

# Choctaw Nation has a commitment to education

The Choctaw Nation continues to work to enhance the quality of life for tribal members. Educational opportunities play an important role in this long-range plan. Head Start classes are offered throughout the ten and one-half counties that make up the boundaries of the Choctaw Nation, truly giving the children a "head start" on learning.

The new Child Care Development Centers in Bennington, Coalgate and Stigler combine the Head Start Program with a Choctaw Nation Day Care in the same facility, which also has a huge storm shelter to provide protection even in the worst weather conditions. The Council and I plan to construct additional Child Care Development Centers in Idabel and Durant in the near future, and to add a storm shelter at the remaining Head Start locations. Head Start programs are in Idabel, Durant, Atoka, Stigler, Hugo, Bethel, Broken Bow, Coalgate, Wilburton, McAlester,

Poteau, Antlers, Bennington and Wright City.

Education assistance is continued for Choctaws through the Johnson O'Malley (JOM) program at the public schools for students up through 12th grade. Those Choctaws who wish to go to college are encouraged to apply early for Higher Education scholarship assistance. The tribe also has Upward Bound and Upward Bound Math/Science programs. The Indian Adult Education Program provides an avenue of learning for those who did not complete high school. There is no cost for the GED program.

One of the most innovative and exciting educational opportunities in the tribe is the Language Program. By using technology such as the Internet, our historic language is being taught all over the world. Students learn how to read and write in Choctaw, and also learn about the history and culture of the tribe through the classes.



Education is an important step on the ladder to success. Just remember, in the words of Elmer Leterman, "No rule for success will work if you won't."

In closing, the response to a quote I used in a recent letter to the Choctaw people has prompted me to share the entire poem, "How Do You Live Your Dash." It has certainly inspired me to make my dash count.

## Chaplain's Corner

By the Rev. Bertram Bobb, Choctaw Tribal Chaplain

This is the season when we commemorate Easter – the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. I share with you two verses from Romans 8:10-11 to celebrate Easter:

"And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by the Spirit that dwelleth in you."

Happy Easter! Jesus is alive, He lives today.

God, pleased with the death (penalty for sin) and burial, raised up His only Begotten Son. When you accept this finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross, you are born again into the family of God as a babe in Christ.

We find in the Book of Galatians, chapter 5, food for spiritual growth. The Word of God is spiritual food for spiritual life.

I believe it is impossible to understand the Bible, or Christian living without understanding something of the person and the work of the Holy Spirit.

The Bible teaches us that God is in three Persons. God is One. But He is manifested in three Persons – God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit is coequal with God the Father and coequal with God the Son. The Bible also teaches that the Holy Spirit is a Person. He is never to be referred to as "it". He is not just an agent. He is not just an influence. He is a mighty Person.

The Bible tells us that God is omnipotent – that means that He has all power. The Bible tells us that He is omnipresent – that means that He is everywhere at the same time. The Bible tells us that He is omniscient – that means that He has all knowledge. He knows everything that you do – he watches you.

He hears the lies that you tell. He knows the thoughts and in-

terents of your heart. He knows what is in your mind, the things you think. The intents of your soul. He knows all about it. He knows everything. The Bible teaches that everything you do is written down in a book, some day it shall be brought out as evidence at the great judgment of God.

The Bible tells us something of the work of the Holy Spirit. What does He do? We are told in John 16:8 that He convicts men of sin: "And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment."

That's the reason that before you can come to Christ you must acknowledge that you are a sinner. You must repent of your sins. It is the Holy Spirit who convicts you of your sin. He makes you feel uncomfortable. He pricks your conscience. He makes you acknowledge and admit to yourself that you are a sinner, and then He gives you the strength and the power to turn from your sins.

There is not a person who can turn from his sins. There is not one who has the power – the will power – to give up sin in his life because sin has control. You cannot come to Jesus Christ unless the Holy Spirit convicts you.

Then the Bible teaches that when the Holy Spirit has convicted you of sin, when you are willing to give yourself to Christ, and when you come to Christ, He gives new life. That is the work of the Holy Spirit. The moment that you receive Jesus Christ as Savior, the Holy Spirit of God comes in and regenerates your life. He gives you new life.

The Bible also teaches that you are dead in sins and trespasses. Now this does not mean your body is dead. It's your soul that is dead. You have a body that is perfectly normal – it's perfectly alive. But your soul that lives in your body is going to live

forever – that part of you is dead toward God. It is called the Spiritual death. The moment you come to Jesus Christ, the Spirit of God brings the life of God into you and you begin to live. God is an eternal God – that means you will live as long as God lives and that is for eternity.

The Bible also teaches us that the Spirit of God produces the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance..."

Now these nine things are to characterize the life of every born again child of God. We are to be filled with love, we are to have joy, we are to have peace, we are to have longsuffering or patience, we are to be gentle and kind, we are to be filled with goodness, we are to have faith, there is to be meekness and we are to have temperance. But what do we find? We find in the average so-called Christian today the very opposite.

Everyone, before he comes to Jesus Christ, is dominated by one nature – the "old man" – which is called the flesh. The flesh, the world, the devil controls your life. You are controlled by your ego. You are controlled by yourself. The moment you receive Jesus Christ as your Savior, that self is put down and Christ is put on the throne in your life and the Spirit of God dominates your life.

One thing to remember – self is still there – sometimes hidden, sometimes quiet – waiting his opportunity and his chance to take over control again.

You have the power, or the will as a Christian to yield either to the flesh and live a fleshly carnal life or you have the power to yield to the Spirit, to live a Spirit-filled, Spirit-controlled life. Which life are you living? Are you living a life on the human plane, a fleshly carnal life in which there is little Bible reading, little prayer? Oh, you go to church, but there is no fellowship with Christ. There is no joy that you know a Christian should have. Your life is an up and down experience.

God never meant it to be that way. God meant the Christian life to be on the highest possible plane at all times bearing the fruit of the Spirit. What kind of fruit are you producing?

We have this promise in First John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Let us confess our sins and obey God and live a spirit controlled life. This is the kind of life the world is looking for – a testimony.

And remember to pray for wisdom and strength for the leaders of our Nations. Pray for our Spiritual leaders and our Service men and women.

## From the desk of Assistant Chief Mike Bailey ... Academics AND activities shape young minds

Academics are immensely important in the education of youth, but I also feel that the extracurricular activities students are involved in shape their future.

Social skills, personalities and levels of responsibility are enhanced with appropriate activities. Sports are an excellent way to form leadership abilities while also improving self-discipline.

Many of the young people in Choctaw Nation are involved in raising and showing stock – beef, swine and sheep. The tribe is proud to have representatives at the premium sales and be a participant in the bidding for these animals that have been so care-

fully tended throughout the previous year.

Chief Pyle and the Council and I are very supportive of these programs. Each of the students involved in the sales deserves to be commended. It is a difficult and time-consuming job to care for an animal – early morning feedings, groomings, pen cleanings, etc... Commitment and dependability are two qualities that are earned early in the process of raising a show animal.

The Choctaw Nation encourages all youth to strive to reach the highest level of education they can achieve, and to also perform all of their daily activities



to the best of their ability.

It is worthwhile to share the words of Marshall Field, "Always remember: The value of time, The success of perseverance, The worth of character, The power of kindness, The influence of example, and The obligation of duty."

## Choctaw Nation Head Start now recruiting

The Head Start program of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma is recruiting prospective students for the 2002-03 school year. Although the program accepts applications year-round, each year in the spring a concerted effort is made to identify children who might be eligible for the services provided by Head Start.

This program serves children from three to five years of age. Children who will be age three before September 1, 2002 are eligible to apply for possible placement in the center in their area. 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, although we do have

limited openings for over-income families as well.

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

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, Bethel, 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. 2373.

## Registration open for Toffa Ahosi Internet classes

Registration opens April 1, 2002 for two new classes beginning in May.

Toffa Ahosi (Almost Summer) Class I: "Choctaw Grammar/History and Culture" will be held 10 a.m. (Central Time Zone) on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Toffa Ahosi Class II: "Advanced Choctaw Grammar" will

be held at 1 p.m. (Central Time Zone) on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. This class is for language students who have completed "Intermediate Choctaw Grammar."

Choctaw Nation Internet Instructor Lillie Roberts will be conducting the 60-minute classes, both beginning on May

6 and ending June 28.

Registration will close on May 3. There will be no classes on Memorial Day, May 27.

Night classes will be offered in the fall.

To sign up, log on to [www.choctawnation.com](http://www.choctawnation.com) and click on the Language Classes link.

## PRINCESS PAGEANTS DISTRICT 7

The District 7 Princess Pageant will be held at 5 p.m. April 6 at Antlers High School Auditorium.

All contestants must have their applications in by March 27.

For more information or to obtain an application please contact the community center in Antlers, 580-298-3501, or Wright City, 580-981-7011.

## DISTRICT 9

The District 9 Princess Pageant will be 5:30 p.m. Friday, May 31 on the Courthouse Lawn during the Magnolia Festival in Durant. Deadline for applications is April 30.

For more information and an application, please contact Kay Jackson or Martha Polk at 1-800-522-6170 or 580-924-8280, ext. 2203.

**Councilman Jack Austin invites everyone to attend a Health Fair & Potluck Dinner at Wright City at 5 p.m. on April 26 at the Choctaw Community Center**

**Broken Bow Phase I Language Class**

A new Phase I Choctaw Language Class will begin April 1. The Monday night class will be held from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. in the Broken Bow Investment Center.

We would like to invite everyone of any age to attend the classes and learn our language.

For more information please call 580-584-2385.

**American Indian Awareness Day**

Eastern Oklahoma State College  
Student Union East Cafeteria  
12 noon • Thursday, April 25

Art Show for Norma Howard, Choctaw Artist  
– 12 noon to 3 p.m. –

Richard Adams, Choctaw Language Specialist  
Presentation of Choctaw history, culture and customs  
– 1 p.m. –

Indian Taco Sale  
– 12 noon to 2 p.m. –

Sponsored by  
Eastern's Native American Student Association

## Gospel Singing April 20 in Dallas

The Dallas Indian United Methodist Church is holding a Gospel Singing on April 20, featuring Ada Harmonettes, Deliverance, Gospel Triplets, Master's Touch and Two Rivers. Emcee will be Mel Gaines.

Dinner will be served from 5 to 6 p.m. and singing starts at 6:30 p.m. The Dallas Indian United Methodist Church is located at 1203 S. Hollywood in Dallas, Texas. For more information contact Cynthia Huffman, 972-907-8516.

## Annual Gospel Singing planned

The annual Gospel Singing at Angie Smith Memorial UMC, 400 S.W. 31 in Oklahoma City, is planned for April 27.

Supper will be at 5 p.m. with singing beginning at 7 p.m. Emcee for the event is Norris Samuels. Everyone is welcome to attend.

**FREE Chahta Hymnals to Churches**

Limit 12

Contact:  
Imogene Dawson  
P.O. Box 12721  
Oklahoma City, OK 73157

Limit 12

Individuals can purchase for \$7.00 each