



BISHINIK

The Official Publication of The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

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December 2008 Issue

Choctaw Nation Livestock Show

The annual Choctaw Nation Livestock Show will be held February 7 and 8. The show is once again being held at two locations – Eastern Oklahoma State College in Wilburton and the Choctaw Nation Event Center in Durant.

The show opens Saturday morning with market swine, followed by market goats and market sheep. Heifers and steers will show on Sunday.

For more information or to get the rules and applications, go to www.choctawnation.com or call 918-297-2518.

Tribal Council holds meeting

The Choctaw Nation Tribal Council met in regular session November 8. The members addressed four items of new business.

First on the agenda was a council bill to approve the fiscal year 2009 budget for the Choctaw Nation Environmental Office Air Quality Monitoring Project Grant which is funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The EPA grant is the first phase of a three-phase process to conduct ozone monitoring within the boundaries of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. The ozone monitoring will assist in providing necessary data on the transport of ozone from North Texas to Southeastern Oklahoma. Councilmembers voted to pass the bill.

Also approved were a grant proposal for the Family Violence Program next year; an easement for right of way in favor of the Idabel Works Authority; and expenditure of tribal trust funds for improvements to the tribal trust property at Tushka Homma.

The improvements to the Choctaw Nation Capitol grounds will allow the tribe to have additional activities throughout the year.

Classes set to aid homebuyers

Are you ready to purchase a new home? The first step in the home-buying process is to attend a Homebuyer Education Class.

Come to one of our Homebuyer Classes to learn the important steps in the homebuying process. You will become more aware of the benefits and risks associated with owning your own home. We make the process fun and educational, so call us for an appointment today!

To register, please call Debbie Childers at 1-800-235-3087, ext. 297, for one of the following classes:

- January 13: McAlester Community Center, 4:30 p.m.
- January 20: Choctaw Tribal Complex, Durant, 4:30 p.m.

◆ What's inside

Notes to the Nation.....	2
Columns	3
Nursery News.....	4
Food Distribution Calendar.....	4
People You Know	6
Voc-Rehab Calendar	7
Obituaries	8-9

◆ Photos from Thanksgiving dinners held throughout the Choctaw Nation are on Pages 10-12.

◆ The annual Pow Wow in Durant had a record-number of dancers this year. For photos, turn to Page 14.

Ceremony honors veterans



The Choctaw Nation held its annual Veterans Ceremony November 11 at Tushka Homma with special guest speakers Lt. General Leroy Sisco and Major General John Furlow.

"I would like to give a special thanks to Chief Pyle, Assistant Chief Gary Batton and the Tribal Council for declaring their love of this country and those who defend her on this Veterans Day," said Lt. Gen. Sisco. "The roots of Veterans Day can be traced to World War I, when on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month in 1918, an armistice was signed and a great victory was won. But it was not as the world hoped at the time, the 'war to end all wars.' See VETERANS on Page 5

Chief Pyle presented with 50 Over 50 Award

AARP has presented Choctaw Chief Gregory E. Pyle with an award for his lifelong contributions toward making Oklahoma a better state as part of its 50th Anniversary events. State Director Nancy Cotter said that Chief Pyle is among 50 Oklahomans over the age of 50 who were selected to be honored from more than 200 nominations.

Other honorees include entertainer Roy Clark, former governor, George Nigh, a nun who operates a food pantry for the homeless, a Peace Corps volunteer and two other American Indian leaders, Chief Leaford Bearskin of Wyandotte Nation and President George Howell of the Pawnee Nation.

An official statement from AARP said,

"Chief Pyle is being honored for his solid, honorable leadership of the Choctaw Nation. He has been consistent in his values, hopes and dreams while taking the Choctaw people forward."

"These honorees represent the fabric of Oklahoma," AARP Oklahoma State President Bob Bristow said. "From everyday people who work for the betterment of their local communities to statewide leaders who have left indelible footprints, this is a fitting way to honor the vision of AARP founder Dr. Ethel Percy Andrus, a pioneering educator, activist and community leader."

In photo at right, Cotter presents Chief Pyle with a medallion marking his 50 Over 50 Award.



Dedication honors Lois Burton

A special luncheon was held December 11 at the Dale Cox Community Center in Poteau in honor of the late Lois Burton, former District 4 Councilperson and Tribal Judge. Chief Greg Pyle, Assistant Chief Gary Batton, Tribal Council, daughters Sherry Krebbs and Theresa Mode, family and friends witnessed the unveiling of the plaque that was to be hung on the Pharmacy Refill Center December 17. The plaque bears the facility's new name, "The Lois White Burton Pharmacy Refill Center."

Choctaw Nation Law Enforcement receives grants exceeding \$900,000

The Choctaw Nation Law Enforcement has applied for and received three grants totalling \$941,324.

"We feel very fortunate to have been granted these funds," said Executive Director John Hobbs. "The tribe's branch of law enforcement is always looking for ways to improve its effectiveness and this will help us to improve our equipment and provide more training for our officers."

The largest of the grants was awarded by the Department of Justice to assist in implementation of an AMBER Alert Program in the Choctaw Nation. Funds of \$414,000 are allocated to purchase equipment to assist in recovering abducted children. The amount of the allocation was based on several things includ-

ing a needs assessment provided by Hobbs, tribal population, adoption of a tribal resolution to create an AMBER Alert plan, and participation at AMBER in Indian Country trainings and meetings.

The Department of Justice approved two additional requests for funding.

Under the COPS Universal Hiring Program, the award provides \$300,000 of federal funds to assist in funding directly to local, state, and tribal jurisdictions for the salaries and benefits of newly hired officers engaged in community policing. COPS awards funding through UHP to help law enforcement agencies partner with their communities to develop creative and innovative ways to deal

with long-standing problems.

The third grant, totalling \$227,324, was awarded by the COPS Tribal Resources Grant Program. COPS' TRGP is a broad, comprehensive program designed to meet law enforcement needs in Native American communities. This program has offered a wide variety of funding in areas such as hiring additional officers, law enforcement training, uniforms, basic-issue equipment, emerging technologies, and police vehicles.

"Our officers are a group to be very proud of," said Chief Greg Pyle. "They go about their duties quietly and efficiently, providing the Choctaw Nation with a sense of security that rivals any larger law enforcement group."

Head Start is recruiting

The Head Start Program of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma is recruiting prospective students for the 2009-2010 school year. Although the program accepts applications year-round, every year beginning in January a concerted effort is made to identify children who might be eligible for the unique services provided by Head Start. Families of children who will be 3, but not 5 years old by September 1, 2009, are eligible to apply.

This program serves children from 3 to 5 years of age. Our program serves children of all nationalities, although we do have a Native American preference policy.

The Head Start program is directed primarily toward low-income families.

Families of children with special needs are encouraged to apply. The Head Start program assists families in obtaining needed support services for your special needs child.

Choctaw Nation Head Start provides families with assistance in their efforts to obtain educational, health, nutritional and social services. The program provides a nutritionally sound breakfast and lunch each day.

For more information and to obtain an application, contact the Choctaw Nation Head Start Centers in Antlers, Atoka, Bennington, Broken Bow, Coalgate, Durant, Hugo, Idabel, McAlester, Poteau, Stigler, Wilburton and Wright City. You may also contact the Durant administration office at 1-800-522-6170, ext. 2353.



Louis Coleman was presented an award by Kenny Sevard, President of the McCurtain County Historical Society.

Wheelock Festival

Wheelock Academy Festival, held the first weekend in November, hosted many of the alumni, including Lucy Walker Rimbaugh, who at 94 years, was the eldest in attendance. A large group of ladies who had attended school at the Academy posed for pictures in front of Pushmataha Hall, the iconic building that symbolizes the grounds. These women told individual memories, including times that they snuck out of the windows (sometimes being caught by teachers), helping take care of younger children, playing and learning through the years.

During the ceremony welcoming the former students, Dorothy Arnote West, although not able to be present, was honored for being the oldest living alumni of Wheelock and OU at 106, and area historian Louis Coleman was honored with a "Friend of the Choctaw" award.

Wheelock representatives reported that 15,000 visitors have visited the campus in the past 10 years. The grounds are open to the public weekdays from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. There is a museum with free admission that features displays from years gone by.



Tribal Councilman Hap Ward welcomed the former students and their families.

One foot in the present, one foot in the past

By James Wood
Mounds, Oklahoma

I have recently begun learning some new skills, or should I say very ancient skills that are new to me. Little did I know that these newly learned skills would change my way of thinking, and open up new doors and avenues of life for me. I have walked this life like most people of today, working hard, earning money to pay my bills and to provide for my family. Living the daily and what some would say the normal life.

Recently I decided to learn how to make fire using a primitive method, the bow and drill method.

It took me four days of trial

and error to learn this ancient form of starting fire, but at last I conquered it and fire was born to me using this method.

What a wonderful and liberating feeling it was. Knowing that now I could walk into the forest with nothing except what nature provides for me and start a fire to keep warm, or to cook, or to smoke meat, and even smoke tan leather ... which is another great skill to be learned.

I have also picked up a new interest and hobby of flint napping, the art of creating tools and weapons from flint, chert or obsidian. Our ancient ancestors made use of this skill producing arrowheads, axe heads, heads for spears, knives and scrapers.

While learning and practicing these skills I became keenly aware of my ancestral past. It is as if I crossed a bridge from here to the other side ... although not able to actually get to the other side of the bridge, it is much like crossing this bridge and getting to the middle where I can actually look at the other side and get a sense of where I came from.

As the small flakes of flint fly, hitting the ground as I chip away to produce an arrowhead, I am taken back to a time long ago, the same sounds of flint flaking and hitting the ground as my ancestors heard them. I hold the stone in my hand to make the correct flaking angle as did my ancestors in the same manner.

When practicing these ancient skills sometimes I can almost hear the distant laughter of children in a village of long ago ... elders speaking of past hunts, young hunters boasting of their skills. The women chatting while making baskets, giggling from time to time. The crackling of cooking fires and dogs barking.

My wife, who is Choctaw and produces beautiful beadwork, has been teaching me this skill as well. Although I make many mistakes I am still learning. It is amazing to produce something from wonderful skills handed down from our ancestors.

When I leave work behind and return home I can practice one of these skills and leave

the modern world behind momentarily. Leave behind the computers, the cell phones, the rush to get things done ... leave behind the worries of money and return to a time when survival was the priority, a time to return to very important yet simplistic skills...

At one point in my life it seemed important to buy that nice home, or to have that nice car, or nice furniture, but now these things are not as important to me. From time to time I long for a time long ago but not completely gone. A time when the earth provided the basic and essential things needed for living. To be at one with the earth and nature, and the simple life and all things that God created.

I am currently learning the Chahta language, one more link to who I am, one more link to my grandfathers and grandmothers. I write this hoping to awaken the many Choctaws who are scattered all about that we can all connect to who we are, that we can connect to the past. In things like the learning of our language, the making of primitive bows and arrows, flint napping, beading, herbal medicine, basket weaving and hunting, just to name a few. To enhance our cultural identity in making things from nature and giving them as gifts, sharing our learned knowledge and skills with others.

We can be proud to say, "I AM CHOCTAW!"

NOTES TO THE NATION

Beyond the call of duty

Dear Choctaw Nation,

The Choctaw Nation again goes beyond the call of duty and shows the world our true patriotism and compassion for our country. The Freedom Award and the passing of the Code Talkers recognition act are truly something that we as members of the Choctaw Nation are truly proud of.

I live in Northern Oklahoma, among the Ponca Tribe and the Otoe-Missouria people. They are very good to me. I was at a dinner for one of their young men who was going to Iraq. He is with the 45th Infantry. When the family learned that the Choctaw Nation was providing their buses to transport them to Fort Bliss, Texas, a Ponca elder told me, "I see that the Choctaws are stepping up and helping out with the transportation of the 45th." I thanked him for that and told him it seems like the Choctaws are always stepping up for our country, doing whatever it takes to help our soldiers, past and present.

The Code Talkers Act is a very proud history for our people and for the other tribes who also are honored. What our warriors did for our country is something that our people should always remember. Our warriors during World War I weren't even citizens of this country until after their service. Extraordinary men who helped turn the tide of the battle with their language at a time when boarding schools were trying to get our people to stop speaking their language.

What could we do to honor our Code Talkers today? We could keep our language going. Take advantage of our language programs. There are many tribes who have only eight or nine speakers and no language program to keep it alive. We are fortunate to have our language program today and prayerfully we can keep our language alive so that the Code Talkers' efforts will be kept alive. I believe this would help honor the memory of our Code Talkers.

I thank Chief Pyle, the Tribal Council and the language directors for their efforts in the language programs.

God bless our veterans from the past to the present.

Geary Watson
Ponca City, Oklahoma

A tremendous victory

Dear Choctaw Nation,

The Choctaw Code Talkers Association expresses its appreciation and gratitude for the support and passage of HR 4544. Chief Pyle, Assistant Chief Batton, we are grateful for the many hours, travels, and work you've done and accomplished. We are thankful for Judy Allen, the dedication to Choctaw Code Talkers and for keeping it a priority for many years.

With the passage of HR 4544, it will allow the public to know our heroes, our Choctaw men who deserve this honor and rightful place in history for their contribution to our country.

We wish to thank U.S. Congressman Dan Bo-

ren for sponsoring HR 4544, and for his faithful support; U.S. Senator James Inhofe, and members of Congress who made this a reality; Lt. General Leroy Sisco and Major General John Furlow who took time out of their hectic schedules to speak on behalf of our ancestors, the Choctaw Code Talkers, and descendants; and to all members of CCTA, friends and relatives throughout the country who helped gain support on this historic bill.

On behalf of the Choctaw Code Talkers Association we sincerely thank you, are deeply grateful for the effort, hard work, and tenacity to fulfill this tremendous victory.

Evangeline Wilson, CCTA President

A small pebble tossed into the water ...

Dear Choctaw Nation,

Like many Choctaws, my heart was touched by the Bishinik's recent series on our tribal Code Talkers' efforts in World War I. The author mentions early in the first article that it is unseemly for Choctaws to brag, and that, coupled with the fact that the U.S. military never formally acknowledged their bravery, made the Code Talkers and their families reluctant to speak of their wartime heroics. No medals were ever issued, and the world never heard their story. But during the short time after reading the story and the arrival of Veterans Day, all that began to change.

As a radio copywriter, I am routinely asked to come up with creative ways to sell everything from custom homes to chainsaws. But a few days before Veterans Day, I was asked to develop an ad for our area's local tribe that would simply talk about the high ratio of Native Americans participating in military service throughout history. And, of course, I was to be especially careful not to make it seem like bragging. I was given plenty of statistics and dates to

help me complete my project, but nothing from World War I. So I figured ... well, hey, I know a little something about that.

The ad was a full 60 seconds, but one line in particular ended up getting a lot of attention. It simply read, "American Indians served valiantly in the Spanish-American War, again in the Civil War, and the Native American Code Talkers' efforts helped turn the tide in World War I."

The ad had only played once or twice when we got a call from a woman who wanted us to know our Veterans Day ad was wrong. The receptionist quickly forwarded the call to me. The caller identified herself as a Native American geographer and historian. Before she could voice her objections to the ad, I said, "Let me guess. I bet you want to tell me that the Code Talkers were actually first activated for World War II, and not for World War I." There was a pause, and then she sputtered, "Well, uh ... yes ... exactly."

So I told her I was Choctaw and what I knew of our Choctaw Code Talkers, which was mostly from what I had read in the Bishinik. I told her how we were currently waiting for the U.S. Senate to officially give these great warriors their long-overdue recognition. She was hesitant at first. But I think she heard the ancestral pride in my voice as I talked about finally being able to set the record straight. She thanked me for the information, and I referred her to the Bishinik for more Code Talker facts.

Before the day was over, a couple more callers questioned my grasp of history. My producer suggested we revoice the ad and say "World War II." So

I told him and our receptionist (and a few other co-workers) the Code Talkers story. Everyone understood why we would not be re-voicing the ad.

That night when I got home, Chief Pyle's letter regarding the Senate's vote to officially recognize the Choctaw Code Talkers was in my mailbox. I thought, "Very timely, this," and took the Chief's letter into work with me the next morning on Veterans Day. Anticipating more calls, I made copies of the letter and highlighted the pertinent paragraphs for the receptionist. I also gave a copy to our newsmen.

A few minutes later, I was standing next to the receptionist when she got a call from a gentleman who said one of our ads on the air wasn't factual and we need to change it. Vikki, our tactful receptionist, explained how the ad in question was a national ad, not one we created, and therefore not one we could effectively alter. Still not quite ready to let go, the guy said, "Oh, and by the way ... I'm a history teacher, and that ad you have on about the Code Talkers is wrong."

I motioned Vikki to pass the receiver to me. I got on the line and, as you might expect, opened with, "So, let me guess ... I bet you want to tell me the Code Talkers were actually activated for World War II, not World War I."

"That's correct," said the teacher.

"And furthermore," said I, "it was the Navajo. Right?"

"Correct again," he replied. And I thought ... "Oh, this is going to feel good."

As with the caller the day before, I again told what I know on the subject and this time

added parts of Chief Pyle's letter. The man said he'd be very interested to see that letter. So I passed him back to reception with instructions to send him a copy of the letter. Vikki told me later the fellow said, "It just goes to show you, you're never too old to learn something new. Evidently, I've been teaching history wrong for the last 20 years."

As I was heading back to my desk, I heard our newsmen launch into a story about the Choctaw Code Talkers and our winning the Freedom Award. He quoted Chief Pyle and gave the story a lot of airtime ... and I was having trouble not swaggering down that hall. Never had I felt more proud to be Choctaw.

The whole experience was a good example of the "pebble in the water" phenomenon. Even the smallest pebble dropped in water will cause ripples all around. When that historian/native geographer writes her next book, she undoubtedly will tell all about our Code Talkers. The next time that history professor teaches World War I history, you know he will tell the story of our brave warriors. These two people alone will influence hundreds or even thousands of individuals ... who will influence tens of thousands more. And it all starts when even the smallest pebble is tossed into the water.

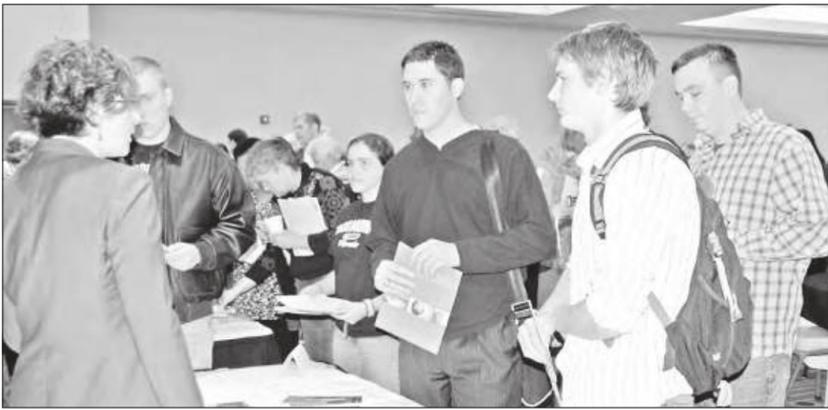
I am honored to have been a messenger for such a noble story as the Choctaw Code Talkers. It is my hope that, like the little pebble, my small contribution will help propel our story through the veils of time forever.

Smokey Tim Conner
Oakland, Oregon

Harvard connects with Choctaw students



Representatives of seven areas of training at Harvard University say the reception they held in Durant was the best-attended they have ever had. Students, parents, and even grandparents traveled from as far as Washington, D.C., for the opportunity. Pictured with Chief Pyle are Kerri Noonan, Harvard School of Public Health; Dr. Gregg Glover, Harvard Graduate School of Education; Geri Nederhoff, Harvard Graduate School of Design (Architecture); Stephanie Parsons, Harvard Graduate School of Arts & Sciences; Anthony Gallonio, Harvard Kennedy School (Government); Angela Counts, Harvard Divinity School (Religion and Theology); and Steven Abbott, Harvard University Native American Program.

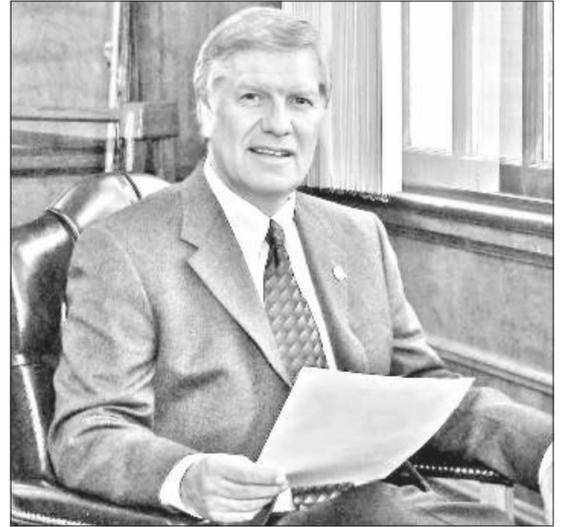


From the Desk of Chief Gregory E. Pyle

We had 77 students utilize the opportunity for a face-to-face interview with Harvard representatives when the Ivy League school visited the Choctaw Nation in November. Seven of the disciplines were directly represented, including Public Health, Education, Architecture, Arts and Sciences, Government, Divinity and the Native American Program. Steven Abbott of Harvard and his colleagues said the Choctaw/Harvard Event was the biggest and best they have ever attended, with around 250 Choctaw students and parents in attendance.

All seven Harvard representatives said it was well worth their trip to talk with and recruit our Choctaw students. Students came from Oklahoma, Texas, Illinois, Georgia, Arkansas, Kansas, and Washington, D.C. The students and parents said the event merited all time and expense incurred for the rare opportunity to visit with Harvard one-on-one.

When the Scholarship Advisement Program set the goal of connecting Harvard with the Choctaw students, I knew it would draw a lot of interest. The event exceeded my highest expectations with the level of success on the part of the



students and the school. The Harvard visitors were very excited about the recruitment possibilities of so many Choctaw students who are interested in their school. The scholarship prospects accessible to our tribal members are amazing. I am thankful that financial assistance and possibilities are available through the Choctaw Nation education programs and through universities.

Since the Harvard experience was so immensely successful, both Yale and George Washington University have contacted the Choctaw Nation to seek a date when they

can pose an opportunity to our Choctaw students to learn about their education facilities. As a result, the schools of Yale, OU, OSU, U.S. Air Force Academy, St. Lawrence University, George Washington University and a host of other colleges will be represented March 31 at the Career Development Expo in McAlester from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. for recruitment and will have break-out sessions with Choctaw students to talk one-on-one.

The education and career goals of Choctaw students are more reachable than ever!

Our youth honored as future leaders

From the Desk of
Assistant Chief
Gary Batton

We often talk about the youth of the Choctaw Nation being our future leaders and it is great to know that other organizations feel the same way about young people. Just recently, the CEO of Pepsico/Frito Lay hosted an event that highlighted opportunities for the youth of the Choctaw Nation.

Close to 40 members of the Choctaw Youth Advisory Board (YAB) visited the corporation headquarters in Plano, Texas, where they were honored as future leaders.

An interview process had taken place with each of the 40 students where they answered questions such as "What impresses you?" "What are your goals?" and "What does family mean to you?"

These answers, along with a photo of each student, were posted in the hallways as we toured the facility, pointing out that each young individual



had the potential of making a difference in the world around them by voicing their opinion and being a role model to others.

This large corporation is looking at Native Americans for possible internships during their high school and college years. This gives Pepsico a chance to train students to see if they would be a good fit as a permanent employee after graduation. The company is so serious about incentives for youth as leaders they are actually going into first and second grade classrooms and capturing their interest with

talk about how potato chips are made, then as the students get older, showing them the other aspects of the company, such as accounting, marketing, engineering and worldwide travel – so much more than just the manufacturing aspect.

The world is a big place, and we want our youth to be able to reach their goals – no matter how far from home, or how close to home their dreams take them. I appreciate all the people and companies who are partnering with the Choctaw Nation to help our future leaders.



The official Youth Advisory Board (YAB) symbol hangs in the hallway of Heavener High School. Pictured are YAB members Koby Cross, Jessie Blackwell and Brandon Dedmon.

YAB recognized as official organization

Heavener High School Youth Advisory Board members Jessie Blackwell, Koby Cross and Brandon Dedmon presented a proposal to the student council and school board in order for YAB to be recognized as an official school organization. The proposal was approved, enabling the Youth Advisory Board to include its symbol in the Heavener High School hallway devoted to school organizations.

The gift of Jesus Christ

Chaplain's Corner

Merry Christmas! It is that time of year when there will be much activities about the celebration of Christmas. There will be shopping, decorations, exchanging of gifts.

In the midst of the Christmas celebrations, let me ask, do you truly express gratitude for the one great gift, the gift of Jesus Christ? After all, it is His Birth we celebrate. His birth is one of the truths of the Christian faith.

During this Christmas season I reminisce of my experience and my spiritual life. My mind goes back to the late 1920s through the mid-1930s.

My father, the late Rev. Johnson W. Bobb, was a pastor and later served as the presiding elder of the Methodist Episcopal Church South in southeast Oklahoma. It was my privilege to have attended the 53 one-room Choctaw churches he ministered at that time.

With the Choctaw Bible we studied only one book in Sunday School classes. We read and memorized parts of the Catechism (Katikisma in Choctaw) each week. Here is a sample of questions and answers (the ones that affected my life):

Q. kvta hosh chikbi tok o? (Who made you?)

A. Chihowa yak osh sakbi tok oke? (God made me.)

Q. Kvta hosh, hatak moyuma ka ikbi tok o? (Who made all people?)

A. Chihowa yak osh hatak moyuma ka, ikbi tok oke. (God made all the people.)

Q. Chihowa hut achvfa yummak illa ho? (Is there only one God?)

A. Chihowa hvt anta kv, amihah katohmi ho? (How many persons are there in God?)

A. Chihowa hvt anta kv, amihah tuchina hoke. (There are three persons in God.) Iki Chihowa, micha Ushi Chihowa, mikmvt Shilombish Holitopa Chihowa, tuchina ilvppak oke. (The three Persons are God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.)

I learned early in life that God was One. There are three Persons in the One Godhead. I can't explain it but I believe it. There is God the Father,



Rev. Bertram Bobb
Tribal Chaplain

God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. In Genesis 1:26 we read: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness ..."

The Good News is that God became flesh and lived among us (John 1:1-14).

John 1:1: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God."

John 1:14: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the father), full of grace and truth."

Jesus Christ, God the Son, was conceived by God the Holy Spirit in the womb of a virgin and became man (Philippians 2:5-7):

5. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6. "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7. "But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men."

Christ was both fully God and fully man – not half God and half man. The Lord Jesus Christ became human so He could suffer and die on the cross for our sins (Philippians 2:8):

8. "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

Jesus was made like us so that He is able to be a merciful high priest, one who under-

stands and sympathizes with our struggle against temptation (Hebrews 2:17-18):

17. "Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

18. "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted."

Though Jesus was tempted like us in every point, He was without sin (Hebrews 4:15):

15. "For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

Finally, at this Christmas season our gratitude for the gift of the Lord Jesus Christ should challenge us in our obedience. Long to learn more about Him.

If you are not a Christian you can trust Jesus Christ as your personal Savior today! You can pray, "Dear Lord, I realize I am a sinner, I trust Jesus as my Savior."

If you have trusted Jesus as your Savior, will you let me know? My mailing address is P.O. Box 9, Antlers, OK 74523. I will pray for you. I want to help you in your spiritual life.

Finally, the record that God became flesh and lived among us provides an example for us to follow in Philippians 2:10-11:

10. "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth;

11. "And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father."

Those who have experienced God's gift of Christ means that we can give ourselves to others in humble service.

May God bless you. Happy New Year 2009! Pray for America. Pray for our men and women in service.

Immunizations and well-baby visits

By Ashley Norris, AFL Technician

Babies should visit their doctor or health care provider regularly during their first year of life. When you take your baby on a visit, it's best to make the next appointment before you leave the office. Visits during baby's first year are usually scheduled at the ages of 1 month, 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months and 12 months.

Why does my baby need to go to her health care provider when she is not sick?

Your health care provider needs to make sure your baby is growing and developing well and, at most visits, to give your baby immunizations. The doctor will also check if baby's hearing and vision are normal, because the earlier problems are caught, the more they can be helped.

Why should my child get immunizations or shots?

Your child can be protected from serious diseases by getting immunized. Without immunizations, some children die of these diseases.

Will the shots hurt the baby?

Your baby may cry for a few minutes when she gets the shot, but she will feel better again quickly.

Will the shots make my baby sick?

The shots may make your baby fussy later in the day, and she may get a fever. Liquid Tylenol can help, but *never* give your baby aspirin which could cause brain damage, or even death. If the fever or fussiness lasts more than 24 hours, call your doctor.

Choctaw Nation AFL Project

The Choctaw Nation Adolescent Family Life (AFL) Project is an innovative program focused on pregnant teens, their child, male partner, and extended family members. The AFL program provides opportunities for a brighter future through integrated services within the Choctaw Nation and other agencies.

Participants will expand their knowledge through prenatal education, relationship enhancement programs, and parenting workshops. Striving for healthy outcomes in adolescent family lives is our program goal. Services are provided through Choctaw Nation Outreach Services to pregnant Native American Teens under 19 years of age or otherwise qualified through an eligible Native American. For more information or questions about eligibility, please call Angela Dancer, Project Director, at 1-877-285-6893.



Five generations

This picture of five generations was taken recently in Talihina of Ester Cummings, Jean Thomas, Jim Blemmel, Carly Blemmel and Cohen James Blemmel.

NURSERY NEWS

Tyler James Phillips

Jennifer and Jonathan Phillips of Valliant would like to announce the arrival of their son, Tyler James Phillips, born at 4:48 p.m. on September 18, 2008, at the Choctaw Nation Health Center. He weighed 7 pounds 15 ounces and was 20 inches long. His sister is Rebecca Phillips of Valliant. He is the grandson of Jackie and Dorothy Southard of Valliant and Don and Donna Shope of Sand Springs. He is the great-grandson of Don and the late Melva Winship of Valliant and the late Mutt and the late Ruby Tyson of Boswell.



Cambria Adalynn Graff

Adam and Jennifer Graff of Albuquerque, New Mexico, would like to announce the birth of their daughter, Cambria Adalynn, on February 20, 2008.



Haley Cheynne Clinton

Lee and Linda Knight of Hugo would like to announce their new great-granddaughter, Haley Cheynne Clinton, who was born September 12, 2008, at the Medical Center of Southeastern Oklahoma in Durant. She weighed 7 pounds 1 ounce and was 19 inches long. Her parents are Sharena Ward and Tony Clinton. Grandparents include Ruth Ward and Donnie and Jacque Knight of Shawnee. Her other great-grandparents include Mary and Loyd Ward of Paris. God parents are Mark and Christine. She also has a sister, Bethany Anderson.



Azlynn Rae Thies

Congratulations to proud parents Amy Davidson and Kenneth Thies Jr. on the birth of their daughter, Azlynn Rae Thies. She was born October 8, 2008, weighing 8 pounds 15 ounces. Grandparents are Debbie Davidson, Kathy Thies and Kenneth Thies Sr. Aunts include Melissa, Kayla and Lindsey and uncles are Kevin and Shaun. She is the great-granddaughter of Mary Davidson and Newman Tisho.



Reilly Logan Howard

Margaret and Ray Howard of Sierra Vista, Arizona, proudly announce the birth of their son, Reilly Logan Howard. He was born July 17, 2008, at Sierra Vista Regional Hospital, weighing 7 pounds 10 ounces and measuring 18 inches in length. His grandparents are Mary and Ron Yarmesch of Fort Myers, Florida, Lloyd and June Howard of Calvin and Nancy and Don Wildt of Tucson, Arizona. Great-grandmother is Alma Barrick of Jones who recently celebrated her 90th birthday.



Community Center Health Fairs

2009 Schedule

All times are at 10 a.m.

Please check with your center prior to the date of your area's Health Fair for any possible changes in the date and time.

DIABETES EDUCATORS

- Smithville - January 21

- Durant - January 28

- Stigler - February 4

- Atoka - February 25

- Coalgate - February 25

- Hugo - March 11

- Wright City - March 25

- Antlers - April 8

- Spiro - April 15

- Idabel - May 13

COMMUNITY HEALTH NURSES

- Broken Bow - June 6

- Poteau - July 8

- Talihina - July 22

- Wilburton - August 12

- McAlester - September 16

- Bethel - September 30

- Crowder - October 14

Is your child ready for finger foods?

"Look mom, I've learned to sit by myself and pick up small objects with my thumb and second finger." "I chew food even though my teeth may not be through." "I am proud of my new skills and may want to do things by myself, like drink from a cup and eat with my fingers." If your child **can do what this baby says**, then they are ready to eat these foods:

- Dry Cereals
 - Cheerios, Kix, Chex, or other iron-fortified, low-sugar cereals.
- Fruits
 - Banana slices
 - Soft, cut-up fresh fruit with the skin or peel removed (like melons, kiwi and peaches).
 - Canned fruit cocktail (no grapes) or canned fruits (like pears and peaches) cut up.

WIC

Be sure and pick the canned in its own juice or low-sugar content.

- Vegetables
 - Well-cooked fresh or frozen vegetables (like green beans, broccoli and carrots).
 - Canned vegetables (buy salt-free or rinse vegetables in water before serving to baby)
 - Other soft foods
 - Cheese sticks, hard cheese only (Cheddar, Monterey Jack or Swiss cheese, cut in sticks).
 - Fish sticks or boneless baked fish.
 - Small pieces of tender meats (small meatballs cut up, beef, pork, or chicken).
 - Scrambled eggs, yolk only for infants **less than 1 year of age** with a family history of food allergies.
- Washington State Department of Health

Choctaw Nation WIC

WOMEN, INFANTS AND CHILDREN

SITE	PHONE	HOURS	DAYS
Antlers	580-298-3161	8:30-4:00	Every Tuesday
Atoka	580-889-5825	8:00-4:30	Every Mon., Thurs. & Fri. 1st, 3rd & 4th Wed.
Bethel	580-241-5458	8:30-4:00	1st & 3rd Tuesday
Boswell	580-380-2517	8:30-4:00	1st & 2nd Friday
Broken Bow	580-584-2746	8:00-4:30	Every Mon., Wed., Thurs. & Fri. 8:00-4:30 2nd & 4th Tuesday
Coalgate	580-927-3641	8:30-4:00	2nd Wednesday
Durant	580-924-8280 x 2255	8:00-4:30	Daily
Hugo	580-326-5404	8:00-4:30	Every Mon., Tues., Wed. & Thurs. 3rd, 4th Friday
Idabel	580-286-2510	8:00-4:30	Monday and Friday
McAlester	918-423-6335	8:00-4:30	1st & 2nd week - Mon., Tues., Wed., Fri. 3rd & 4th week - every day
Poteau	918-647-4585	8:00-4:30	Every Mon., Tues., Wed. & Fri.
Smithville	580-244-3289	8:30-4:00	2nd Thursday
Spiro	918-962-3832	8:30-4:00	Every Thursday
Stigler	918-967-4211	8:30-4:00	1st, 2nd & 3rd Thursday
Talihina	918-567-7000 x 6792	8:00-4:30	Every Tuesday
Wilburton	918-465-5641	8:30-4:00	1st & 2nd Thursday



Jones Academy students enjoy Health Fair

The Pittsburg County OSU Extension Office sponsored a Health Fair at Jones Academy for the elementary students, grades one through six, in October.

The event was promoted by the Choctaw Nation in an effort to educate young students about healthy lifestyles and making good choices.

Several agencies from the Choctaw Nation participated in the endeavor, including lessons on diet, nutrition, teamwork, drug and alcohol abuse and making practical everyday life decisions.

The students especially enjoyed the games and physical activities during the Health Fair. The program was designed to help students develop healthy, lifelong habits and lifestyles.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION

ANTLERS

January 7: Idabel 9-11 a.m.; Broken Bow 12-2 p.m. (market closed).

January 14: Bethel 9-10:30; Smithville 12-2 (market closed).

Closed January 1 for holiday.

Closed January 28-30 for inventory.

DURANT

Market open weekdays: January 5-27.

Closed January 1 for holiday.

Closed January 28-30 for inventory.

McALESTER

January 2: Stigler 9-12 (market closed).

Market open weekdays: January 5-27.

Closed January 1 for holiday.

Closed January 28-30 for inventory.

POTEAU

Market open weekdays: January 5-27.

Closed January 1 for holiday.

Closed January 28-30 for inventory.

CHOCTAW NATION FOOD DISTRIBUTION

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

WAREHOUSES & MARKETS

Antlers: 306 S.W. "O" St., 580-298-6443

Durant: 100 1/2 Waldron Dr., 580-924-7773

McAlester: 1212 S. Main St., 918-420-5716

Poteau: 100 Kerr, 918-649-0431

FOOD DISTRIBUTION SITES

Bethel: Choctaw Community Building

Broken Bow: Choctaw Family Investment Center

Idabel: Choctaw Community Center

Smithville: Choctaw Community Center

Stigler: Choctaw Community Center

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Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline

1-800-QUIT-NOW

Veterans Day

November 11, 2008



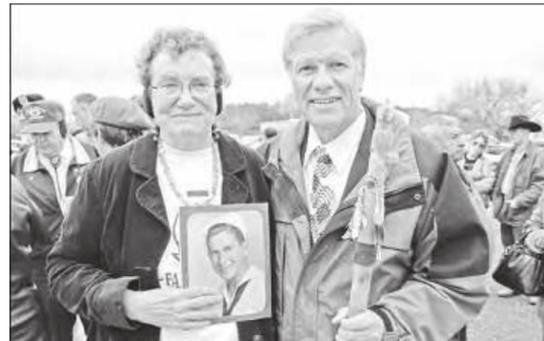
Members of the Color Guard post the American and Choctaw flags.

I pledge allegiance to the flag

I – Me, an Individual, a committee of one.
Pledge – Dedicate all of my worldly goods to give without self-pity.
Allegiance – My love and my devotion.
To the Flag – Our standard, Old Glory, a symbol of freedom. Wherever she waves, there's respect because your loyalty has given her a dignity that shouts freedom is everybody's job!
The United States of America – That means that we have all come together.
And to the Republic – Individual communities that have united into 50 great states. Fifty individual communities with pride and dignity and purpose; all divided with imaginary boundaries, yet united to a common purpose, and that is "love for country." A state in which sovereign power is invested in representatives chosen by the people to govern and government is the people and it's from the people to the leaders, not from the leaders to the people.
One Nation – One Nation, meaning "so blessed by God."
Under God – Our founding fathers built this nation on Biblical principles. *Wouldn't it be a pity if someone said now that Under God is in the "Pledge of Allegiance" it is now a prayer and it would be eliminated from schools, also?*



Chief Gregory E. Pyle and Color Guard place wreaths by the names of fallen soldiers.



Judy Dotson of Braggs presented Chief with a staff that was carried in a commemorative Trail of Tears Walk by a deceased friend.

Veterans

continued from Page 1

"Many since that time have answered freedom's call and shed their blood for freedom's cause."

Maj. Gen. Furlow had many moving words for the veterans but also for the families.

"It is not only the service member who answers the call to duty," he said. "Our families' service is marked by the unwavering support to their loved ones who are in harm's way. They may not carry a rifle on their shoulder, but they have carried the weight of worry. They carry that burden until their loved one returns home. Tragically, some never do."

Chief Greg Pyle thanked both Sisco and Furlow for their unwavering efforts in helping with the passage of the Code Talkers Recognition Act.

"Many from the Choctaw Nation have worked for years to have our Code Talkers receive federal recognition. Both Lt. Gen. Sisco and Major Gen. Furlow made a distinct difference this year as they went from office to office in D.C. in full uniform.

"We thank you and everyone who helped get the Code Talkers Recognition Act passed."



Jr. Miss Kanda Jackson, Little Miss Cheyene Shomo, and Sr. Miss Choctaw Nation Dayla Amos sign the Lord's Prayer.



Edward Palmer points out his great-uncle Tommy Hattentsty's name on the World War II memorial at Tushka Homma. The memorials hold the names of Choctaw servicemen who lost their lives in World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam and the most recent Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.



Troy Smith, 81, is a veteran of World War II.



Madelyn Baker is pictured with Pat Pyle and Chief Greg Pyle.



Assistant Chief Gary Batton greets Vietnam veteran Bobby Amos and his son, Peter Amos.



Chief Pyle is pictured with brothers R.A. Lindsey and Dwayne Lindsey and Dwayne's wife, Shelia.



Chief Pyle shakes hands with Michael Miller.



Sherian Freemon of Lubbock, Texas, and her dad, Houston Tom Sr., of Talihina are with the Chief.



Robert Frazier, Fay Frazier, Timothy Frazier and Carolyn Frazier point to a relative's name on the Korean memorial – Elam Frazier. They are also related to Code Talker Tobias Frazier.



Council Speaker Delton Cox is pictured with Ralph White. Ralph is a grandson of Tobias Frazier.



Susan Edwards of the Southeastern Oklahoma Indian Credit Association visits with Armon and Charleen Curtis. Mr. Curtis is a Korean veteran and he serves on the Credit Association board.

PEOPLE YOU KNOW

Happy 100th birthday

Ethel Shores turned 100 years old on November 5. She is very independent and enjoys playing the piano at two different nursing homes each week for all the "old" people. Wishing her a happy birthday is her grandson John Ligon.



Congratulations

Congratulations to Luther 'Luke' Battiest on his 30th anniversary. He started pastoring at the Bible Baptist Church in Wright City in 1978. He has only pastored at one church and is still pastoring there now in 2008.



Happy birthday Josephine

Happy birthday to Josephine Rosa Gilmore from grandpa, grandma, papa, mama, Uncle Jimmy, Uncle Thomas, Sissy, Baba, Victor, Debbie and Uncle Herbert Jessie.



Happy fourth birthday

Happy fourth birthday to Kaden Danderson on November 22 from Mom, Dad, family and friends.



Families celebrate special days

Jimmie and Ruthie Jefferson would like to wish a happy eighth birthday to my granddaughter, Samantha Nicole Lopez. She is the daughter of Crystal Lopez of Poteau and Jose Lopez of Broken Bow. Also, a happy birthday wish to our grandson, Adrian Redcloud Jefferson of Bethel. He is the son of Andrea Jefferson. He will be 14 years old on October 24. Happy birthday to Terry on October 15.

Also a happy 25th anniversary on October 3 to our daughter, Lisa Diane Jefferson, and son-in-law, Jose Terry Estrada of Al-pharatta, Georgia.

Siblings celebrate birthdays

Jerald and Annie celebrated birthdays in October. Jerald turned 21 on October 14 and Annie turned 17 on October 20. They are the children of Jamie Greenwood and Guadalupe Renteria and the grandchildren of M.T. Greenwood, the late Mildred Cole Greenwood and the late Raul and Paula Renteria. Happy birthday to both from your family and friends.



Happy 22nd birthday

Happy 22nd birthday on October 30 to Franciso Delangel from Annie, your friends, and family in Oklahoma.

Happy birthday

Happy birthday to Uncle Jay on October 30 from Jerald, Annie and Jessica.

Happy birthday

Happy birthday to Martha Louise Harris Fields on November 5 from your family. Louise is a second great-grand-niece of Chief Peter Pitchlynn.



Draper crowned homecoming queen

Kurstin Draper was crowned Homecoming Queen at Brewer High School in White Settlement, Texas, where she is a senior. Kurstin is active in cross-country, and varsity track. She is also on the varsity soccer team. She is an active member of her youth group at Olive Place Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas.

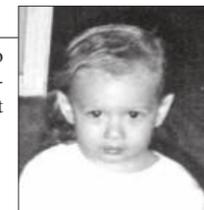
Kurstin is the daughter of Lance Draper and Yvonne Draper, the granddaughter of Calvin and Gail Draper, Ron and Delene Drumm all of White Settlement, Texas.

She is the great-granddaughter of Ola Maye Draper, the late Edward Draper of Wilburton and the late Leonard and Ruth Potts of Yanush.



Happy second birthday

Linda and Lee Knight would like to wish their great-granddaughter, Bethany, a happy second birthday on August 30.



Happy 10th birthday

Happy birthday to Corey Lovewell. He turned 10 years old on November 17. Wishing him a happy birthday is his grandmother, Zora Lovewell; brother, Austin, and sister Savannah Lovewell. Happy birthday Corey.

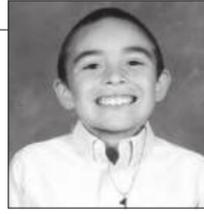


Happy 61st anniversary

Walter and Madeline Unruh of Athens, Texas, celebrated their 61st wedding anniversary on December 21. They have two daughters; Barbara and husband Martin Thompson of Athens and Sharon and husband Richard Campbell of Seabrook, Texas; grandson, Jason Campbell of LaPorte, Texas; granddaughter, DeAnn and husband Kevin Murphy of Athens; great-grandson, Joss Murphy of Fresno, California, and great-granddaughter, Terra Murphy of Athens.

Happy birthday

We would like to wish Cody a happy birthday on November 2. We are proud of you. Happy birthday from your family.



Happy 21st birthday

Micah turned 21 on December 2. She is a junior at Northern Arizona University at Flagstaff, Arizona. We are proud of you and wish you a great day from mom and dad.



Happy eighth birthday

Happy eighth birthday to Kai McClary-Noble from those who love you papa, Mimi, dad, Sylvia, mom, Bill, Chase, Six and Willard.



Happy first birthday

S. Brian Gipson and Nadine Lewis would like to wish their daughter Joslyn Paisley a happy first birthday on October 22. Happy birthday from big sis, mom and dad.



Happy 10th birthday

Happy 10th birthday to Liberty Paige Christianson on November 8. She is the daughter of Lorin Paige Dillard and Heath Christianson of Tacoma, Washington, and the granddaughter of Cindy and Richard Stephens of Fort Worth, Texas, and the great-granddaughter of Dale and Louise Fields of Idabel.



Happy birthday

Happy birthday to Cindy Fields Stephens on November 8. Cindy is photographed with her good friends, Gracie and Jack. She is the second great-granddaughter of Henry Churchill Harris.



Synhorst selected semi-finalist

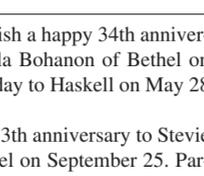
Michelle Synhorst has been selected as a National Merit Semifinalist for 2009. Michelle is a senior at Ironwood Ridge High School in Oro Valley, Arizona. In the past year, Michelle also earned her Gold Award from the Girl Scouts of America. Michelle is the granddaughter of Charles McClure of Dallas, Texas, and the great-granddaughter of deceased original enrollee Ruby Marx McClure.



Family celebrates special days

The Jefferson family would like to wish a happy 34th anniversary to Haskell Hack Bohanon and Ella Bohanon of Bethel on October 5. Also, wishing a happy birthday to Haskell on May 28 and to Ella on April 4.

We would also like to wish a happy 13th anniversary to Stevie Bohanon and Debbie Bohanon of Bethel on September 25. Parents of the celebrating couple are Haskell and Ella Bohanon of Bethel and Don and Rosie Bess of Wright City. Also, happy birthday to Stevie Bohanon on July 31 and happy birthday to Debbie Bohanon on August 3 from the Jefferson family of Bethel.



Wall presented with 25-year pin

George Wall of Anna, Texas, was presented his 25-year pin in October by the National Union of Structural Ironworkers. He has worked as an ironworker at Baten Steel Erectors in Dallas since 1983.



Happy birthday

You may not recognize the young lady in this picture but to us she is the best mom her son could have. A wonderful mother-in-law and the greatest grandma ever. Happy birthday to Clara Taylor on November 12.



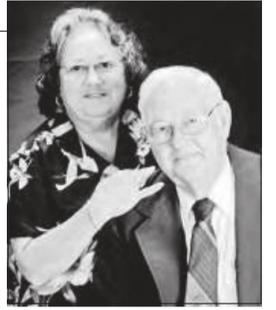
Look who's five

Happy 5th birthday to Derek Rice from big sister Khystian and little brother Ryan. Derek turned 5 on November 25. He is the son of David and Traci Rice of Greenville, Texas. The proud grandparents are Donald Swatek of Floyd, Texas, and Pat and Virginia Espinoza of Boswell. Also wishing him a happy birthday are all your aunts, uncles, cousins, dogs and fish.



Happy 50th anniversary

Larry and Alfreda Whitfield Sandridge of Wright City celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. The couple was married September 19, 1958. Alfreda is the granddaughter of original enrollee Ida Merry Whitfield and great-granddaughter of original enrollee Bessie Durant.

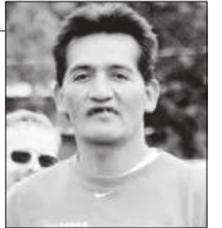


Happy 46th anniversary

Adrian Red Jefferson and Skyler Jefferson would like to wish their grandpa and grandma a happy belated 46th anniversary on July 13, and also a happy birthday to Grandma Ruthie Jefferson on October 4 and to Mama Andrea LeAnn Jefferson of Bethel a happy birthday on October 3.

Happy 50th birthday

Happy 50th birthday to Lee Watkins on November 20 from your sisters, brothers, wife, daughter, son and family.



Chapman-Williams wed

Congratulations to Chance and Jennifer Chapman who were married on May 17 in Fittstown in a double-ring ceremony.

Jennifer is the daughter of Cheryl and Jerry Williams of Ashland. She is currently completing the nursing program at EOSC and will graduate in May 2009.

Chance is the son of Rondia and David Chapman of Kiowa. He is a graduate of ECU with a bachelor's of Science in Education. He is currently teaching fifth grade at Stuart Schools and coaching softball. They reside in McAlester.



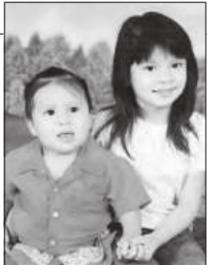
Gutfleish-Brock to wed

Mr. Edward Brock and Ms. Rebecca Brock, both of Crescent, are pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter, Lindsay Allen Brock, to Aaron Gutfleish, son of Louis and Marcia Gutfleish of Hudson, Florida. Aaron and Lindsay are planning a late June 2009 wedding to be held in Oklahoma City.



Happy birthday to siblings

Happy birthday wishes to Nishozone Anna Marie Washee who turned 13 on October 13 and her brother, Tushka Kenneth Ray Johnson, who turned 9 on November 4 from grandparents, Kenneth and Darlene Johnson of Achille, and great-grandfather, E.J. Johnson, former District 10 Councilman of Atoka County.



Happy fourth birthday

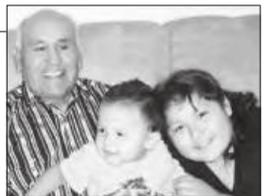
Wishing a happy birthday to our little Angel Bianca Genevieve Fuller who turned 4 years old on December 17 from Nana and Papa.



Birthday wishes

Happy birthday to Levi Orphan, Elvis Taylor and Skyla Orphan-Taylor

Elvis and Skyla are the children of Eugene and Rebecca Orphan Taylor. Their grandparents are Clara Taylor and Bob and the late Preston Taylor of Smithville, and Levi and Darlene Orphan and the late Sue Orphan of Lightning Ridge.



Happy fifth birthday

Happy fifth birthday to Vincent Kuehlthau on December 10. He is the son of Mike Kuehlthau and Rhonda Blake Kuehlthau of Papillion, Nebraska; grandson of Gene Parnell Blake and Bonnie Blake of Bellevue, Nebraska, and the great-great-grandson of original enrollee Haywood Parnell.



Happy sixth birthday

Savannah Nichole Robison turned 6 on November 22. She is the daughter of Chad and Denise Robison and the granddaughter of Verlon and Jeannette Robison.



Mother and daughter receive Sunday School bars

Pamela West received her 44th Sunday School bar and daughter, Krystle Countz Bennett received her 20th bar.

Pamela West is the daughter of Harold Buck and Frances Jones of Arpelar. She and her husband, Eric West, reside in Stuart. Krystle Countz-Bennett's father is Jimmy Countz.



STAR Program eligibility expands

The Success Through Academic Recognition (STAR) Program is happy to announce that the eligibility for students has been extended to include children enrolled in any Accredited School within the state of Oklahoma.

What does this mean for your child? This program encourages the academic success of Choctaws by providing students an incentive to strive for the highest possible level of achievement. The STAR Program offers a certificate of excellence along with an incentive dispersed on a bi-annual basis. The awards are granted according to the students' educational progress:

- Straight A's – \$25
- A's and B's – \$10
- Perfect Attendance – \$25

To be eligible for this program a student must be a confirmed tribal member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma as verified by STAR staff and be in second through 12th grade.

If your child attends a school that is not listed please feel free to turn in an individual application or to contact us personally with any questions you may have at 800-522-6170, ext. 2639, or star@choctawnation.com.

<p>Schools participating within the 10 1/2 counties of the Choctaw Nation include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Albion • Antlers • Arkoma • Atoka • Battiest • Bennington • Bokoshe • Boswell • Broken Bow • Buffalo Valley • Caddo • Calera • Calvin • Cameron • Canadian • Caney • Clayton • Coalgate • Cottonwood • Crowder • Denison • Durant • Eagletown • Fanshawe • Farris • Forest Grove • Frink-Chambers • Ft. Towson • Glover • Goodland • Grant • Haileyville • Harmony • Hartshorne • Haworth • Haywood • Heavener • Hodgen • Holly Creek • Howe • Hugo • Idabel • Indianola • Jones • Keota • Kinta • Kiowa • Krebs • Lane 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LeFlore • Lukfata • McAlester • McCurtain • Monroe • Moyers • Nashoba • Panama • Panola • Pittsburg • Pocola • Poteau • Quinton • Rattan • Red Oak • Rock Creek • Savanna • Shady Point • Smithville • Soper • Spiro • Stigler • Stringtown • Stuart • Swink • Talihina • Tannehill • Tupelo • Tushka • Tuskahoma • Valliant • Watson • Whitefield • Whitesboro • Wilburton • Wister • Wright City 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bowlegs • Braggs • Bristow-Collins • Bristow • Byars • Byng • Cache • Calumet • Campbell • Caney Valley • Carnegie • Carney • Cherokee Elem. • Chickasha • Chickasha/Grand Ave. Elem. • Claremore • Claremore Alternative • Claremore • Clinton/Washington Elem. • Colbert • Coleman • Collinsville • Comanche • Coweta • Crescent Middle • Cyril • Davis • Del City; Christian Heritage • Dewar • Dibble Elem. • Dickson • Dustin • Edmond Doyle • Edmond PS • Edmond/Cimarron Middle School • Edmond/St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic School • El Reno/Banner • Elk City High • Elk City Middle • Elmore City-Pernell • Eufaula • Fairland • Fargo • Fletcher • Flower Mound • Fort Cobb-Broxton • Fort Gibson • Fox 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foyil • Geary Elem. • Geronimo • Glenpool • Gore • Gracemont • Grandview 5th, 6th • Greenville • Grove • Harrah • Haldton • Henryetta • Hilldale • Hominy • Hoover Elem. • Inola • Jenks • Kansas • Kiefer • Kingston • Konawa Elem. • Konawa • Kremlin-Hillsdale • Latta • Lawton/Pioneer Pk • Lawton/Whittier • Lexington • Liberty • Lindsay • Little Axe • Locust Grove • Lone Grove • Lookeba-Sickles • Madill • Mannford • Maple • Marietta • Marlow Elem. • Maud • Maysville • McKinley Elem. • McLoud Jr. High • Medford • Meeker • Miami • Mid-Del • Monica Cooper • Moore • Moore/SW • Christian • Morris • Mtn. View/Gotebo • Muldrow • Muskogee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mustang/Centennial • New Lima • Newkirk • Noble • Norman PS • Norman/Robin Hill • North Rock Creek • Oaks Mission High • Okay • Okeene Jr/Sr High • Okemah • OK City Public Schools • OK City/Dove Science • OK City/Sacred Heart • OK City Schwartz Elem. • OK City/Webster MS • Oklahoma School of Math and Science • Oklahoma Union • Okmulgee Elem. • Okmulgee Primary • Oktalo • Owasso • Pauls Valley • Pawhuska • Piedmont • Pioneer-Pleasant Vale • Plainview • Ponca City • Porter Consolidated • Porum Elem. • Prue • Pryor • Pryor/Lincoln Elem. • Purcell • Putnam City • Ringling • Riverside Indian School • Robin Hill • Roff • Roland • Russell Babb Elem. • Ryan • Sallisaw/Central • Sallisaw/Eastside Elem • Sand Springs • Sapulpa • Sapulpa/Washington • Schuler • Shenandoe • Sequoyah 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shady Grove • Shidler • Silo • Skiatook • Snyder • Southside Elem. • Springer • Sterling • Stillwater • Stillwell • Stonewall • Stratford • Stroud • Sulphur • Sulphur/Oklahoma School for the Deaf • Tahlequah • Tecumseh • Thackerville • Tishomingo • Tulsa Public Schools • Tulsa/Lanier Elem. • Tulsa/Park Elem. • Tupelo • Turner • Tuttle • Union • Vanoss • Varnum • Verden • Vian • Vici • Victory Life Academy • Vinita • Walters • Wanette • Wapanucka • Putnam City • Waukomis • Wayne • Weatherford • Welch • Weleetka • Welling/Tenkiller • Wellston • Westville • Wewoka • Wickliffe • Wilson • Wilson/Okmulgee • Woodward • Wynnewood • Yuba Elementary • Yukon
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Jones Academy students are stars

Congratulations to the Jones Academy students who received STAR Program awards for the first semester. They are, at right, Alisha Picone and Lee Scott; and in the group photo above, front row, Wilmer Guerrero, Jilian Hernandez, Shelby Tushka;



standing, Kendale Willie, Cyrus Battiest and Enrique Guerrero.



Chief speaks at JOM event

Chief Gregory E. Pyle was the keynote speaker at the 2008 National Johnson O'Malley Conference held this year in Tulsa. Virginia Thomas, President of the National JOM Association, presented Chief Pyle with a silver breastplate in appreciation of all that he and the Choctaw Nation have done to support the board and the work done for the students across the United States.

Choctaw Nation GED Classes

CHOCTAW COUNTY

Beginning date and time:
January 26, 2009

Mondays and Wednesdays at 1:30-4:30 p.m.
Choctaw Nation Community Center
408 N. "M" Street, Hugo, Oklahoma

PITTSBURG COUNTY

Beginning date and time:
January 26, 2009

Mondays and Wednesdays at 1-4 p.m.
EOSC
McAlester Campus
1802 E. College Ave., McAlester, Oklahoma

McCURTAIN COUNTY

Beginning date and time:
January 27, 2009

Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1-4 p.m.
Choctaw Nation Family Investment Center
Broken Bow, Oklahoma

HASKELL COUNTY

Beginning date and time:
January 27, 2009

Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1-4 p.m.
Choctaw Nation Community Center
Highway 82, Stigler, Oklahoma

The class will meet two days a week for approximately three months. Books, supplies and testing fees are provided. In addition, a \$10 (per day) transportation stipend is paid to those who attend classes on a regular basis and attempt the GED test.

If you have turned in an application with our Adult Education Program for GED classes and wish to attend the upcoming class, please contact our office.

If you have not applied and wish to attend these or future classes, please contact Neal Hawkins or Kathy Springfield at the Durant office, 1-800-522-6170 or 580-924-8280, ext. 2319 or 2122. Also, you may register at the first class. A Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) is required.

To the Youth of the Nation

By JD Chancellor

The youth of today have become a part of an historical event. I have many times sat and listened as my grandparents or great-grandparents talk of the depression, the Vietnam War, assassination of President Kennedy, resignation of President Nixon, and the fall of the Berlin wall to name just a few. I realize that in my 17 years I have witnessed the Iraq War, the attack on the twin towers and an economic crisis but I believe that when future generations look at this time in United States history it will be the election of our first African-American president that will stand out as the premier event.

I join many people is saying congratulations to President-elect Obama; I however do not believe that this is the only important thing that happened during the 2008 elections. I believe that for the first time in many years the youth of America turned out in record numbers to support the candidate of their choice.

According to Politico.com, "president-elect Barack Obama's 34-point margin of victory with voters under 30 was the largest in a generation, cut across lines of class, color and education – and the most impressive youth mandate in modern American history, according to an exclusive Politico analysis."

I believe that in future elections and when historians look at this race it will focus on the importance of the youth vote. We made a difference in this election. Whether you voted for President-elect Obama or John McCain, our voices were heard and counted as important. I believe that a cornerstone of the American dream is to participate in the election of our government. It is a right that we should never take for granted.

I call on the youth of the Choctaw Nation to take a stand for what you believe in and become part of history, vote in all elections, tribal, state and national. Because even though we are often told that the youth of today are our future, I say the youth of today are our now!

CHOCTAW NATION VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION									
	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT		
JANUARY	A Vocational Rehabilitation representative will be available at the locations listed. A representative is available Monday through Friday 8-4:30 except for holidays at the Hugo office.						1	2	3
	4	5 Wilburton 10:30 am-1:30 pm	6 Antlers by appt only	7 Durant 10 am-12 pm	8	9 Idabel 10 am-12 pm Broken Bow 1-3 p.m.	10		
	11	12	13 Talihina 10 am-2 pm	14 McAlester 10 am-2 pm Stigler by appt only	15 Crowder by appt only	16 Wright City by appt only Bethel by appt only	17		
	18	19	20	21	22	23 Poteau 11:30 am-1 pm	24		
	25	26	27	28	29	30 Atoka 10 am-2 pm Coalgate 10:30-1:30	31		
								2009	

Choctaw Nation Distance Learning Technology GED Classes

Beginning
January 5, 2009

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

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



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

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

OBITUARIES

Finis Ewing Impson

Finis Ewing Impson, 75, of Lawton, passed away May 14, 2008. He was born on July 29, 1936, to Dickey and Myrtle Impson.

Mr. Impson was a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corp., during the Korean War. He worked as a barber, maintenance worker for the Indian hospital, and in later years as a cab driver. Most of all, he was a good father and a loving brother.

He was preceded in death by his parents; three brothers, Dickey John Impson Jr., David Warren Impson and Preston Wayne Impson; and one sister, Mildred Walker.

Survivors include his wife, Ruby Impson Konowa; daughter, Cindy George; son, Paul Impson and wife Kimberly; five grandchildren, Shane Impson, Lillian and Lidia George, and Christopher and Colby Impson; stepson, Calvin Harjo and his children, Katrina, Casey and Mariah Harjo; three great-grandchildren, Christopher Shane, Hunter Franklin and Jan Lee Impson; six sisters, Leona Wilson of Chickasha, Emma Nelson, Sophia Impson and Margie Davis, all of McAlester, Claudine Wheeler of Mesquite, Texas, and Elizabeth Impson of Talihina; and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.



James Robert Pittman

James Robert Pittman, 67, of Bennington passed away July 24, 2008, in Duncan. He was born February 19, 1941, in Talihina to Dallas James and Helen Louise Wesley Pittman.

He attended and graduated high school in Choctaw. He moved to Bryan County and worked as a mechanic. He married Cleta Coulter on December 31, 1972, in Durant and they spent 35 wonderful years together. James enjoyed spending time with family and friends, going to flea markets and garage sales. James will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved him.

He was preceded in death by his father; grandparents; sister-in-law; two nephews and a daughter-in-law.

Survivors include his loving and devoted wife of the home; mother, Helen Pittman of Calera; sister, Barbara Phares of Talihina; sons, Randy Bully of Durant, Jeff Bully and wife Emily of Mapleton, Georgia, and Dallas James Pittman and wife Raelynn of Ratcliff City; daughters, Tracy Ussery and husband Tim of Duncan and Lesia Moore and husband Steve of Chickasha; 21 grandchildren; numerous other relatives and a host of friends.

Jim Blemmel

James Doyle "Jim" Blemmel passed away September 15, 2008, at his home in Talihina. He was born June 28, 1959, to Neva Jean Cummings and Jerry Blemmel, their first son and the sunshine in their lives. He is the great-grandson of original enrollee Lof Olson. Growing up he attended Whitesboro High School where he met his future wife and camping partner, Kathy Williams.

Jim worked for OTIS engineering, then Halliburton for 27 years. He went on to work for Boots and Coots International Well Control for three years. Jim was proud of what he did as he was of his family. Every deer season, Jim filled the house with jerky and deer meat to last through the year. There was no fish that Jimmy couldn't catch. There was no greater pleasure to him than sitting around a fire with his dogs and a fryin' pan of fish or deer meat.

He was preceded in death by his grandparents, Charlie and Marie Blemmel and L.W. "Paps" Cummings; uncle, Charlie Blemmel; and cousin, Linda Blemmel.

Survivors include his wife; mother, Jean Thomas; father, Jerry Blemmel and wife Judy; brothers, Joe Blemmel and Mark Blemmel and their families; sister, Mary Blemmel Williams and family; grandmother, Ester "Mamaw" Cummings; uncle, Monty Olson; daughters, Carly Blemmel, Amber Arnold and husband Jeff; son Zach and wife Cassie Woodson; grandchildren, Cohen James Blemmel, Aubrey Arnold and Aubri and Cambri Coleman; step-sister, Jessica Watt; stepbrothers, John Watt and Joey Watt and their families; and his true and faithful friend, Buddy, and his old huntin' pal, Nuisance.



Ben Eugene Engavo Sr.

Ben Eugene Engavo Sr. passed away September 16, 2008, at the Wyoming Medical Center in Casper. He was born March 5, 1965, in Lander, Wyoming, the son of Billie Daney Engavo and Joseph Engavo Sr. and the grandson of the late Rev. Ben and Edith Daney of Talihina. A traditional Indian funeral was held at the family residence in Fort Washakie, Wyoming.

Ben enjoyed art, drawing, music, horses, and being with family and friends. He attended school at Fort Washakie, Riverside Indian School in Anadarko, and Lander Valley High School. He was a carpenter by trade.

Survivors include his mother; brothers, Joseph Jr., Eric and Tom Engavo of Fort Washakie and John Engavo of Riverton, Wyoming; sisters, Vickie and Teresa Engavo of Fort Washakie, Eunice Engavo of Blackfoot, Idaho, and Edith Woodley of Newberg, Oregon; his children, Ben Engavo Jr. and Tiffany Ann Engavo of Missoula, Montana; grandson, Vincent Eugene Zavarelli, and numerous other family members in Oklahoma.

Minerva Helene Spencer

Minerva Helene Spencer, 87, of Tuttle passed away on June 10, 2008, at the Norman Regional Hospital. She was born May 19, 1921, in Antlers to Morris and LeVicy Gibson.

Minerva was a proud member of the Choctaw Nation. She attended Goodland Indian School in Hugo. Minerva and Maynard Spencer were united in marriage in 1957 in Oklahoma City. For several years she wrote the Bridge Creek News. Later, she wrote a weekly column called Minerva's Corner in the Blanchard newspaper. Minerva enjoyed her family and friends. She also enjoyed her hobbies of crocheting, writing, reading, attending pow wows and visiting with her friends daily.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husbands, Maynard Spencer and Charles Johnson Pickens; son, Kirk Pickens; and sisters, Irene Watkins and Ada Perry.

Survivors include her sons, Charles Pickens of Purcell, Eugene Pickens of Union City and Maynard Spencer of Tuttle; daughters, Betty Wolfe and Charlie of Moore, Verda Haines and Edward of Blanchard, Kathy Thompson and John of Blanchard and Myra Pierson and Mike of Purcell; grandchildren, Bryan Kitchen, Stacy Kitchen, David Haines, Tasha Wilk, Jacob Fleck, Christian Redhat, Candace Redhat and Ramona Redhat; eight great-grandchildren, and a host of other relatives and friends who will miss her greatly.

Jay Evan 'Pete' Bass

Jay Evan "Pete" Bass, 44, passed away October 1, 2008, at his home in Stigler. He was born December 24, 1963, in Jacksonville, Arkansas, to Gene and Sue Hall Bass.

Mr. Bass was a 1982 graduate of Stigler High School where he was deeply involved in school leadership and was a four-year letterman in all sports. An avid OU fan, he went on to graduate from the University of Oklahoma in 1988 with a bachelor's degree in Management Information Systems.

His career accomplishments are varied and impressive, serving in a management capacity in restaurants, health care and other high profile businesses. His most prized service was as city manager for his beloved hometown of Stigler.

An intensely organized manager, Pete was instrumental in the planning and construction of the recently completed Roye Park, a great source of pride. His leadership and talents extended to many areas, with Leadership Oklahoma, a select organization of Oklahoma's elite community and business leaders, among the most prominent. He was a proud member of the First Baptist Church of Whitefield.

He was preceded in death by his stepfather, Jim Clark; his grandparents, Jim Sr. and Ann Hall, and Elgie Bass.

Survivors include his daughter, Jaedyn Bass, and son, Lakin Bass, both of the home; his mother, Sue Clark of Stigler; his father, Gene Bass and wife Betty of McAlester; Shelli Bass and Tuesday Riley of Stigler; one sister, Janice Bracken and husband Mike of Stigler; one brother, Jim Bass and wife Helen of Oklahoma City; grandmother, Alma Ruth Bass of Muskogee; six stepbrothers, James, Jeff and Greg Belote, David, John and Jim Clark; two nephews, two nieces and their children; and a tightknit extended family and countless number of friends and acquaintances.

Harold E. Clark

Harold E. Clark, 79, of Evansville, Indiana, passed away September 24, 2008, at his residence. He was born September 29, 1928, in McAlester. Harold was a member of Salem United Methodist Church, the church choir, and Salem Bell Tower Club. He was a past president of the Darmstadt McCutchanville Kiwanis Club. Harold was a precinct committeeman for Center Township.

He enjoyed camping at West Boggs Park, fishing, river barge cruises and singing, belonging to the Evansville College Choir and the Society for Preservation of Barbershop Quartets. Harold was a graduate of Bosse High School and Evansville College with a BS degree in geology.

He served with the Indiana National Guard for 10 years. Harold obtained his pilot's license at the age of 25 and was a business partner with his father at Coy Aviation for 10 years and Clark and Clark Petroleum Producers from 1940-1960. He was a Real Estate Appraiser for the Indiana State Highway Commission for 27 years and was a member of the Indiana Appraiser's Association.

Harold is survived by his wife of 59 1/2 years, Shirley Clark; daughter, Teresa Ellis and husband Tom, of Bloomfield, Indiana; sons, Steve Clark and wife Sandra of Bloomfield, Michael Clark and wife Estralia of Coupeville, Washington, and Mark Clark and wife Brenda of Evansville; sister, Ramona Laster of Reagan, Tennessee; grandson, Bruce Dayvolt of Evansville; stepgrandsons, Scott Ellis of Detroit, Michigan, and David Ellis of Helena, Montana; granddaughters, Sarah Rizza of Austria and Tasha Hudson of Worthington, Indiana; grandson, Scott Clark of Bloomington; granddaughter, Cassandra Clark of Marysville, Washington; stepgranddaughter, Rubi Ginapp of Oak Harbor, Washington; five great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild; eight nieces; and one nephew.



Dorothy Sue Birch

Dorothy Sue Birch, 71, of Hudson, Massachusetts, passed away September 25, 2008, at her residence. She was born in Spiro, the daughter of the late Henry J. and Jane Ethel Hiarker Birch.

She served in the U.S. Army from 1955 to 1956. She resided in Ventura, California, for a short time before residing in Dover from 1967 to 1986 and has resided in the Metro West, Hudson area the past 23 years. She was employed as an admitting and registration secretary for New England Baptist Hospital of Boston and Marlboro Hospital for the past 17 years until retiring in 2005. Dorothy Sue was a kind and loving person who especially enjoyed her time as a volunteer for the Medical Reserve Corps, Region 4a of Hudson.

Survivors include her lifelong companion, Donna Dimock of Hudson, and her many nieces, nephews and cousins, including JoAnn and Dean Ferguson of Lexington, Kentucky, Sarah and Richard Tilden of Tulsa, Barbara and Raymond Reames of Blanchard, Idaho, and Sharon, Russell, Garrett and Courtney Hamm of Lexington. She was the co-parent of Beth Boelter-Dimock of Boston.



Josephine LeFlore

Josephine LeFlore, 89, of Frederick passed away October 11, 2008, at Memorial Hospital, Frederick. She was born on November 16, 1918, in Pickens to Joel and Maleum Carterby LeFlore. She grew up in the Pickens and Battiest area in southeast Oklahoma.

Mrs. LeFlore worked at the ammunition plant in McAlester during World War II. She came to Tillman County in 1958 and established her home. She raised two nephews and did babysitting for numerous nieces, nephews, great-nieces and nephews as well as caregiving for others in need. She made a significant impact and contribution to the lives of her nieces and nephews and great-nieces and nephews. She enjoyed playing pool, cards and dominoes. She also enjoyed quilting and made numerous quilts to donate for church fundraisers. She enjoyed singing Choctaw hymns and was a member of the Apostolic Faith Church in Frederick.

She was preceded in death by her parents and three brothers, Carlo Wade, Hanson Wade and Samuel Wade; five sisters, Loranice Hicks, Amanda Marshall, Suzanne Burris, Nellie Fay Beers and Dena Henson.

Survivors include numerous nieces and nephews including local nephew Eddie Joel Hicks of Frederick and local niece Vera Hudson and her husband, Cordell, of Frederick; numerous great-nieces and nephews including great-niece and caregiver, Lori Dawn Perez and husband Braulio of Frederick.

Frances Vaughn

Frances Vaughn, 70, passed away September 3, 2008, in Wichita Falls, Texas. She was born June 9, 1938, in McMillan to Marvin and Mary Tom Sherwood. She married Vernon Vaughn on February 3, 1956, in Gainesville, Texas.

She was preceded in death by her parents; son, Daniel Robert Vaughn; two brothers, Johnson Sherwood and Allen Roberts; and two sisters, Mary Aguillar Sherwood and Doris Morgan.

Survivors include her children, Emma White and husband Tim of Sherman, Texas, Violet Miller and husband Mike of Wichita Falls, Texas, Eddie Vaughn of Dallas, Texas, Louise Garcia of Ardmore, and Charles Vaughn and wife Jessica of San Antonio, Texas; grandchildren, Theresa White of Allen, Texas, Tara Petty and husband Kevin of Sherman, Kimberly Vincent and husband James of Silo, Tammy Long and husband Gabe of Choctaw, Steven Marshall and wife Andy, Claude Henry, Toby Garcia, Tabby Garcia and Nathan Vaughn, all of Ardmore, and Jennifer Vaughn of San Antonio.

Also, four great-grandchildren; sister, Betty Gregory of Broken Bow; brother, Jimmy Sherwood of Arkansas; stepsister, Josephine Shoemaker of Madill; and former husband Vernon Vaughn and wife Wanda of DeQueen, Arkansas.



Juanita Mae Estes

Juanita Mae Estes, 88, a lifelong resident of Durant, passed away October 20 at the Medical Center of Southeastern Oklahoma. She was born January 13, 1920, in Durant to John O. and Susie Thompson Dunn.

Juanita graduated from Durant High School and married Haskell Estes on May 15, 1937, in Atoka. She was an instructor for the Choctaw Nation, teaching arts and crafts, and a member of the Achille Baptist Church. Some of Juanita's hobbies included being a leader for the Campfire Girls, Indian dance, and arts and crafts. Juanita loved Choctaw Pow Wows. She will be dearly missed by all who knew and loved her.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Haskell; her parents; a son, Johnny Ray; and a daughter, Charlotte May.

Survivors include her three daughters, Mary Sue Hess of Arlington, Texas, and Melba Sheller and Linda Roberts, both of Durant; eight grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; and four great-great-grandchildren.

W.E. 'Dutch' Boback

W.E. "Dutch" Boback, 80, longtime resident of the Keetonville area near Claremore, passed away October 5, 2008. He was born February 21, 1928, at Bokoshe to Rudolph and Gertrude Barnett Boback.

He was raised and educated at Bokoshe and graduated with the Bokoshe High School Class of 1946. He was called to serve his country with the U.S. Navy and served during World War II. After his honorable discharge, he continued his education at Poteau College in Poteau. He was married to Wanda Eidschun on September 1, 1951, in Fort Smith, Arkansas.

Mr. Boback spent most of his working life as a sheet metal mechanic with American Airlines in Tulsa. He enjoyed a variety of pastimes including spending time outdoors working around his home on the tractor or with his cattle. His priority in life was his love for his wife and family.

He was preceded in death by his parents and two brothers. Survivors include his wife of over 57 years of the home; daughter, Pam Boback Self of Owasso; son and daughter-in-law, Eddie and Rhonda Boback of Claremore; and his only grandson, James Edward Self.



Goodwin Keener Cobb III

Goodwin Keener Cobb III, 63, of Newark, Delaware, passed away on October 20, 2008.

He graduated from Bel Air High School in Bel Air, Maryland, Connors College Northeastern State University in 1967 and earned a Master's of Arts in Organization from the University of Phoenix. He taught at the Delaware State School for the Deaf in Newark, was a Resource Room Teacher and served as Speech Therapist in Cecil County Public Schools. He was with the Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in Washington, D.C., where he was the Branch Chief of Planning. He was a member of the Ogletown Baptist Church in Newark, a member of Solomon Masonic Lodge #36, Aberdeen Masonic Lodge, Tuscan Royal Arch Chapter, Concordia Council, 32nd Degree, Scottish Rite of Wilmington, Delaware, York Rite Mason, Eastern Star, and the Boy Scouts. He was founder of the National BIA Very Special Arts Festival, Developed Blue Ribbon Campaign for Prevention of Child Abuse, White House Conference on Indian Education. He served the Ogletown Baptist Church as a Deacon, Bible Study Leader, on the expansion committee for the new multipurpose building and founder of Boy Scouts Troop 316. His other interests included auctioneering, crafts, activities with family and grandchildren and many ministry projects.

Survivors include his wife of 42 years, Paula Cobb; his children, Kizzie Kalitoyo Cobb and husband Josh Given and their children, Noah and Zoe of Middletown; Goodwin Keener Cobb IV and wife Maria Cobb and their children, Goodwin V and Edward of Newark, and Quay Mahkila Cobb of Newark.

Dixie Oehler Bundy

Dixie Oehler Bundy, 86, of Sherman, Texas, passed away June 26, 2008, at Texoma Medical Center. She was born on August 29, 1921, in Broken Bow to Dick and Lela Stiles Oehler.

She attended elementary school in Broken Bow and high school in Sulphur. She went on to East Central State University in Ada, earning a B.S. degree in speech. She married Arthur H. Bundy on December 14, 1975, in Pauls Valley. He passed away on May 20, 1978.

A devoted Methodist, she served as a missionary teacher in the Yucca Valley of California and on the foreign field in Singapore. After retiring to Broken Bow, she moved to Sherman in 1998.

She was also preceded in death by her parents. Survivors include her friend and caregiver, Felton Cash of Leonard, Texas, a stepson; three nieces; many cousins and a host of other friends.



OBITUARIES

Charles 'Denny' Knight

Charles "Denny" Knight passed away suddenly of a heart attack on October 19, 2008. He was born in Bakersfield, California, on November 16, 1950.

Denny was a great teacher and the only wrestling coach Kern Valley High School has ever had. He is the "winningest" coach in the Desert Inyo League in dual matches. Denny was a man's man. He was smart, straight-talking and quick-witted. He was a master crossword player and excellent storyteller. His passions, however, were his kids, roping and hunting. He was happiest outside with his kids, horses, mules, dogs and guns. Denny was very proud of his Choctaw heritage. He could read and speak in Choctaw. He was looking forward to becoming a grandpa.

Survivors include his mother, Lena Bishop; his wife, Sandy Smith; children, Jenna, Kali and Ben Knight, Jess Montgomery, Chase and Jamy Smith; sisters, Donna Newman, MyLena King, MyLissa Isaacs and her husband, Darren Isaacs; eight nieces and four nephews and too many friends to mention, who will miss him dearly.



Ernestine Norwood

Ernestine Norwood, 69, passed away on October 5, 2008, in Midwest City. She was born on December 31, 1938, in Smithville to Ed and Myrl King Wilson.

While being raised in Smithville, she went to school at Wheelock Academy and graduated from the Haskell Institute in Lawrence, Kansas. Ernie grew up loving all sports and enjoyed playing and coaching softball and basketball. Even though she was a NASCAR fan, she was first and foremost a huge fan of her grandchildren. Ernie was best known for her blue 1963 Falcon and her Indian tacos. Her nickname while working for the Mid-Del Public School System was "Lunch Lady." She married Robert "Jitter" Norwood on August 20, 1960.

She was preceded in death by her parents and her brothers, Calvin, A.C. and Eugene.

Survivors include her husband; daughters, Bobbi Pride of Del City, Sheila Norwood of Tahlequah, Norma Brown of Mustang, Dewan Faulk of Midwest City; grandchildren, Bryan and Rance Pride of Del City, Felicia, Mariah and Skye Norwood of Tahlequah, Brooke Molet, Cody and Dailen Creek of Mustang, Bradley Edmonds-Faulk and Trevor Faulk of Midwest City and siblings, Raymond, Edna, Earleen, Gerald, and Charleen.

Ladascod Lou Collins Crane

Ladascod Lou Collins Crane, 62, a former Idabel resident, passed away October 6, 2008, at Fort Smith, Arkansas. She was born January 9, 1946, in Talihina, Oklahoma.

Lou was raised in the Kulli Community and graduated from Haworth High School and then attended Haskell University where she studied nursing. She joined the Air Force, where she met her first husband and father of her son. She was honorably discharged in 1969 and moved to New York City where she lived several years. Lou recently moved back to Idabel for a time before moving to Baltimore, Maryland, with her son. She was a nurse and enjoyed reading, traveling and going to the casino.

She was preceded in death by her mother, Minerva Collins Byrum, and her husband, William Crane.

Lou is survived by her son, Alfred Medina, and his fiancé, Rena, Baltimore, Maryland; granddaughter, Cheyanne Medina of Baltimore; sisters and brothers-in-law, Juanita Jane Williams of Healdton, Suzie and Tommy Chesney of Wright City, Ruth Treece of Murfreesboro, Arkansas, and Amabel and Frank Tidmore of Wright City; several nieces, nephews, other relatives and a host of friends.



Billy Davis

Billy Davis passed away on February 6, 2007. He was born on October 16, 1987, to Green Dale and Jolene Davis.

Billy's grandparents are Mabel Davis and the late Charlie Davis of Broken Bow and Williston and Delia Wesley of Wright City. He is a great-grandson of World War I Choctaw Code Talker Ben Carterby.

Clora Mabil Brookshear

Clora Mabil Brookshear passed away on July 10, 2008, at Pico Rivera, California. She was born on October 27, 1918.

She is survived by her husband, Cecil; sons, Bondie, Cleo and Dannie; 10 grandchildren, 13 great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren.



Neva Jean McBride Tackett

Neva Jean Tackett, 44, passed away November 2, 2008, in Bokoshe. She was born March 23, 1964, in Talihina to Wilmer Odus and Drucilla Ritter McBride.

Neva was preceded in death by her parents; sister, Cynthia Holderfield and brother, Harlan Ray McBride.

Survivors include her two sons, Chris Tackett of Bokoshe and Jason Tackett and wife Jodi of Heavener; her granddaughter, Rumor Tackett of Heavener; her sisters, Pat Vinson of Noble, Sammie Thompson of Panama, Gail Mayer, Shirley Picklesimer and Becky Maxell, all of Poteau; her brothers, Samuel McBride of Carlsbad, New Mexico, Mackey McBride and Tim McBride, both of Poteau; and her special friend, Steven Tackett of Bokoshe.

Juanita Fields

Juanita Fields, 82, passed away on September 24, 2008. She was born on October 20, 1925, in Hugo. Juanita was the daughter of original enrollee Leflore Jackson.

She was preceded in death by her husband, E.L. Fields; grandson, Earl Fields Jr.; and daughter, Faith Renee Fields.

Survivors include two sons and their spouses, Earl Fields Sr. and Tish, and John Fields and Teresa; daughter and her spouse, Regina Smith and Larry; five grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; three half-sisters and one half-brother.



Anna Marie Johnson

Anna Marie Johnson, 44, passed away December 4, 2008, in Atoka. She was born on September 15, 1964, in Talihina to E.J. Johnson and Marie Leflore Johnson.

Anna attended school at Lane and Atoka High School. She studied Business Administration at Okmulgee Tech. She was employed as an administration assistant for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma for 23 years and an active participant in the summer youth programs. She was of the Baptist faith.

Anna was preceded in death by her mother and brothers, Jerry Leflore, Edward Johnson and Alvin Johnson.

She is survived by her father; sisters, Clela Billy of Atoka, Anita Jones and husband Roger Coslow of Coalgate, Deborah Williams and husband John of Achille; brothers, Kenneth Johnson and wife Darlene of Achille, Richard Johnson and wife Pat and Bobby Johnson and wife Sara, all of Atoka; nieces, Misty Lynch and husband Emmitt of Atoka, Holly Jones of Tulsa, Shannon Billy, K'Anna Billy, Shawn Sublette, all of Atoka, Marla Johnson of Moore, Kari Peterson and husband Steve of Kiowa and Consetta Leflore of Stringtown; nephews, James Billy and wife Mary of Tushka, Samuel Billy, Marcus Mills and wife Mary, Jeremy Johnson, David Sublette, all of Atoka, Eddie Johnson and wife Terra of Coweta; special friends, Oneida Winship, Terri Englutt and Susan Edwards, along with numerous cousins, family and friends.



Raymond Patton

Raymond Patton, 91, passed away on September 27, 2008, in Stigler. Raymond was born on June 17, 1917, in McCurtain to Prosper and Leona McDonner Patton.

He was a retired coal miner who enjoyed fishing and spending time with family.

He was preceded in death by his parents; wife, Alva Patton; and three brothers, James Patton, Virgil Patton and Jim Bill Patton.

He is survived by one daughter, Patsy Kates of Stigler; one son, Ronnie Patton and wife Betty of Baker, Florida; three sisters, Helen Honeycutt, Dorothy Mayberry and Mona White, all of Stigler; two brothers, J.C. Patton of Van Buren, Arkansas, and Charles Patton of Keota; grandchildren, Terry Kates of Boston, Massachusetts, and Teri Irwin and husband Mike of Baker, Florida; great-grandchildren, Courtney, Sarah and Taylor; and his friend, Sassy.



Pauline S. Tom

Pauline S. Tom, 62, passed away on November 10, 2008, in Soper. She was born on February 12, 1946, in Talihina.

Pauline was a long-time resident of Soper. She married Leonard "Chuffy" Tom on November 16, 1965, in Soper. She was employed by the Soper School System but also worked for the Indian Health Services. She was a member of Soper Assembly of God Church. Pauline loved her family, church and friends.

Pauline was preceded in death by her husband; adopted parents, Rev. Ben and Mattie Jackson; biological mother, Alice Jacob; sisters, Bertha Jacob and Cathy Nelson, and brother, Rev. Earl Wallace.

She is survived by her sisters, Josephine Gallant of Hugo and Liz Smithart of Tushka; brothers, Willie Robinson of Hugo and Donald LeFlore of Antlers; sons and daughters-in-law, Raymond and Claudia Tom of Hugo, Mike and Keshia Tom of Greenwood, Arkansas, Wayland and Dena Tom of Kennett, Missouri, Larry and Dottie Tom of Bennington; daughters and sons-in-law, Linda and Scott Taylor, Sharon and Jim Davis, and Lenora Jackson all of Hugo; 27 grandchildren, 40 great-grandchildren, seven great-great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews, relatives and friends.

Robert J. 'Bobby' Blackburn

Robert J. "Bobby" Blackburn, 47, passed away on April 17, 2008, in Elgin. He was born on October 2, 1960, in Fort Sill to Robert J. and Willa Blackburn.

Bobby was raised and attended school in Lawton. He worked for the City of Talihina for 12 years and was the director of the Talihina Emergency Management Services. Robert traveled all over the United States and had many adventures in his life before settling down in Talihina. He married Carolyn Gravitt in Talihina on February 27, 1984.

Bobby was passionate about fishing and hunting. He enjoyed baseball. He coached his stepson's little league team and cheered him on when he played school ball. He could make you laugh when you were sad and encourage you when you had a bad day. He was a generous, selfless man who will be greatly missed.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Carolyn. Survivors include his mother and stepfather, Willa and Jim Caudill; his stepson and spouses, Kelly Wayne and Ashley Gravitt of Talihina and William Wayne and Shannon Gravitt of Stillwater; brothers, Richard Martin Nance of Germany and David Mitchell Nance of Oklahoma City; sister and her spouse, Trudi and Robert Glass of Elgin; grandchildren, Wayne, Austin and Aubrey Gravitt of Stillwater; nieces and nephews, Betty Sue Archambault and Richard Nance, both of Florida, Heather, Holly and Hanna Glass of Elgin, and Callie, Larry Jr., Crystal and Justin Edwards, all of Panama; and special friends, Robert Solenburt, Travis Klinegardner, Dolores Ward, Robert and Christi Hubbard.

James Kenneth 'Kenny' Williams

James Kenneth Williams, 78, passed away on October 24, 2008, in Fort Smith, Arkansas. He was born March 2, 1930, in Poteau to Reginald and Ann Williams.

Kenny graduated from Goodland Indian School in Hugo, Eastern State College and Central State College. He retired after 25 years with the U.S. Postal Service and spent many years as a welder. He was a veteran of the Korean War. He served his country with pride in the U.S. Air Force from which he retired. He greatly enjoyed participating in the Veterans Day ceremonies held at Tushka Homma each year.

Kenny was preceded in death by his parents; wife, Vivian; daughter, Kennetha, and brother, Harrell Williams.

Survivors include his daughter, Regina Georgette Black and her husband, Dr. Tony Black, of Tecumseh; granddaughters, Shelley and Whitney; sisters, Virginia Johnson of Poteau, and Ramona and her husband, Dr. Bill McCready, of Joplin, Missouri; brothers, Robert F. Williams of Hugo, David B. Williams of Pocola, Reggie Williams and wife Barbara of Idabel, and Neal Williams and wife Joan of Gilmer, Texas; one great-granddaughter; special friend, Billie Klug of Grand Prairie, Texas; numerous nieces and nephews, and many other relatives, loved ones and friends.



Floye E. Cochnauer Holt

Floye E. Cochnauer Holt passed away July 13, 2008, in Oklahoma City. She was born on May 20, 1916, to original enrollees David William and Rhoda Robinson Cochnauer in Bokchito.

Floye was married to Charles Franklin J. Holt Jr. on March 7, 1941. She was a beauty operator until her retirement; however, she never quit working to help others. She was a faithful member of Wilshire Church of Christ in Oklahoma City where she helped quilt to raise scholarship funds for college students. Floye, an accomplished seamstress and quilter, designed, embroidered and hand quilted the Seals of the Five Civilized Tribes for a quilt that she donated to the Oklahoma Historical Society in Oklahoma City.

Floye was preceded in death by her parents; her husband; five brothers and five sisters.

She is survived by many nieces and nephews, including the family of Robert and Mary Cochnauer of Oklahoma City.



Bertie Shelton

Bertie Shelton, 89, passed away on July 10, 2008. She was born on November 12, 1918, in Honey Grove, Texas, to Harley Stephen and original enrollee Zennie Cochanuer York.

She married Robert Ed Shelton on January 13, 1934, in Boswell. Bertie resided in Wright City for the past 53 years. She worked for Dr. Zimmer and Dr. West in Valliant for the past 14 years. She was a homemaker, a member of the First Baptist Church in Wright City and a member of the Eastern Star. She loved quilting, crocheting, music and her job.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband; one sister, Bertha Maxwell, and three brothers, Rosco York, Franklin Bud York and William York.

Bertie is survived by five sons and daughters-in-law; Jimmy Shelton of Broken Bow, Ray and Rita Shelton of Columbus, Ohio, Danny and Gina Shelton, John and Phyllis Shelton and Dooley and Katie Shelton, all of Wright City; eight daughters and sons-in-law, Mary Lee Wynn of Soper, Jo Ann and W.T. Wynn of Waxahachie, Texas, Helen Young and Charlene and Boyce Harrison, all of Wright City, Dorothy and Rusty Martin of Lake Dallas, Texas, Pauline and Jim Castleman of Halton City, Texas, Donna Wilson of Paris, Texas, and Sharon Shelton Barnett of Valliant; one brother, Henry Radford "Rad" York; one sister, Reatha Freeman of Hugo; 34 grandchildren, 42 great-grandchildren, 16 great-great-grandchildren and several nieces and nephews.

Colonel William F. Stevens

Colonel William F. Stevens, 92, passed away on November 12, 2008, in Livermore, California. He was born in Caddo to Eulin Stevens and Jewel Dillard Stevens.

He will be laid to rest with full Military Honors in Arlington National Cemetery. He was the first in his family to graduate from high school. He graduated during the Great Depression. Despite the poverty brought by the Dust Bowl, he followed a recruiter's invitation and worked his way through Indiana University mopping floors at the student union. He lettered in football as a starting tackle weighing only 185 pounds. He was proud to note he played offense and defense in the age of leather helmets with no substitutions. He became the first college graduate in his family in 1939.

The attack on Pearl Harbor prompted him to leave his position with Phillips Petroleum to join the Army Air Corp where he served as a navigator/bombardier in the 315th Bomb Wing in WWII.

Colonel Stevens' military career spanned 28 years during which he flew several different types of planes throughout the world with him retiring as Director of Engineering for the U.S. Air Force.

After the loss of his first wife, he eventually returned to Texas, where he married his high school sweetheart.

Colonel Stevens was preceded in death by his first wife, Adna Madeline Bridges Stevens; his second wife, Inita Beaver Calder Stevens, and five brothers.

He is survived by sisters Nadine Parker and Mary Ellen Evans; children, William Bridges Stevens, Tandy Leone Stevens Gotschall and Riley Randolph Stevens; seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Lisa Marie Klingler-Stewart

Lisa Marie Klingler-Stewart passed away on September 26, 2008, in Bakersfield, California. She was born July 21, 1964, in Ventura, California.

She is survived by her mother and father, Sharon and Richard Klingler; brothers, Brad and Richie; children, Gina Padgett, Michael Guntermand and adopted son, Jeremy; stepchildren, Charles, Kathy and Sherman; husband, Jack Stewart; grandchildren, Kaylean, Nicole, Tiffany and Cody.

Steven Wendell Baxter Jr.

Steven Wendell Baxter Jr., 30, passed away on August 4, 2008, in Talihina. He was born in McAlester on July 10, 1978, to Steven Baxter and Odessa Marie Stepp Baxter Hamilton.

He worked as a firefighter.

He was preceded in death by grandparents, Lois Stepp, George Stepp and Jack Baxter.

Steven is survived by his parents; stepfather, Glenn Hamilton; stepmother, Lanie Baxter; daughters, Caitlyn and McKenzie, both of Wagoner, Tatum and Kobie, both of Savannah, and son, Jarit of Buffalo Valley; brother, Tony Stepp; nephew, Kayden Stepp; sister, Ally, grandmother; Marie Baxter; great-grandmother; Vera Stepp; step-grandparents, Ace and Joyce Hamilton; many aunts, uncles, cousins and friends.



Rebecca Lynn O'Donnell

Rebecca Lynn O'Donnell passed away on October 4, 2008. She was born on January 2, 1960, to Othel Hill and Doris Green Hill.

Rebecca, known locally as "Miss Becky," was a woman strong in spirit, especially in her battle with cancer. We were fortunate to have her in our lives and be touched by her.

Rebecca is survived by her husband, Robert Kyle O'Donnell; brothers, Gerald and Wesley; and sisters, Dorothy, Joyce and Deborah; children from a previous marriage to Jim Lee Turpin, Georgian, Faith and Jimmy Lee Turpin; grandchildren, Joshua, Chance, Cash, Kian, Kyle and Corinne.



Holiday festivities take place throughout the Choctaw Nation



Councilman Jack Austin greets Melinda Webb and Faye Cox at the Antlers Thanksgiving Dinner. Jack also wishes Faye a happy 81st birthday.



Assistant Chief Gary Batton welcomes Antlers' Mayor Brent Franks, Evelyn James and Fay Frazier.



Councilman Jack Austin visits with the tribal members in his district.



Atoka County families enjoy the food and fellowship at District 10's Thanksgiving lunch at the Choctaw Nation Community Center in Atoka.



Bethel area Choctaws came to their center ready to enjoy the evening of good food, music and visiting with their friends and family.



A large crowd gathered for Broken Bow's Thanksgiving dinner. Among those attending are, at left, Gloria



Bond and several young members of her family; above, Christopher Bailey and Louis Bond; and at right, Charles Watson with Councilman Mike Amos and Chief Greg Pyle.



Ellie Pickens and Maggie Mae Anderson are ready for a great potluck Thanksgiving meal at Coalgate.



Councilman James Frazier says hello to Cleo Sallee.



Jessie Frederick of Allen is pictured with Assistant Chief Batton and Councilman Frazier. The day of the luncheon, November 12, was Jessie's 84th birthday.



Joyce Wilcox and Councilman Frazier are pictured at the Crowder Thanksgiving luncheon.



Councilman Frazier visits with Lloyd Morris and Deddia Francis of Eufaula.



All smiles at the Crowder Center are Councilman Frazier, Philip Morris, Diane Morris and Lucille Jameson.



James Cox, Chief Pyle, Oscar Sutton, Margie Sutton, Willie Walley and Ann Cox visit in Durant.



Councilman Ted Dosh stops by to greet Kathern Standridge of Durant. Pictured with them are Kathern's niece, Shirley Houston, and C.O. Houston.



Betty Buchanan, granddaughter Savannah Wells and Carl Buchanan of Boswell attend Durant's dinner.



Not a chair was left empty at the Thanksgiving supper at Hugo. Pictured, left, are Councilman Perry Thompson with Bobby Ware and Barbara Hamill and her granddaughter, Alley Ivey. Above are Adrain Parker and his sisters, Ann Shanner and Shelea Moore. At right, Assistant Chief Batton is pictured with District 8 Jr. Miss Rebeckah Boykin, Little Miss Molly Durrence, and Sr. Miss Rachel Boykin.



Sue Helms holds 2-year-old granddaughter Ansley Helms while at the Idabel Thanksgiving dinner.

Councilman Hap Ward stops by to talk with A.L. Battiest before enjoying their Thanksgiving meal.

Chief Greg Pyle is pictured with Jenny Townsend and little Randall.



Councilman Bob Pate is pictured with Charles Lester, Sonny Billy and William King at McAlester.

Aline Ward and Sylvia Compton join in the Thanksgiving festivities at McAlester.

Enjoying their day at the McAlester center are Ada Lusk, Ann Smith and Virginia Latue.



Ready for good food at Smithville are Councilman Kenny Bryant, Deborah Winship, Chief Pyle, and in back, Darlene Rose.

Assistant Chief Batton visits with Minnie Edward and Evelyn Ludlow.

Julia Watson, Councilman Bryant, Leroy Wilson, and Julia's mom, Rhoda Sullivan.



Councilman Delton Cox welcomes Dr. Brandon Webb, president of Carl Albert College, and Ken and Wanda Ferguson to Poteau's Thanksgiving festivities.

While in Poteau, Choctaw Nation employee Cyndi Houser introduces Councilman Delton Cox to her daughter, Liz Belcher, and her son, Abe House.

Enjoying their day at Talihina are Davie Mae Russell, Councilman Kenny Bryant, and Melba Boman.



Councilpersons Delton Cox and Charlotte Jackson lead Choctaw singers in a few Choctaw hymns before the meal at Stigler's Thanksgiving dinner.

Assistant Chief Gary Batton and Councilperson Charlotte Jackson enjoy speaking with Dora Hansen at Stigler's Thanksgiving dinner.

Councilman Bryant says hello to Willis Melton and James Melton during Talihina's Thanksgiving dinner.



Basking in the aftermath of a great dinner at Stigler are Dr. Chris Mitchell, Carol Harris, John Jones, Councilperson Charlotte Jackson, Tammy Morrison, and Sherry McGuire.

Enjoying Stigler's Thanksgiving dinner are Lee James, Wanda Leach, Executive Director of CDIB/Tribal Membership Brenda Hampton, Della James and Vicky James.

It was a fun day in Talihina for Councilman Bryant and Dweena and Carl McIntosh.



Councilman Joe Coley sits for a bit with Miles and Ray White during the Thanksgiving dinner at Wilburton.



Councilman Joe Coley with Geraldine Isabell, Ruth Morgan, Esterline Atkins and Pauline Tom.



Chief Pyle visits with Matthew Kem at Wilburton.



Isaac Jacob and granddaughter Victoria Reyes are among the crowd at Wright City's center.



Judge Fred Bobb, Chief Greg Pyle and Tribal Chaplain Bertram Bobb attend the Thanksgiving get-together at Wright City.



Assistant Chief Gary Batton and Councilman Jack Austin are pictured with Princesses Alyssa Willis, Karen Crosby and Loren Crosby.



Josephine Gilmore and Miss Choctaw Nation Dayla Amos are pictured with Chief Pyle, Congressman Dan Boren, and Councilmen Mike Amos, Ted Dosh and James Frazier during the Harvest Fest at the Event Center in Durant.



Gathered at the October Fest are family members Willard and Sharon Polk, Red "Franch" Johnico, Gloria Melton, Natasha Polk, Nora Johnico, Amanda Melton, Lisa Melton and McKenzie Polk.



Representatives from Social Services and the CHR program held an Outreach Fest at the fairgrounds in Antlers for area citizens.

Fall events kick off holiday season



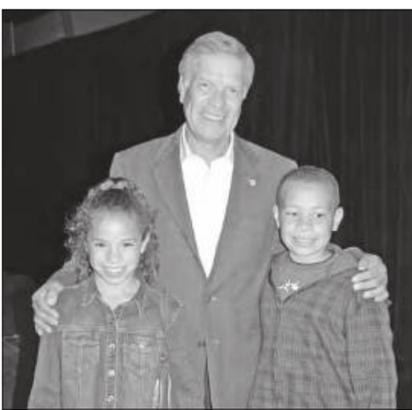
Councilman Delton Cox and Congressman Dan Boren say hello to Lizzie Carney during a dinner at the Poteau Community Center.



Councilperson Charlotte Jackson and R.O. White visit during the Poteau Impa Chito.



District 9 Outstanding Elders Lorene Blaine and Willie Walley wave as they drive by during the SOSU Homecoming Parade.



Shayla and Tré Harper have their picture taken with Chief Pyle at the Harvest dinner.

Gregory E. Pyle
Chief

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Face of defense: Soldier sings way through deployment

By Army Spc. Joseph Rebolledo, Special to America Forces Press Service (Reprinted with permission)

To cope with the stress of deployments, soldiers try to find different ways to entertain themselves and their comrades. Some play video games, watch movies or use their computers and the Internet. But things like that are usually done while "inside the wire" at a forward operating base or combat outpost.

But Army Spc. Jackie Moore, a Fox, Oregon, native doesn't confine his love of entertaining to the base, or even to his spare time. It's as easy as just singing to his fellow soldiers through the internal communications system of his vehicle.

As he sings, Moore dances

in the turret as the vehicle rolls through the streets of northern Baghdad. Moore, who has been in the Army for more than two years and serves as a Multinational Division Baghdad vehicle gunner with the 4th Infantry Division's Company B, 6th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, is well-known among his peers, noncommissioned officers and commander for his artistic abilities.

Moore said singing and dancing help keep morale up for himself and his fellow soldiers through their 15-month deployment. It also helps to keep his fellow soldiers awake and alert while on long, overnight combat logistics patrols.

"Why not try to make the best out of it? It keeps everyone awake, alert. I try to keep everyone's spirit up," he said.



Army Spc. Jackie Moore, a Fox, Oregon, native, prepares for a mission at Camp Taji, Iraq, before hitting the road in northern Baghdad. Moore is a vehicle gunner serving with Company B, 64th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Multinational Division Baghdad. His singing and dancing when on patrol make him popular among his fellow soldiers.

U.S. Army photo by Spc. Joseph Rivera Rebolledo, 4th Infantry Division

"It keeps me awake for the most part too, keeps me moving. And I don't really get a lot of time for (physical training), so I get it by dancing a little bit."

Moore's repertoire includes songs like "I Will Survive," others from Donna Summer,

and country music. However, he also has music of his own, making up lyrics to relate to current situations.

Music and dancing have been a part of his life since his childhood, Moore said. His children, Kyle and Heather, seem to have inherited their

musical abilities, he added, and his wife, Christina, also has joined in the dancing and singing routine.

"They love all kinds of music. I let them decide," Moore said.

Moore said he has a simple message for his fellow de-

ployed soldiers.

"Spend your time here bettering yourself," he said. "We are here for a purpose. Have fun. Take care of yourself. Keep positive. You are not out here for four or five years, you are here for 15 months.

His outlook on his mission is a positive one as he deals with the challenges of the deployment in his own unique way, his platoon sergeant said.

"Specialist Moore is a character," said Sgt. 1st Class Joe Bernal, a Fresno, California, native. "Everybody has their own way of dealing with things, especially being out on the roads for sometimes from 12 to 18 hours.

"Some people seem to enjoy it, especially when we have passengers in the back," he continued. "It keeps them awake and also keeps them entertained."

Dallas area Choctaws attend Native American Awareness Expo



Among the Choctaw families who attended the Native American Awareness Expo at the Will Rogers Memorial Center, Fort Worth, on December 2 are Mike Lee, Mackenzie and Kayla Bay, Kim Lee-Bay and Kathy Lee, with Chief Greg Pyle.



Pictured with Chief Pyle at the Expo are Gloria Garza and daughter Angela Carrillo. Also pictured is Gloria's sister, Bobbie Person.



Councilman Mike Amos visits with Jimmy Barcus while at the Expo. The annual event is sponsored by the DFW Native American Chamber of Commerce, providing information and hosting members of several tribes from around the country.

Choctaw student's dream comes true

Dear Choctaw Nation,

August 9, 2008, was one of the most favorite moments of my life and a dream come true - my son, Micah Anthony Montgomery, graduated from Texas Tech University. He didn't just graduate, he graduated top of his class as "magna cum laude" and a member of two honor societies, Phi Beta Kappa and National Society of Collegiate Scholars. He also remained on the President's or Dean's List for three years.

I'm writing not only to boast and brag about my son's accomplishments but to thank the Choctaw Nation for its contribution in making Micah's dreams come true.

Micah has been chosen one of 16 out of 352 students to do his master's in molecular pathology. While he is attending school, he will be serving as an intern for a research institute. He will have a large portion of his school expenses paid and will have a job



upon completion.

All this was accomplished due to the support of the Choctaw Nation and one very special person named Debbie Vietta. Debbie and I go back a total of five years when Micah began his journey to college. She and I have talked so much through the years we know each other's voices now. Debbie has been such a great help when I've needed her and I don't know what I would have done without all the help.

Micah is the first male to complete college in my family so you can only imagine how proud we are of him.

I'm sending this letter of appreciation to you to show my utmost gratification for all of Debbie's help, guidance and friendship. Thanks to all of you at Choctaw Nation for making this all come true.

Sherry Zafar

Jones Academy announces Super Students

Jazlynn Bernal and Desma Valdez were named the first/second grade Super Students by their teacher, Mrs. Wells. Both second grade students are returning students from last year. Jazlynn is the daughter of Shanna Bernal of Tulsa. Desma Valdez is the daughter of Amy Valdez of Eagle Pass, Texas, and the granddaughter of Susie Pepiakitah of Shawnee, Oklahoma.

Third grade student Shelby Tushka and fourth grade student Joseph Simpson were selected by Mrs. Martin to represent her class for the first nine weeks. Shelby, who loves to read, is the daughter of Michelle Tushka of Broken Bow, Oklahoma. Joseph, son of Jennifer Simpson of Connerville, Oklahoma, and grandson of Wanda and Kennie Justice has been an exemplary student.

Mr. Sirmans chose Delanie Lime and Bethany Willis to represent the fifth grade. Both students referred to the fun field trips they go on and the poems they learn. Bethany also enjoys the daily work of spelling, reading and math. Delanie is the daughter of Melissa Buffalomeat of Oklahoma City. Bethany is the daughter of Martha Henry of Philadelphia, Mississippi. Both have attended Jones Academy in the past.

Saul Martinez and Wesla Butler were named sixth grade Super Students. Saul is an earnest and personable student. Saul has been involved with the 4-H agricultural program. He is the son of Marshall Moore of Philadelphia, Mississippi. Wesla Butler is the daughter of Senora Manley of Tulsa, Oklahoma. Voted Best-all-



Around in the dorm last year Wesla is keeping up the good work.

The alternative school teachers, Mrs. Sanders and Mrs. Luker, chose Alicia Moore and Chelsea Marshall as their most notable nine weeks students. Alicia, a senior, entered Jones Academy as a first-grader in 1998. She is the daughter of Tina Moore of Norman, Oklahoma. Chelsea, a sophomore, is a first-year student at Jones Academy. She is the daughter of Sherry and William Marshall of Broken Arrow, Oklahoma.



YAB performs Skit at SOSU

Choctaw Nation Youth Advisory Board performed the Turnaround Skit at the 18th Annual Domestic Violence Candlelight Ceremony held at the Student Union Atrium/Loft at SOSU. This event is in partnership with the Office of Violence Prevention for National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Portrayed in the skit were the effects of violence, issues that the youth face and the possible outcomes of the wrong choices.



Choctaw members share historical information

Over 60 participants were in attendance at a statewide annual conference of the Friends of the Archives, Oklahoma History Center, on November 15. Barbara Grant, Ernest Hooser and D.J. Battisti gave presentations on Choctaw history, culture, and Wheelock Academy.



Pow Wow



The Anoli Dancers presented gifts to Assistant Chief Batton, Executive Director of Gaming Janie Dillard, and Senior Director of Gaming Tammye Gwin during the Choctaw Nation's annual Pow Wow, held November 29 in Durant's Event Center. The group also presented a letter from Ernest L. Stevens Jr., the Chairman of the National Gaming Association, extolling the Nation's support of the Anoli Dance Troupe who presented a cultural performance in Washington, D.C., as a part of the NIGA's Native American Heritage Month celebration. The dancers were invited for a repeat performance at the NIGA's National Conference in San Diego.

"I would like to appropriately acknowledge the Choctaw Nation, Mr. Michael Roberts and the Anoli Dance group for this service to all of Indian Country," writes Stevens. "I believe these efforts to educate the surrounding community, and now the national community, will stand true to the intent of Native American Heritage day. It is very important that all nationalities understand the highs and lows of history to really appreciate Indian country for who we are and why we are such a proud and united people."

A spectacular 400 dancers, some from as far away as Canada, entered the contest pow wow and participated in grand entries at both noon and 8 p.m. Twelve drums were in attendance. There were also more vendors than ever with jewelry, arts & crafts, food, clothing and specialty items. The Anoli Dancers pictured include T'ata Roberts, daughter of Michael Roberts and a teen fancy shawl dancer; Dennis Nevaquaya, chicken dancer; Michael Roberts, head of the Anoli Dance Troupe and a men's southern fancy dancer; Rebecca Roberts, Michael's wife and a jingle dress dancer; George "Cricket" Shields, men's northern traditional; and Tawny Hale, lady's fancy shawl dancer.

