red GMC Sierra on Sept. 3 during the Choctaw Nation's annual Labor Day Festival.



Farron Ray Dill wins a Buick Verano during Monday's festivities on Labor Day.

## Softball



Assistant Chief Gary Batton and Larry Wade present a trophy to Betty Dixon in honor of her 28 straight years of playing in the softball tournament at the Labor Day festival. This years women's softball tournament saw Chitto Harjo finishing 1st, Shockley's taking 2nd and T.T.S. earning 3rd place. The men's tournament produced Kansas City Indians in 1st place, with L.C.C in 2nd, and Tribal Brothers in 3rd.

## Distinguished Choctaw



Chief Pyle shakes hands with the old-est person attending Monday's festivities – Cecil Spring, 97.

## Bow Shoot



Sue Folsom presents awards to the bow shoot winners for the Co-ed 9 and under category with Lorna Beshirs in 1st place and Tristen Kirchner in 2nd place.



Sue Folsom presents awards to the bow shoot winner, Madi McDonald, 1st place in the girls 14 to 16 category.



Bow shoot winners for the 14 to 16 Boys category are Jager Sakolasky in 1st, Sam Jacob in 2nd and William Beshirs in 3rd place.



Cyndi Houser takes 1st place in the Women's bow shoot competition. Pam Waugh takes 2nd place and Sue Folsom takes 3rd.



Bow shoot winners for the Men 20 and Over category are Brad Hooker in 1st, Daniel Smith in 2nd and Joey Waugh in 3rd place.

## Chief Pyle's Physical Fitness Challenge



Youth who attend the Labor Day Festival are encouraged to get up and get active by competing in mini competitions such as a sprint and obstacle course during a physical fitness challenge on Friday afternoon.

## Quilt Show Results

Hand Stitch: 1st Lois Thomas, 2nd Gwen Parish, 3rd Connie May  
Machine Stitch: 1st Anna Bender, 2nd Becky Mizell, 3rd Tina Sims  
Machine/Hand Stitch: 1st Donita Clay, 2nd Rosie Ludlow, 3rd Tina Sims  
This year marks the first time hosting a People's Choice. Guests of Saturday's show voted for which one they liked best. Many votes were cast that day, and were tallied that night. The quilt with the most votes was "Iris-Garden," made by Lois Thomas. This work also won 1st place in the hand stitch division.

For more Labor Day photos, 'Like' the Choctaw Nation Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/choctawnationofoklahoma](http://www.facebook.com/choctawnationofoklahoma)  
Photos are also available for download on our Smugmug photo page. Scan this code with your smartphone to go there now.





# 2011-12 Choctaw Nation Royalty bids farewell

## Little Miss Summer Moffitt

I have recently closed one of the most beautiful chapters in the book of my life.

This past year, what a journey it has been! A year truly filled with emotions, learning, friendship, adventures, surprises, challenges, growth, tears and smiles. There also have been times of giving and making a difference.

So many people have given me so much strength, inspiration and a gift of dreams answered. I thank everyone at the Choctaw Nation, my heartfelt thanks for your support, Chief Pyle, Assistant Chief Batton and Perry Thompson, my councilman for District 8, for supporting my journey as Little Miss Choctaw Nation for the space to learn and grow and for believing in my dreams and aspirations.

Thank you to Faye and Elaine, our event coordinators, who were so wonderful in helping us get to where we needed to go on time and worked so hard in making sure things were taken care of for us. You both leave us with such warm and funny memories along the way, and our reign as princesses would not have been the same without you. Thank you for being my angels, philosophers and guidance. You both have enriched my heart forever.

Dora Wickson, thank you for being my language teacher, you would have made my Amafo (grandfather) proud. I would not have made it here, where I am, without you.

Pat Baker, thank you for making my dresses and thanks to Debbie Raper and Lucille Olive for helping my mother with my jewelry.

I have had one of the most incredible journeys of my life with two wonderful people; Amber and Adrianna, thanks for being my friends. Thank you both for making sure my crown and sash were on straight and keeping me informed where the nearest “Justice” store was and where I could find the “bling.” Faith, thank you for being my B.F.F., you are like a sister to me; I love you. Camille and Francine, thanks for being there, too, you are



the greatest.

To my Choctaw people I’ve met along the way: you will stay with me forever as I embark on the next chapter of my life. I feel that it is possible to make a difference in the world. Thanks for the warmth and love that you have bestowed upon me. I believe the past shapes the people we become in the future, for this, always, I say thank you.

To my family and friends, especially my dad, mom and brothers: you are my life, my inspiration. I love you.

Last but not least, I stood with faith in my maker a year ago, I stand with Him now and thank Him for His blessings as I pass along a wonderful gift to a new Little Miss Choctaw Nation. To the lucky young lady who will get to wear the crown: enjoy each moment, every second and everybody you meet. This will be a once-in-a-lifetime experience that you will get the chance to take with you forever.

Again, to my Choctaw people, my deepest thanks for allowing me to represent you all. Each one of you will always be present in the new chapter of my life. Yakoke.



**Adrianna, Summer and Amber laid flowers at Pushmataha’s grave during the Choctaw Days at the Smithsonian event in Washington, D.C. The girls also visited the World War II memorial, Korean War Veterans memorial, Vietnam Veterans memorial, and the grave of past Choctaw chief Peter Pitchlynn in the Congressional Cemetery.**

## Jr. Miss Adrianna Curnutt

Halito, I am Adrianna Curnutt, your 2011-12 Junior Miss Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

Robert F. Kennedy once said, “Only those who dare to fail greatly can ever achieve greatly.” This is the quote I used in my interview a short year ago. This quote is true in my case. Winning first runner-up three years ago, I never would have thought I would be giving my farewell as your Junior Miss Choctaw Nation. This year came and went before I knew it, but the experience will stay in my heart a lifetime. I could talk for hours about my experience as royalty and all my memories of this past year, but I have picked my favorites.

On a tearful night exactly one year ago, God blessed me by giving me this title. Tuskahoma went by in a blur. I had a blast at festivities, getting to meet different people, and of course, being called a princess. I started to get to know the other princesses that weekend. Little did I know I would consider them family today. We were all kind of thrown together at Tuskahoma for the festival. I will never forget the first time we had to do the Lord’s Prayer. We had been princesses for three days and we really didn’t know each other. The look on our faces when we saw the larger-than-expected crowd was priceless. We survived, though, and I knew that was the beginning of a fun-filled year.

We all began to travel around Oklahoma and some in Texas, representing our people to the best of our ability. We went to the pow wow at Durant. That was the first year I attended it. Seeing all the people keeping our culture alive, and also teaching other people, was amazing. I do remember my feet hurting badly, and soon after we got home I purchased some Dr. Scholls gel insoles for my moccasins!

The year seemed to fly by. We got to go to Southfork Ranch and look in the home where they would film the very next day. The California trip soon arrived. I was so excited to get to go to part of the country I have never seen. I’m not the biggest fan of flying, though. Due to some prayers, and a little help with anxiety medicine, I made it to California without any major freak-outs. On our second day there, we thought we would go see Pismo Beach, and the motel receptionist said it was about an hour away. Excited, we all left. Well, he was a tad off on his

time, because it took us over three hours to get there and we stayed for 20 minutes before we left!

Getting to go to the Okla Chahta gathering was an honor. I got to see Choctaws from a different state and learned about their tradition. After doing a lot of shopping, meeting their new royalty, and accidentally taking a few things out of the steak house (no worries, it was all returned), we had a great time!

It was a great feeling getting to walk out in the grand entry representing my nation at Red Earth. Getting to talk to people from different tribes and watch how they danced was awesome. I met some great girls from all over the United States that came and represented their people as royalty, and that will be something I will never forget.

Washington, D.C. was the highlight of this year. It was amazing to get to perform the Lord’s Prayer with my fellow princesses in the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian. I got to tour all around Washington, D.C., putting flowers on Chief Pitchlynn and Chief Pushmataha’s graves, as well as several other well-known monuments. My eyes were really opened to how big life is outside of Wister, Okla.

The next trip was Mississippi. I loved getting to see the rich tradition of the Choctaw Nation. I learned so much while I was there and had a blast, even though it rained every day we were there. My favorite part was getting to meet R.J. and J. Paul from “Swamp People.” I had to call my dad and sister and brag about getting to meet them.

The craft vendors were also great. I spent some of my daddy’s money there! The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians made me feel so welcome, and I really enjoyed my trip. From getting lost in traffic at Dallas, driving around for two hours trying to find our motel, getting in trouble with Elaine for



not being good at restaurants, and getting banned from sitting by her again by Mother Faye, giving rabid squirrel faces with Summer and Amber, and swimming with Brody, I will never forget this past year.

I would like to thank God for this past year. Without Him, I would not be here today. I am truly blessed.

Thank you, Mom, for toting me around this year. I will never forget the time I spent with you and the memories I have made and will never forget. You have always been there for me no matter what. Thank you so much, and I love you. Thank you, Dad, for all of the encouragement. You always told me I could do anything I put my mind to, and of course for footing the bill of all my shopping this year. Thank you, Callie, for being a role model to me. You have showed me to hold my head high and be proud of the person I am.

I always told you I was royalty!

To my fellow princesses and their families, I consider you all part of my family now. I couldn’t have asked for better princesses with which to reign. We could all be silly together, eat as much dessert as possible, and shop all day long! I now consider you both my sisters and thank God for putting you in my life. Thank you for an amazing year.

Faye and Elaine, there could be no better pageant directors. You made sure we were always happy and having a great time. You both truly made this year memorable. Thank you for spoiling me rotten!

To my councilman, Delton, and his wife, Delores, I hope I made you proud. Thank you for all your help this past year.

A big thanks to the Choctaw Nation, which truly takes care of its royalty. The nation has given me opportunities that I may never have again. I hope I’ve represented the Choctaw Nation well. I has been an honor to serve as your Junior Miss Choctaw Nation. Yakoke!



# OBITUARIES

## Lloyd Burris

Lloyd “Tooter” Burris, 93, of Mesa, Ariz., passed away peacefully in his sleep on July 25, 2012. He was born on June 10, 1919, in Blanchard, to Samuel Sidney and Florence (Hayes) Burris. Lloyd was the ninth child of 10. He had six brothers and three sisters. Tooter attended school only through the third grade when he left school to work in the fields, helping to support his family following the death of his father.



In 1939, his brother Jack convinced him and brother Amos to come out to Phoenix. After arriving, he met his future wife, Gertie. They were married later that year on the evening of Halloween. They enjoyed a long and happy marriage of 59 years, until Gertie passed away in September of 2000. His wife and most of the family called him Tooter although no one is certain how he acquired the nickname. He was extremely proud of his Choctaw heritage and you always knew when he met someone new as he immediately told them he was a Choctaw.

Tooter worked full time for Holsum Bakery from around 1942 until retirement in 1985. Despite the lack of formal education, he was a hard worker and was the sole provider for his family. The family was often told of his first car being won in a poker game – a 1930 Model A. He also enjoyed country western music, and although he did not read music, he learned how to play the piano, guitar and fiddle.

Tooter was well known around his neighborhood as the “older gentleman on the 3-wheel bike.” He traveled far and wide on his bike until age 90, when he took a spill resulting in a broken hip. He recovered well and was able to return back to his home until July of 2011, when he moved to a wonderful private group residence and totally enjoyed the undivided attention that he received from all of the staff. On June 10, 2012, he celebrated his 93rd birthday with his family.

Tooter was preceded in death by his mother and father; his wife; brothers, Jack, Leafus, Roy, Sid, Amos and Buster; sisters, Juanita and Mamie; stepdaughter Mary Magdalene Shandley; and step-granddaughter Janis (Shandley) Coleman.

He is survived by a sister, Polly Burris Riviera; step-granddaughter, Nancy Kordylas; step-grandson, Jerry Shandley, the children of Mary Magdalene; stepdaughter Wanda Knisley; step-grandsons, Mitchel Knisley and Lloyd Anderson; and numerous step-great and great-great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

## Jeremy Louis

Jeremy “Moose” Louis, 31, of Durant passed away on Aug. 2, 2012, at the OU Medical Center in Oklahoma City. He was born to Byars C. Louis and Eleanor (Bully) Palmer on Dec. 29, 1980, in Talihina.



Jeremy was a proud member of the Choctaw Nation. He graduated from Idabel High School in 1999 and went on to attend the Kiamichi Vo-Tech. Jeremy was a member of the Methodist Church. He enjoyed sports and was an avid OU fan.

He was preceded in death by his father, B.C. Louis; grandparents, William and Pearlle Louis, and Joe and Minerva Fobb; and uncles, Nelson Louis, Claude Billy and Arnold Bully.

He is survived by his mother, Eleanor Palmer and stepfather Edward Palmer of the home; sister Nanette Wylie with husband Wayne of Durant; brother Micah Louis of Durant; nephews, Willie Lanier with wife Krystal, Kyllin Lanier, Kuren Lanier and Cash Louis, all of Durant; and numerous other family members and friends.

### *Is it right for you?*

## Choctaw Asset Building Section 184 Home Loan

Meet with mortgage lenders and learn how the CAB program can assist tribal members


**OCTOBER 16, 2012**  
**9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.**

**Choctaw Community Center**  
2750 Big Lots Parkway, Durant OK

Don't miss this opportunity to get the latest info about the 184 Loan Guarantee Program for Native Americans

Find out more on: **Loan eligibility, low down payments, refinancing eligibility, land requirements and much more!**

Event is perfect for: realtors, lenders, Native Americans looking to purchase or refinance, Native American agencies, contractors/builders and economic development leaders.



## Choctaw Nation can aid with loans

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

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

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

## Houston Hicks

Houston Cephus Hicks, 71, passed away on June 23, 2012, at his home in Frederick. He was born on July 26, 1940, to Laymon Cephus and Sophina (Ashalintubby) Hicks, in Watson. He attended schools in Hugo, Weaver and Frederick. He married Josie Flores on July 3, 1959, in Vernon, Texas. He worked for Century Granite Company, Betsy Bra, Schlegel and Walker Mobile Homes. He later married Norma Jean Bird on Sept. 9, 1983, in Wichita Falls, Texas. He was a landlord and had numerous rental properties. He loved to hunt and fish. He was a Baptist.



He was preceded in death by his infant sister, Virginia, in December 1944; father Laymon Hicks on Oct. 3, 1996; mother Sophina Hicks on Jan. 31, 2007; and a stepson, Arthur Bird on June 29, 2009.

He is survived by his wife, Norma Hicks of Frederick; children, JoAnna Hicks O'Neill, of Cypress, Texas, Linda Haston with husband Danny of Frederick, Jimmy Hicks of Wichita Falls, Texas, and Gary Hicks with wife Kristi of Palestine, Texas; sisters, Rena Cornelius of Muskogee, Mary Teague and Dora Williams, both of Frederick; 14 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren; and five great-great-grandchildren.

## Betty Bowden

Betty Arlene Bowden, 68, a Hugo resident, passed away on Sept. 13, 2012, in McKinney, Texas. She was born June 17, 1944 in Talihina, the daughter of Nicholas Alexander Cochnauer and Nora (Anderson) Cochnauer, and had lived most of her life in the Sawyer and Hugo area.



Betty was a homemaker and had worked as a bookkeeper for Harbor's Mini Mart in Sawyer. She was also a supervisor for Triple Edge in Hugo; Betty took her state merit test and scored so high in the science essay that she was offered a job with NASA in Houston. She turned it down choosing to stay home with her younger children that were still in school.

She is preceded in death by her parents; brothers, Dixon Cochnauer, Lee Cochnauer, Stanley Cochnauer and Marion Cochnauer; sister Vickey Felter; and sister-in-law; Barbara Cochnauer.

Survivors include her first husband of 24 years, George Bowden of Sawyer; second husband, Garlan Leslie of Hugo; sons, Rodney Bowden of Sawyer, Kevin Bowden of Antlers, and Sean Bowden of Hugo; daughters, Treina Bowden, Rebecca Bowden and Regina Bowden, all of Hugo, and Pamela Benjamin of Sawyer; brothers, Bill Cochnauer, Bobby Cochnauer, and N.H. Cochnauer, all of Hugo; a special nephew that she loved dearly like a son, Dennis Cochnauer; special niece that she loved dearly like a daughter, Nannette Roshell Steakley of McKinney; nine grandchildren, Meghan Benjamin, Alyx Bowden, Hayley Bowden, Trevor Bowden, Skylar Chastain, Raven Bowden, Lynzee Smith, Kanyon Bowden and Chance Bowden; great-grandson, Preston William Benjamin-Sewell; along with many other family and friends.

## Jerry Flowers

Jerry J. Flowers, 64, a longtime Coalgate resident, passed away on August 10, 2012, in Montrose, Colo. He was born on April 11, 1948, in Pheonix, Ariz., to Cecil Calvin and Janie (Williams) Flowers. He married Karen Horner on March 8, 1968, in Phoenix. He was a maintenance/refrigeration and heavy equipment operator. He attended and graduated from Peoria High School in Arizona. He was a member of the Cottonwood Baptist Church. He loved fishing and spending time with his family and grandchildren. He was a Veteran of the Vietnam War.



He was preceded in death by his parents; sister-in-law Norma Flowers; and his grandparents.

He is survived by his wife, Karen Flowers of Coalgate; children, Jeremy Flowers with wife Marisa of Ardmore, and Carrie Blackmon with husband Dave, and Gary Flowers with wife Joann, both of Coalgate; grandchildren, Kara Watkins with husband Michael, Jarrett Miller, Elizabeth Flowers, Cliff Tomlinson-Flowers, Mackenzie Merritt, Sierra Flowers, Harley Flowers, Shian Flowers, Brody Michael Flowers, Rowdy Blackmon and Dakota Blackmon; great-grandchildren, Karleigh Watkins and Mackie Watkins; brothers, Cecil Flowers Jr. of Lehigh, Rodney Gale Flowers with wife Leslie of Arkansas, and Ronald “Duck” Flowers with wife Shirley of Surprise, Ariz.; sisters, Jody Flowers and Roxie Flowers, both of Montrose; along with nieces, nephews and other relatives and many friends.

## Kathleen Manker

Kathleen Garren Manker, 89, of Escondido, Calif., passed away on July 19, 2012, after a short illness. She was the second child of Samuel E. Garren and wife Gertrude (Dunagan) Garren. She was born March 14, 1923, in Okmulgee. Kathleen's grandmother, Lula (Stanton) Dunagan was an original Dawes enrollee of the Choctaw Nation. Lula was the daughter of William Stanton and his wife Sarah Ann Kirk.

Kathleen's grandfather, Newton Dunagan, was a 9-year-old boy when he came with his father, Condy Sula Dunagan, on the 1889 Land Rush. Condy Sula Dunagan served with the Confederate Army in the Civil War as did William Stanton. Both of these grandfathers made their home in Pittsburg County, in the McAlester area. Kathleen moved with her family to California in the mid-1930s and settled in the Los Angeles area. She graduated from Garfield High School in Montebello, Calif. She began her career as a secretary in a war plant, which made tools for World War II. While working there she met her husband, Henry E. Manker, who was a native of St. Louis, Mo., before coming to California. After the war Kathleen and Henry settled in La Canada, Calif., where their only child, Kathy Sue, was born. Kathleen was a mother and homemaker. When Henry retired from business, they moved to San Diego County and settled in Escondido. They both enjoyed playing golf and bridge. Henry Manker died in 2006.

Kathleen is survived by her daughter, Kathy and son-in-law Tom Stimson, and their two children, Graham and Hayley of La Canada, Calif.; sister Martha Gujda with husband Bruno of McAlester; and her four nephews, Bruce, Greg, Glenn and Mark Gujda.

## Elaine Taylor

Elaine Pahsetopah Taylor, 49, a resident of Durant, passed away on Aug. 12, 2012. She was born on Dec. 13, 1962, to Loren Pahsetopah and Virgie Reed Harris in Tulsa. She married Jeff Taylor on June 8, 1985, in Madill.



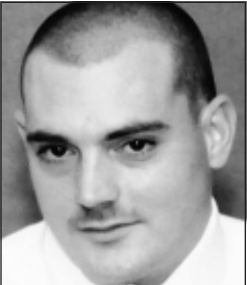
Elaine was a member of the St. John's Episcopal Church in Durant. She worked as a nurse's aide in Ardmore and Durant. She loved her family and chose to dedicate her life to caring for them.

She was preceded in death by her mother; daughter Shelly Pahsetopah; and brother, Paul Anthony Pahsetopah.

She is survived by her husband, Jeff Taylor of the home; sons, Nicholas Taylor of Madill, Christian Taylor of Durant, and Jason Nunley of Marlow; father Loren Pahsetopah with stepmother Tonnie of Pawhuska; sisters, Lorna Wilkins and Mary Hynes, both of Tulsa, and Theresa Pahsetopah and Monette Harjo, both of Wewoka, and Gwyn Pahsetopah of Eulless, Texas; brothers, Chris Pahsetopah of Tulsa, and Billy Jack Harris of Durant; and 13 grandchildren.

## Cody Hokett

Cody Charles Hokett, 26, of Nederland passed away on July 23, 2012, in Groves. He was born on July 29, 1985, in Odessa, Texas, to Tillmann and Jerrie Bixler Hokett. He was an assistant manager for Baker Distributing Company.



Cody was preceded in death by his father, Tillmann Hokett.

He is survived by his mother, Jerrie Bixler Hokett of Nederland; sister Kristy Honig of Llano; grandmother Billie Bixler of Lumberton; nephews, Trey Watson and Samuel Honig of Llano; niece Lauren Wimberely of Llano; cousins, David Michna of Nederland, Dustin and Tracey Myers of Conroe; aunts, Beverly Keen and Gloria Kernechel, both of Lumberton, and Velencia Keen of Huntsville; uncle Noel Buff of Lumberton; and numerous cousins, family members and friends.

## Michael Aaron

Michael Dean Aaron, 54, of Valliant, passed away on Aug. 23, 2012, in Valliant. He was born on March 20, 1958, in Talihina, and was the son of the late Gardner Perry Aaron and Susie Jane Louis of Valliant. He proudly served as a Community Health Representative for the Choctaw Nation, and was a member of the Choctaw Academy Methodist Church in Rufe. Michael enjoyed working as a Community Health Representative, working closely with people, as well as reading his Bible and listening to gospel music. At one time he was a teacher/layperson at the Choctaw Academy.



Michael was preceded in death by his father; his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Caldwell; and his brother, Ronnie Dean Aaron.

Michael leaves to cherish his memory his mother, Susie James; brothers, Perry Aaron of Valliant, Dwight Aaron with wife Lisa and their children, Shaun and Whitney of Broken Bow, and Mitchell Aaron with wife Lucinda of Valliant, and their children, Megan, Amy, Emily and Lelah.

## William Lyon

William Elijah Lyon, affectionately dubbed Liam, was born at 3:25 a.m. on Feb. 18, 2011, to Whitney and Brody Lyon in Fort Smith, Ark. He was a perfect size, weighing 6 pounds and measuring 19 inches. Liam was quickly diagnosed with hypoplastic left heart syndrome and in the short time that Liam was here, he changed the world in which we lived. His story of love and courage crossed borders and continents as he traveled to various hospitals across the country in an effort to save his life. He has touched the lives of tens of thousands on his Facebook page, “I Love Liam Lyon.” On Sept. 3, 2012, despite his courageous fight, the efforts of countless medical personnel and the prayers of thousands, Liam earned his wings while in the loving arms of his mommy and daddy.



Liam was loved by a huge family and he is survived by his parents; big sister, Cheyanne of Cameron; grandparents, Nanci Tankersley, Ricky and Trina Ward of Cameron, Bruce and Sandy Lyon of Santa Barbara, Calif.; aunts, Jamie Ward and cousins Ali, Jalen, Gage, Tristyn of Cameron, and Amanda Lyon of Santa Barbara; uncle Kyle and Brittany Ward, and cousins Kylee and Isabella of Cameron; AJ and PJ; great-grandparents, Paul and Joyce Tankersley, and Virginia and the late Ernest Ward of Cameron, and Hazel Lyon of Santa Barbara; great aunts and uncles, Susan and Dale Pickle with second cousin, Ashlee Pickle of Houston, Texas, and Paul and Lori Tankersley with second cousins Jennifer and Tracy Morris (Kaitlyn, Ashlyn, Brooklyn), Christopher and Tammy Tankersley (Kaley, Chance, Breyden), Torey and Chris Howell (Cooper and Case) and Zach Tankersley; Cathy and Jerry Bernstein with second cousin Heidi Bernstein of Santa Clarita, Calif.; Barbara Lyon of Santa Barbara, Star Essman of Ventura, Calif., Dick Lyon of Grass Valley, Calif., and John Lyon of Dumfries, Va.; Wayne and Cissy Ward and second cousins Chass Ward (Cassidy and Kelcee), Justin, Dustin, Chad, Tanner and Mykayla; Sandra and Jody Cox and second cousins Sharon and Robert (AJ, Breanna, Skeeter), Karen and Bruce, Shane and Angie (Makayla, Wade, Ashley, Emily), Shawn and Robin (Megan, Austyn, Jaxyn, Addyson), Sandy (Taylor, Tyler), and Rocky (James David, Jacob, and Kinley); honorary family, Karen and Gerry Greathouse, Amanda and Matthew Penny, Hillary Kokes, Nancy Box, Amy Roberts, Chris Hansen, Ernie, Maria and Leonard Campos, Bryon and Bonnie Burns, Luke and Lindsay Hoyhtya, brother David and Alicia Kennedy; Jane Phillips Memorial Hospital coworker family, Judy, Lisa, Lori, Kelly, Kelli, Amanda, Deb, Pat, Brian, Stan, Anderson, Gary, Ronda, Kathy, Kristen, Randy, Brad and Charles; Alvin-Friendswood Veterinary Clinic coworker family, Vikki, Cindy, Mel, Alina, Gabe and Amanda, Cherie and Ronnie, and Jann; Cindy Price with Design Support Services; Westmont College Admission Office, Jodi, Dawn, Silvio, Lexi, Maddie, Olympia, Andrew, Pat, Jessica, Todd, Susan, Andrea, Laura, Candace and Joyce.



# OBITUARIES

## William Stevens

Master Sgt. William Bridges Stevens passed away on Sept. 5, 2012, in Phoenix, Ariz., after a two-year battle with brain injuries suffered in an auto accident. He was born Nov. 19, 1944, in Indianapolis, Ind. The oldest son of Col. William F. Stevens and Adna Bridges Stevens, he proudly served in the U.S. Air Force for over 20 years, including assignments from Oklahoma to Iceland. After retiring in 1983, he worked in the aerospace and financial industries until settling in Phoenix with America West Airlines. Bill celebrated 45 years as a Master Mason and was involved in Job’s Daughters International where he served as Associate Guardian of Bethel 19 in the 1980s. He earned his Bachelor’s degree from Southern Nazarene University in Oklahoma and his MBA in Global Management from the University of Phoenix in Arizona.

He was preceded in death by his parents and his wife of 44 years, Carolyn Kaye Dittrich Stevens.

He is survived by two daughters, Tandy R. Elisala and Felicity E. Stevens; grandchildren, Amanda, Sarah and Steven Elisala; and siblings, Tandy Leone Gotschall and Riley Stevens.



## Laverne Jarrett

Laverne Jarrett, 76, departed this world into the presence of her Savior, Jesus Christ, on May 19, 2012. Laverne was born on Aug. 4, 1935, to David and Betsy Sam in Stratford. In 1956, she married Jimmy Jarrett and devoted the rest of her life to loving her family. She was a wife, mom, Grammy, nana, and friend. Her home will always be remembered for being full of love and laughter.

She was preceded in death by her husband of 54 years, Jimmy Jarrett; four siblings; and two great-granddaughters, Hope and Faith Bourne.

She is survived by her children, Glenna Hays (Mark), James Jarrett (Sandy) and Jeffrey Jarrett (Vickie); grandsons, Jason Hays (Erin), Nathan Hays (Megan), Joey Jarrett, Jason Jarrett, Nicholas Jarrett, and Joshua Jarrett; granddaughters, Diane Bourne (Charles), Mallory Jarrett, and Casey Perez (Bruno); great-granddaughter, Emily Hays; great-grandson, Charles “Charlie” Bourne; sisters, Barbara Otis and Bernice Drake; and numerous extended family and friends.



## Cecil Williams

Cecil “Goo Goo” Riddle Williams, 90, of Los Angeles passed away in Panorama City, Calif., on Aug. 23, 2012. He was born on Sept. 9, 1921, in Quinton to Georgia Riddle, the daughter of an original enrollee, Okemah Riddle, and father, Mason Livingston Williams, M.D. His siblings were Elizabeth Riddle Williams Hicks, James “Sonny” Livingston Riddle, Goldie Mae Riddle Williams Campbell and Cephas Riddle Williams. He lived in Oklahoma with his mother, brothers and sister. Cecil moved to Texas with his brothers and sisters to live with his father, who set aside his medical profession to become a handyman to support his family. Cecil loved to golf, winning many tournaments and caddied with his brother Cephas from age seven. His mentor was Jimmy Devor, a 1930’s golfer. Cecil attended Baptist Church and graduated Ball High School in Seguin, Texas. He enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1941 and was stationed at Fort Sam Houston with Instrument Survey 228. Cecil was decorated with the American Theater Ribbon in the Euro-African-Mideast conflict during World War II. He received two Bronze Stars, two Overseas Service Bars, a Service Stripe and a Good Conduct lapel button. He was Honorably Discharged in 1943. He married Lois Ellen Wilcox in 1942 and from that union was born a daughter, Sandra S. Wilcox Riddle Williams Smith of Texas. Cecil and Lois moved to California where he worked in the dry cleaning business. His third marriage to Martha Louise Williams, who passed in 2004, lasted more than 30 years.

Cecil was cheerful, loved a good meal, loved sports, loved to play golf, loved learning his Native American heritage, displayed a salty manner sometimes, liked cars, liked to dress up and go places with his family, and enjoyed laughing at cartoons such as Bugs Bunny. Cecil accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior in 1945.

He is survived by one daughter, three granddaughters, 10 great-grandchildren, three great-great-grandchildren, two half-brothers, a half-sister, nephews, nieces and cousins.



## Sue West

Sue Marie “Susie” Spring West, 90, passed away on Sept. 13, 2012, at her residence in Mena, Ark. Sue was a devoted housewife and mother of two sons and a daughter. She was born March 19, 1922, in Hugo, to John and Ruth Spring. As a child her family later moved to Commerce, Texas. There she met William D. “Darrell” West, and they were married for 69 years. Her children, whom she adored, were William D. West Jr. of Hatfield, Ark., and Johnny L. “Butch” West and his wife, Lydia of Rosenberg, Texas, and daughter Sandra Sue West, who passed away as a child in Houston. Susie lived for 10 years in the Houston/Galena Park area where she was a substitute teacher and involved in the PTA. She also served in her church while living there. They decided to retire in Mena in 1970 living quietly in the community since. She loved to garden and make her famous jellies and fruit cakes for family and friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents; daughter; sisters, Lorene Palmer and Katherine Chilton; brothers, Jack Spring, James M. Spring, and Dennis Spring; nephew Jonathan Chilton; and Joan Williams.

Susie is survived by her husband and two sons; sisters, Lois Faye Ingram and Margie Nell Williams; eight grandchildren, William D. “Billy” West III, Johnny Cook, Timothy West, Beau West, John Martin, Clayton West, Lacey West and Patricia Gonzalez; seven great-grandchildren, Skylar West, Johnny L. West II, Denise West, Aaron West, April Cook, Ashley Cook, Zane Cook; and many nieces and nephews.



## Billie Botkin

Billie Faye Pebsworth Botkin, 73, of Tahlequah, entered into eternal peace on Aug. 17, 2012, at her home. She was born in Grant on May 26, 1939, to original enrollee V. P. Pebsworth and Willie Byars Pebsworth. She was raised in Grant, where she attended school and was a member of the Baptist Church. Billie was married to Ronald Botkin on Aug. 7, 1958, and they were married 54 years. Billie was a very kind and gentle soul; she had a loving and generous heart, she never met a stranger and was loved by all that knew her. We will always carry her precious memory forever in our hearts.

Billie is preceded in death by her parents; along with three brothers, Roy G. Pebsworth, Ray Pebsworth, Herbert Pebsworth; and sister, Helen Pebsworth Branch.

Billie leaves her loving memories to be cherished by her husband, Ronnie Botkin; daughter Rhonda with husband Scott Harbaugh; son Dean Botkin; grandchildren and great-grandchildren; two sisters, Bobbie J. Jones of Paris, Texas, and Betty S. Berryhill of Aztec, N.M.; along with numerous nephews, nieces, other relatives and many friends.



## Ronnie Scarbrough

Ronnie Paul Scarbrough, 63, of McAlester, passed away on Aug. 15, 2012, at the V.A. Medical Center in Muskogee. Born Oct. 10, 1948, in Dallas, to Otis Leon and Audrey Agnes (Compelube) Scarbrough, he grew up in Mesquite, Texas, where he graduated high school. After a year of college he then joined the U.S. Army and served in the 2nd Battalion of the 47th Infantry Division and was involved in the battle at the Mekong Delta during the Vietnam War. After his honorable discharge he worked as a truck driver for Yellow Freight and then came to the McAlester area where he had lived for the past 20 years. He helped start a local veteran’s group that meets weekly for conversation and fellowship. He saw himself as a cowboy and enjoyed horses and raising cattle, and also enjoyed hunting. He was a member of the Tannehill Freewill Baptist Church.

He was preceded in death by his father; his grandparents; brother, Doyle W. Scarbrough; and sisters, Barbra Daloris Jarvis and Rita Ann Wacasey.

Survivors include his wife, Debra Fay Scarbrough, of the home; daughter Shannon Scarbrough of McAlester; mother Audrey A. Scarbrough of Tannehill, and sister Donna Sue Davis of Van Alstyne, Texas.



## Heaven Hunter

Heaven Leigh Hunter passed away on Aug. 13, 2012, in Oklahoma City. She was born on Aug. 13, 2012, to Michael and Sequina (Taylor) Hunter.

Heaven was preceded in death by her maternal great-grandparents, Wilson and Delores Taylor; and paternal great-grandparents, Myrtle and Don Hunter.

She is survived by parents, Michael and Sequina Hunter of Antlers; sister Kendall Cogburn of Antlers; brother Korbin Hunter of Antlers; paternal grandparents, Billy and Brenda Hunter of Antlers, and Sherrill and Weldon Lofton of Antlers; maternal grandparent, Phyllis Bohanan of Rattan; paternal great-grandparents, Jerry and Janice Hill of Antlers; aunts and uncles, Keegan Bohanan, Moriah Tollett, and Kisha Bohanan, all of Rattan, Tiffanie with husband Philip Burchfield, Stephanie Bohanan and Brandon Sam, all of Hugo, Trina with husband Cary Lester of Soper, Jana with husband Zach Seeton of Durant, Jimmy with wife Jackie Sanders of Antlers, and Leah with husband Adam Brown of Tyler, Texas; as well as many other relatives and friends.



## James Whitehead

James Norvin Whitehead, 79, passed away on Aug. 25, 2012, in Norman. He was born on Aug. 9, 1933, in the Bailey Community, to Norvin W. and Louise (Pittman) Whitehead. James lived in the Marlow and Bray area all of his life and graduated from Bray High School in 1952. He served in the U.S. Army and was a master sergeant in the National Guard. James married Sandra Hallmark on Oct. 16, 1953, in Marlow. James and Sandra raised white mice and rats for medical research for 35 years. James also worked at Halliburton as a machinist, retiring after 31 years of service, and was co-owner and manager of Jamie D’s Club and Arena in Oklahoma City for 12 years. He enjoyed taking care of his yard, gardening and fishing. He was a member of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church where he served as a deacon and sang in the choir.

James was preceded in death by his parents.

Survivors include, wife, Sandra Whitehead of the home; sons, Alan Whitehead of Duncan, and Barry Whitehead of Marlow; grandson Jeff Jordan of Rush Springs; brothers, Donald Lynn Whitehead and Clinton Whitehead, both of Texas; sisters, Virginia Ruth Burkhead of Washington, and Patricia Stout of Shawnee; and several nieces and nephews.

## Cleveland Jefferson

Cleveland “Cleve” Jefferson, 68, of Wilburton, passed away on Sept. 5, 2012, at his home after a long battle with cancer. Cleve was born on July 19, 1944, in Red Oak, to Joseph and Mozelle Marieta Jefferson. He grew up in Red Oak with his four sisters and joined the U.S. Army during Vietnam. He served for a total of 18 years. Cleve attended Southeastern University and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Culinary Arts. Following his military career, he worked as an assembly line worker for local manufacturing companies. Cleve married Sue Coley in Wilburton in 1995. He was a member of the Wilburton VFW Post #3649 and served as judge. His true passion was fishing.

Cleve was preceded in death by his father; two sisters, Shirley Calvini and Ruth Morgan; and an infant brother, Douglas Jefferson.

He is survived by his wife of 17 years, Sue Jefferson of the home; his mother, Mozelle Jefferson of Red Oak; his son, Douglas Jefferson of the home; two sisters, Virginia Stallaby of Oklahoma City, and Missie Jones of Bokchito; numerous nieces, nephews and a host of friends.



## Eula Gardner

Eula Fay Gardner, 85, of Boswell, passed away on Aug. 15, 2012, in Durant. She was born on April 20, 1927, in Boswell, the daughter of Frank Taylor and Liddy (Helena) Taylor, and had lived most of her life in Boswell. Eula married Critten Alexander Gardner Jr. on Dec. 14, 1945, in De Queen, Ark. He preceded her in death on Sept. 24, 1996. She was also preceded in death by her parents.

Eula had a hard life. She lived through the Great Depression, worked hard and traveled with her husband in the oil fields across the western United States. She loved being involved with the Choctaw Nation functions and traditions. Eula loved the outdoors, hunting, fishing and camping. She loved God and her children and was very protective of her family. Eula will be truly missed by all who knew her.

She is survived by three sons, Lyman B. Gardner with wife Valerie of Hollister, Mo., Noel G. Gardner of Ringold, and Nathan D. Gardner with wife Dallina of Boswell; three daughters, Brenda G. Holliday of Boswell, Sondra K. Hickman with husband Larry of Oklahoma City, and Rebecca L. Rubio with husband Antonio of Boswell; sister Pearl Cheshier of Boswell; 25 grandchildren; 32 great-grandchildren; 21 great-great-grandchildren; along with a host of other family and friends.



# Reserve your 2013 Labor Day RV Site

In order to reserve an RV site with electric and water hook-ups for the 2013 Labor Day Festival, please mail the reservation request form below no earlier than Jan. 1, 2013. RV sites will be reserved on a first come, first serve basis. Please include a copy of your CDIB card. Also, include the length of your RV or camper and the number of slide-outs. **PLEASE DO NOT SEND ANY MONEY AT THIS TIME.** After the deadline, all reservations will be drawn randomly for RV sites. If your name is drawn, you will be notified by mail. At that time you will send in your cashier’s check or money order in the amount of \$75.00 to receive your confirmation and rules for RV camping at the Labor Day Festival.

No phone reservations will be accepted. Please only include one reservation per application. We will do our best to respect the requests for preferred RV pads, however, we cannot guarantee you will get the pad number requested.

Please watch the Biskinik newspaper for future articles or changes in parking, tent camping and tribal preferences for the 2013 Labor Day Festival.

## 2013 RV Space Reservation

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime phone number \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate phone number \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

RV camper description and length: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### NO TENTS IN RV AREAS

Number of slide-outs \_\_\_\_\_

– Only one (1) reservation per application –  
No reservations accepted prior to Jan. 1, 2013.

*Please return to:*  
**Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma**  
**Attn: Margaret Jackson**  
**P.O. Box 1210**  
**Durant, OK 74702**

**NO RESERVATIONS WILL BE**  
**ACCEPTED PRIOR TO JAN. 1, 2013**



# Oak Hill Raiders play for tradition, family and pride

By **CHRISSY DILL**  
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Labor Day Festival attendees will tell you there are many reasons to visit the annual event; whether it's the pow wow, carnival rides, concerts, the Choctaw village, art show or the terrapin races, the festival can appeal to everyone.

For Wayne Tisho and the Oak Hill Raiders, it's the annual softball tournament.

The Oak Hill Raiders softball team, which is comprised of Tisho, his son, his two brothers, three nephews and several close friends, has been playing in the Choctaw Nation Labor Day Festival softball tournament since 1968. They've earned first place once, second place twice and third and fourth place numerous times.

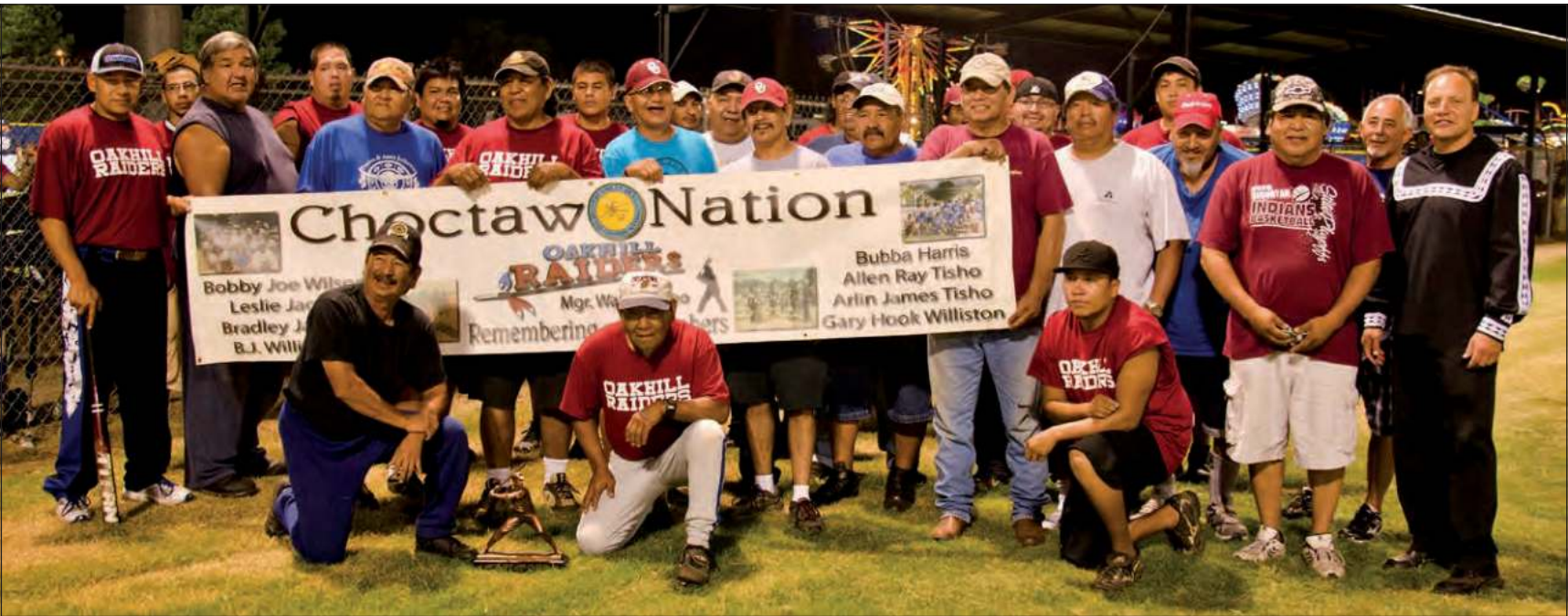
"Competition has gotten a lot stiffer at the Labor Day Festival tournament as the years went on," said Tisho. "Our team has improved, but so has everyone else."

Throughout the years, the Oak Hill Raiders have maintained mostly family members as its players with the help of close friends of the Tisho family.

Oak Hill, where most of Tisho's family attended school and were raised, is a small community about 8 miles west of Broken Bow.

"We just all love games," said Tisho of his family. "It gives us something to do."

Tisho said the small Oak Hill school his family attended only offered softball and basketball to its students. "Only a few of us played high school baseball," he said.



Wayne Tisho and the Oak Hill Raiders are presented a trophy by Assistant Chief Gary Batton for participating over 40 years in the Labor Day softball tournament.

"We all like to play athletics, and we didn't really have the opportunity to play as a team during school."

The team began as a church league softball team in the mid-'60s with Tisho, his brother, a few nephews and some close friends, giving the team around 11 players to take the field and swing for the fence.

After the church league ended in a couple of years, Tisho and his teammates wanted to keep playing ball.

The Raiders started playing in the Broken Bow location, but have traveled to participate in many tournaments over the years. "I have six brothers and five were playing," said Tisho. "We just keep playing."

A tournament the team holds in highest importance is the Oklahoma All-Indian State Tournament, in which they participate each year, first attending in 1976.

In 1979, the Raiders placed 10th overall in the state tournament, having competed against well over 100 teams, according to Tisho.

Though the state tournament is important for the Raiders, the Labor Day Festival softball tournament is important for a different reason. "Our main focus when going to the Labor Day Festival is tradition," said Tisho.

Tisho described his team's participation in the Labor Day Festival softball tournament for over 40 years as a family affair. "We like to meet up with friends from different areas and everyone knows we're going to be at the tournament," explained Tisho, who said his team and family camp out over the Labor Day weekend at Tvshka Homma.

Tisho even has family members travel across the country to watch their Raiders play in the Labor Day tournament.

A nephew from North Carolina as well as relatives from Washington, northern California, and Oregon have all attended the festival to watch the team compete and visit with their family and friends. "It is always lots of fun to see them," said Tisho.

Though most of Tisho's memories of playing with the Raiders are happy, there are a few that hold a special place in his heart. For a good 25 years, he and his brother, Rico, were a pitcher-catcher team, but Rico suffered injuries, requiring him to cease play.

Tisho also recalled his two nephews, one of them holding the position of shortstop for many years, passing away unexpectedly.

Though these events are unfortunate, Tisho knows they are a part of life. "In this game, playing out on the field, you learn what you should and shouldn't do," he

explained. "You experience the same thing in life, and that's what we try to teach our young players."

Tisho plays softball for many reasons: family tradition, respect for his heritage, and just for the fun and competition, but he also keeps his health in mind. "A lot of people ask me why I've played for so long," he said. "I'm afraid to quit."

Tisho said he and his brother, who are over 50 years old, play ball to keep their health in check. "Some people quit after some years," he said. "I say, keep playing if you're able to, keep conditioning, and love the game."

Tisho said conditioning is important for his team to continue to play. If there are no conditioning and practice involved, you are not able to play to the best of your ability, he explained.

When it comes to recruiting new team members for

the Oak Hill Raiders, Tisho said he looks for a couple of characteristics. "We look for kids who want to play ball and who are committed to the team."

The youngest member of the Raiders began playing for the team at just 12 years old.

"My son's been with us for 21 years – he started at 13 years old," said a proud Tisho.

"Many players started at the age of 13-15, we've had around 30-40 players come through our program as teenagers," continued Tisho.

"We look for kids who want to stay active, participate and play ball. That's the way our team evolves and keeps going."

If you are interested in competing against the Raiders in the 2013 Labor Day Festival softball tournament, watch for Labor Day announcements in your Biskinik and sign your team up to play.

# Race becomes Labor Day Festival staple

By **BRET MOSS**  
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

The Choctaw Nation Labor Day Festival is a fast-paced weekend for thousands of visitors and employees of the Choctaw Nation. Many events have patrons running to and fro, and perhaps the one that has them moving the quickest, is the 5K Run.

Beginning about a mile south of the historic Choctaw Capitol Building, looping around festival grounds, and ending between the capitol building and Council Chambers, the 5K has been a solid 3.1 miles of excitement and enjoyment for many runners over the years.

Today's race is much different than in earlier years. In the 1980s it was a simple run that added to the festival's event lineup for entertainment and not a sanctioned race. In the early '90s, the now Head Start and Johnson-O'Malley Director, Rebecca Hawkins, became the race director and put the event on the path to what it is today.

"They were just trying to get activities for participants," stated Rebecca as she described the earliest days of the race. As runners voiced requests for a sanctioned run, it became apparent that it was to be more than just a "fun run." Under Rebecca's direction, a Tulsa-based company, Glen's Road Race, certified the run.

The certification allowed it to be recognized by the USA Track and Field Association and the Oklahoma Track and Field Association, permitting runners to have their times posted nationally and points added to their membership to the association.

To promote the newly certified race, Rebecca scheduled Olympic gold medalist Billy Mills to make an appearance. Mills provided the shirts and a speech to motivate runners. "Getting him to come down brought a bigger crowd of people versus us just hav-



Choctaw Nation: JUDY ALLEN

Men's 2012 overall 5K winner, 18-year-old Tysin Davis, crosses the finish line with a time of 18:31.

ing the run," Rebecca stated. That year's run was a considerable success with Mills encouraging participation.

As years have passed, numbers have grown and logistics have improved. Now, under the direction of Adult Education Director Neal Hawkins the race sees over 500 runners and utilizes electronic chips attached to runners' shoes to track time.

Starting in the 2011 race, chips were issued by DG Productions, the company which now provides equipment for the race, that a runner can lace into a shoestring. As the chip passes the finish line with the runner, it stops the timer and records the finishing time electronically.

Previously, stopwatches were used and times were written down according to bib numbers. The new way "makes it much easier," exclaimed Neal as he explained how it significantly reduces the chances for error and time involved in finding placement

within age category.

As Chief Gregory E. Pyle has led the Choctaw Nation to focus on the health of its members, promotion, participation and accommodation for the run has grown. The run has always been open to CDIB and non-CDIB cardholders alike, but before 2010, it cost \$10 to enter. In 2010 the \$10 fee was waived for CDIB cardholders and in 2011 it was made free to all in an effort to encourage physical activity for Labor Day Festival guests.

The Choctaw Nation believes that by offering a free run, they will inspire more people to train and participate, which leads to increased diet and exercise of tribal and non-tribal members. Evidence shows this tactic effective, with numbers increasing from 239 in 2010 to upwards of 550 in 2012's run.

A wide variety of people are also getting involved as well, with this year's ages ranging from 7 to mid 80s. The finish-

ing times of top runners are consistently under 19 minutes for the 3.1 mile dash with this year's winner, 18-year-old Tysin Davis, crossing the finish line at 18:31.

A considerable amount of planning and coordination are required for Choctaw Nation to host this event. It is completely hosted by the volunteer efforts of about 20 employees and their families, as well as seven police officers.

The tribal police and EMTs are on site in case of emergency, to manage traffic and keep it from disturbing the run. Choctaw employees are there to help with registration, hand out water, keep track of times and aid runners in any way they can.

As well as time and manpower, Choctaw Nation also invests in various supplies such as running chips, T-shirts, food, drink and medals. This service is all in an effort to push healthy activities and add more enjoyment to guests of the Choctaw Nation.

# BIGFOOT

# 5K/1MILE

October 6, 2012

*Bigfoot 5k will not be held at the same location as the Bigfoot Festival. The 2012 Bigfoot 5k will be held at the Honobia Senior Citizen Nutrition Center.*

**For location and information on the Festival go to**  
**www.honbiabigfootprint.com**  
**or call Wind Walker Sound at 580-244-3013.**

**PRE-REGISTRATION HAS CLOSED – MUST REGISTER ON SITE**

**On-Site registration begins at 8:30 a.m. and closes at 9:30 a.m. at the Little River Park. Race Begins at 10 a.m. near the Senior Citizen Nutrition Center on Honobia Loop. Pre-registered 5k participants will receive a T-shirt. On-site 5k participants will receive a T-shirt based on availability.**

**Awards for 5K participants only – 1st, 2nd, & 3rd place male & female in each age category (5-year age groups). Also, 1st, 2nd & 3rd place medals for overall male & female.**

**Contact: Choctaw Nation for Bigfoot 5K information at (800) 349 7026 ext 6043 or 6958.**



# Stone-Bladed Axes

Today, most Americans enjoy a lifestyle geared towards comfort and convenience. It tends to insulate us from having to think about the basic things that support our lives or about the non-human world around us. For example, if we want to cut a tree down, most of us simply go to the store, buy a chain saw, purchase some fuel, and cut it down. We may never reflect on who made the saw, where the parts of the saw came from, or about the life of the tree itself. Before colonization, our Choctaw ancestors practiced a very different lifeway; one that kept them aware of their surroundings and which required them to draw upon their own intelligence, talent, patience, and spirituality to accomplish basic everyday tasks. In this month’s edition of Iti Fabvssa, we are going to present the steps and a little bit of the traditional knowledge that our ancestors employed to make an ax to cut down a tree.

One-thousand years ago, Choctaw ancestors made beautiful stone-bladed axes, called “iskifa” in the Choctaw language (Fig. 1). The first step in making these axes involved finding the right type of stone for the blade. It had to be a stone that could be shaped, but also one that would make a durable finished tool. For Choctaw ancestors, greenstone was a favorite material (Fig. 2). This beautiful dark-green colored metabasalt is dense, hard, and so tough that it is difficult to break with a sledgehammer. The nearest source of greenstone was located in central Alabama (Gall and Steponaitis 2001),

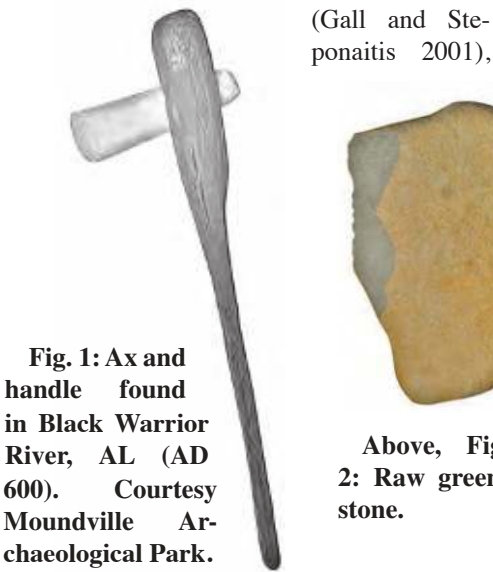


Fig. 1: Ax and handle found in Black Warrior River, AL (AD 600). Courtesy Moundville Archaeological Park.



Fig. 3: The same piece of stone with flakes removed, rough-shaping it into an ax head.



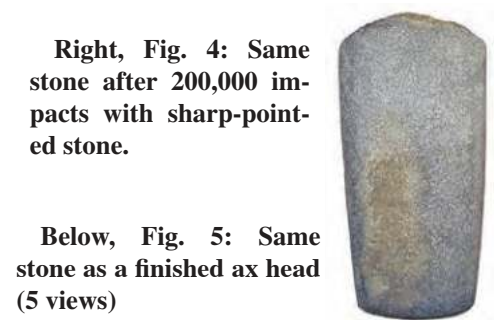
## Iti Fabussa

50 miles from the closest ancestral Choctaw villages of that time. To make an ax blade of this material, and many were made from it, our ancestors probably walked the 100-mile round trip to get the stone (ibid).

Cobbles of greenstone would be selected for the desired size and shape, and tested to make sure that there were no cracks or internal flaws. While the stone was still damp from the earth, it could be more easily shaped. The ax-maker would begin by hitting the greenstone with a round rock on just the right spots to knock off a series of thin chips, giving it the rough outline and approximate blade angle of an ax head (Fig. 3).

The ax maker would then set the rough-shaped ax head on hard dirt, and begin forcefully pounding it at a 90-degree angle with a hard, sharp-pointed rock, again, and again, and again. Rather than fracturing a chip off, each impact removed a tiny pit of stone from the surface of the emerging ax head. The greenstone would be continually dipped in water to keep it as soft as possible, and to cut down on rock dust. After literally hundreds of thousands of impacts in the right places, the shape of the stone would be near that of a finished ax head, and its surface would be smoothed out and covered in thousands of tiny pits (Fig. 4).

Finally, the ax-maker would grind the ax head back and forth on a flat piece of stone, covered in wet sand to act as an abrasive. This would grind away all of the little pits, leaving the ax head smooth to the touch, beautifully polished, and with an even blade edge



Right, Fig. 4: Same stone after 200,000 impacts with sharp-pointed stone.



Below, Fig. 5: Same stone as a finished ax head (5 views)

(Fig 5). It easily took a full week of work or more to make a greenstone ax head.

Ax handles were made from hardwoods like hickory or oak. The wood was worked while it was still green, using stone and mussel shell tools. After it was roughed out, it was slowly and carefully dried to prevent cracking. After several months, the handle would be ready to fit to the ax head. A thousand years ago, stone ax heads were made to stick straight into the handle, through a hole known as a “mortise.” Cutting a mortise across the grain, right through a thick piece of dried hardwood without using steel-tipped power tools is no easy task. Our ancestors did it with fire (Thompson 2008). A coil of damp clay was wrapped around the perimeter of what would become the mortise (Fig. 6). Then, a hot coal was set inside the coil of clay, and a hollow piece of cane was used to blow downward on the coal, forcing heat onto the wood. The directed heat caused the wood to heat up and burn. Coals would be replaced as they burned out, and damp clay would be packed on the edges of the hole as it deepened. Over several hours of careful work, the mortise would be burned all the way through the handle. Then, its edges would be fine-tuned using flat pieces of sandstone as files.

One-thousand years ago Choctaws used no glue or binding to hold the ax blade to the handle, rather they were compression fit. When looking from the flat side, the ax heads are shaped like wedges, narrower at the base, and wider at the blade. The mortise was made just long enough so that it would contact the two narrow edges of the ax blade. Every time the ax was used, the impact would push the wedge-shaped ax blade harder and harder into the handle. Because the force was against the grain of the wood, the handle would not split. At the same time, the mortise had to be wide enough that the flat sides of the ax blade would not touch the handle. If this happened, the ax head would act as a wedge on the handle, and split it apart.

These Choctaw axes took a huge amount of time to make, easily several months from start to finish (including time to season the handle) with three weeks of direct working time. People put a great deal of themselves into making these durable implements, and once made, these axes were held onto and even passed down (Fig. 7).

The axes our ancestors made were highly functional implements, and could be used to fell any tree in the woods. Compared to a modern steel-bladed ax, the old Choctaw axes are heavier, and must be swung harder, but they cut quite efficiently (Fig. 8). They were also quite durable. Traditional stone axes made by individuals in recent years have held up to cutting down more than one thousand



Fig. 6: Process of burning out a mortise to receive the ax head.

trees (Kinsella 1999).

When Europeans entered Choctaw country in the 1500s they brought socketed iron ax blades. At first, Native Southeasterners used stone tools to reshape the strange iron blades into wedge-shaped native-style ax heads. However, they quickly began using the socketed axes as is, finding it easier to trade hides or agricultural produce for an iron-bladed ax rather than putting in the effort to make a traditional one. Stone axes were one of the first elements of Choctaw traditional culture that was given up during colonization. By the early 1700s, they had disappeared from Choctaw communities, except for a few held onto by the old people as a memory of earlier days (Adair 1775:405).

Today, nothing prevents us from making and using these axes exactly as our ancestors did many generations ago. When one takes the time to do so, the hours spent connect us back with these ancestors and a Choctaw lifeway that existed before colonization. There is power in that. If readers are interested in making and using this ancient type of Choctaw ax, please contact the Historic Preservation Department for more information.



Fig. 7: Three axes made by author. The example at the right was made entirely with stone and shell tools.



Fig. 8: Four bois d’ark trees cut down with stone axes.

## Chahta Anumpa Aiikhvna

◆◆◆ Lesson of the Month ◆◆◆

### Peh maka li!

Pronounced:

Peh mah-kah - le

I’m just saying that!

(Also, the meaning can be expressed close to that of “I’m just kidding”! or “I’m just joking”!)

Word Meaning:

peh – just                      maka – to say, to say that                      li - I

### Yämmät ahli!

Pronounced:

Yahm-maht a(n)hli

That is true!

Word Meaning:

yämmät – that                      ahli – really, truly

www.choctawschool.com

## Thanksgiving

*District dinners will be held to celebrate the Thanksgiving holiday*

Antlers .....	Nov. 14.....	12 p.m.
Atoka.....	Nov. 7.....	12 p.m.
Bethel.....	Nov. 19.....	6 p.m.
Broken Bow.....	Nov. 16.....	6 p.m.
Coalgate .....	Nov. 14.....	12 p.m.
Coalgate Community.....	Nov. 11.....	2 p.m.
Crowder.....	Nov. 7.....	11:30 a.m.
Crowder Community .....	Nov. 18.....	1 p.m.
Durant Community at Event Center .....	Nov. 5.....	6 p.m.
Hugo .....	Nov. 14.....	11:30 a.m.
Idabel .....	Nov. 14.....	6 p.m.
McAlester .....	Nov. 14.....	11:30 a.m.
McAlester Community.....	Nov. 18.....	1 p.m.
Poteau.....	Nov. 14.....	11 a.m.
Smithville.....	Nov. 14.....	12 p.m.
Spiro .....	Nov. 13.....	11 a.m.
Stigler .....	Nov. 7.....	11:30 a.m.
Talihina .....	Nov. 15.....	12 p.m.
Tvshka Homma .....	Nov. 5.....	6 p.m.
Wilburton.....	Nov. 14.....	12 p.m.
Wright City .....	Nov. 15.....	12 p.m.

*Kil i yakoke*  
Let us give thanks



# Meet Undergraduate & Graduate Recruiters from America's Top Colleges



Attending institutions include:

Harvard, Yale, Dartmouth,  
University of Pennsylvania,  
Vanderbilt, Purdue, Johns Hopkins,  
Duke, Northwestern,  
Washington University in St. Louis,  
and Rhode Island School of Design

See website for complete list and more info:  
[choctawnation-sap.com](http://choctawnation-sap.com)

**Saturday, Nov. 10**

Choctaw Casino and Resort - Durant, OK

[choctawnation-sap.com](http://choctawnation-sap.com)

800-522-6170 ext. 2523

email: [scholarshipadvisement@choctawnation.com](mailto:scholarshipadvisement@choctawnation.com)