By Shelia Kirven

Choc\textsuperscript{a}\textsuperscript{w} Nation was chosen as the premiere screening location of Marvel’s upcoming superhero series, Echo, held in Durant on November 3 at the District Theater.

Marvel Studios screened the first two episodes of the upcoming series Echo during Choc\textsuperscript{a}w Nation’s annual powwow. The episodes were presented by director Sydney Freeland, who was joined by Seth Fairchild, Executive Director of Cultural Services for Choc\textsuperscript{a}w Nation, for a Q&A conversation after the screening.

“It’s so exciting to be able to premiere Echo and it was extremely meaningful to myself to have this screening in Choc\textsuperscript{a}w Nation.” She continued, “One of the things we’re most excited about is being able to portray the Choc\textsuperscript{a}w culture hopefully in an authentic and exciting way.”

The series’ lead character, Maya Lopez, is Choc\textsuperscript{a}w. Her culture, legends and history of the Choc\textsuperscript{a}w tribe will be highlighted throughout the five episodes released January 10, 2024, exclusively on Disney+ and Hulu.

Lopez, aka Echo, played by Alqua Cox, Cheyenne and Latin American, was first introduced in the 2021 television series Hawkeye. Her story continues in Echo, where the character has hope for a new life from her previous effort of obtaining justice for her father.

Echo leaves the big city for her rural Oklahoma hometown to reconnect with her Native American roots, family and the community. She will be joined by Vincent D’Ozefro, portraying her “uncle”, Wilson Fisk (Daredevil), Zahn McClarnon as her father, and Charlie Cox as Matt Murdock (Spider-Man: No way Home and She-Hulk.) Also appearing will be Graham Greene (Dances with Wolves), Tantoo Cardinal (Killers of the Flower Moon), Devery Jacobs (Reservation Dogs), and Charlie Cox as Matt Murdock (Spider-Man: No way Home and She-Hulk.)

Chief Gary Batton said on his Facebook page, “I was like a little kid because of getting to partner with Marvel and Disney to highlight our language, culture and history in a series called Echo that will be coming out January 10 on Disney and Hulu. Yakoke to Sydney Freeland, who was the director, and to Stephen Judd, who was a writer and is from Broken Bow, gave so much detail and attention and respect to make sure everything was represented and said correctly. Yakoke to all of the staff who helped them on the sets during the filming. Go check out ECHO on January 10!”

Biskinik launches new website

Extra, extra, read all about it on our new and improved website. The Biskinik now offers a new online reading experience. Visit https://www.choctawnation.com/biskinik/ to check out the good news of the Choctaw Nation.

Speaking of the good news, do you know the legend of the Biskinik?

The Sapsucker and the Flicker: A Choc\textsuperscript{a}w Legend

According to Choc\textsuperscript{a}w legend, only two birds survived the Great Flood. A sapsucker and a flicker flew above the rising waters. Becoming weary, they flew as high as they could and perched upside down on the sky. As they hung there, their tail feathers were drenched by the surging waters. The waves caused the feathers to separate and become scissor-like.

God blessed the two birds for their bravery. The sapsucker was very grateful for his blessing. God decreed that he would always be a special friend to His people, the Choc\textsuperscript{a}w. The sapsucker was the friendliest of birds. It was accorded special treatment and became known as “the little Choc\textsuperscript{a}w news bird.”

The sapsucker lived near Choc\textsuperscript{a}w homes and let the people know when someone approached. This little bird accompanied hunting parties. It would tell the hunters when game was nearby and which direction they should go to find it. The sapsucker warned warriors of approaching enemies. When danger came near an encampment of Choc\textsuperscript{a}w warriors in the night, the sapsucker tapped the message on trees throughout the camp.

The Choctaw people continue to honor this bird. The tribal newspaper bears its Choc\textsuperscript{a}w name – Biskinik.
Giving is a Chocoway tradition to be proud of

Some of the great events that the Chief and I get to attend each holiday season are the tribal member dinners, where we get to meet and greet so many of our friends and family members. This is the perfect start to the holiday season for me and I am sure you are excited about the coming New Year! We wish you all a happy and prosperous New Year!

The audience watches as Cultural Outreach sings Choctaw hymns.

Visitors from Ireland were on hand filming for a documentary.


Evelynne Robison demonstrates traditional Choctaw pottery for visitors.

Kirk Hornsby and Deena Byrd demonstrate the use of textiles.

Just a Just Man

Leading to the story of the birth of Christ, we read in Matthew 1:18, 19: “Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: when as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being an upright man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privately.”

The doctrine of the Virgin Birth of Christ is based on this event. To understand this story, we must not forget that the story of Joseph’s life was completely different from those in modern Western society. Joseph was a just man. The way Joseph and Mary dealt with this dilemma was vastly different from what we would do today. Joseph and Mary followed the law and did not dare to bring forth their child without the marriage. This was a devastating dilemma for Joseph and Mary. If Joseph denied having a marital relationship with Mary, she would have been tried by law and sentenced to death. If Joseph acknowledged the child, he would have lost his reputation and become a public example, as mentioned in verse 19. This dilemma was unique in the history of mankind, and Mary and Joseph were faced with it quite suddenly.

This was an arranged marriage where the girl was very young and was promised to a young man chosen by the parents. This is very strange to the Western view because the bride and bridegroom had never met. Parents were responsible for the continuation of the family name, and it was their task to find a husband for their daughter.

The second stage was to ratify the arrangement made. This was called the betrothal. This was like our modern engagement party. At this point, the entire affair could be canceled if the bride or bridegroom objected. Once the betrothal is approved, the arrangement is considered fixed and cannot be canceled if the bride or bridegroom objects.

The third stage was the marriage service. After one year of preparation, the ceremony was held and festivities lasted for several days. This is the background of this story. It was during this year of betrothal that Joseph realized Mary was pregnant.

This was a devastating dilemma for Joseph and Mary. If Joseph denied having a marital relationship with Mary, she would have been tried by law and sentenced to death by stoning. According to Jewish law, Moses said in Deuteronomy 22:20–21, “If a thing be true, and the tokens of virginity be not found in the damsel, then shall they bring the damsel to the door of her father’s house, and the men of the city shall stone her with stones that she die: because she hath wrought deceitfully in Israel, to delude the whale in her father’s house: so shall thou put evil away from among you. Joseph was contemplating keeping this secret and somehow resolving this matter without having Mary stoned to death when the angel appeared and reassured him.

Verse 24 says, “But while he thought on these things, behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him in a光明 morning, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.”

One mistake from Joseph could have changed the gospel story. Joseph was a man and a just man.

The reason for the Choctaw Salute

The Choctaw Nation has announced its new flag pledge that was recently approved by the Tribal Council to be used at all Tribal meetings, officially following the U.S. Pledge of Allegiance. The pledge has been a long time in the making, and we, as a nation, should feel great pride in reciting the pledge and in being Choctaw proud. It is a simple pledge, but its meaning is great. The resilience of the Choctaw Nation and its sovereignty deserves no less. EveryChoctaw tribal member to recite this pledge loud and clear and let your voice be heard. The pride of the Choctaw Nation and its people will be heard in this pledge. I challenge you not to ignore. Our people will not placated. Our Chahta Spirit will live on long past us. This flag pledge is as follows: “I solemnly pledge that I will be a loyal Choctaw citizen and will always respect and honor the flag of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, whose members, characterized by tenacity, resourcefulness, and belief in God, will forever honor its representation of FAITH, FAMILY, and CULTURE.”

As I write this statement, I’m so appreciative of the action taken by the Tribal Council to approve this flag pledge for our Nation. Native American history under the U.S. Government has a violent and traumatic past. The Choctaw Nation was promised land, honored, and placated by a government who created the rules and did not abide by them. Still the Choctaw Nation persevered through it all – the lean times and the good. Our nation cannot be placated by a government who created the rules and did not abide by them. Still the Choctaw Nation is a sovereign nation governed by its people, and it is up to the people who have lived and volunteered with our associates who have volunteered with our associates with prayer, dedication, and service, to place a flag in the ground to honor our ancestors and great leaders.

This flag pledge is a reminder of where we have been and where we are going. The pride of the Choctaw Nation and its people will be heard in this pledge. I challenge every Choctaw tribal member to recite this pledge loud and clear and let your voice be heard. The pride of the Choctaw Nation and its sovereignty deserves no less. It is a simple pledge, but its meaning is great. The resilience of the Choctaw Nation should be the standard and recorded. It is the least we can do as a nation for the sacrifices made to be here today. "Yoleke and God Bless!"
Ohoy Ohoyo Vhleha: Influence of Matriarchs

By Christian Toews

The Choctaw Cultural Center in Durant, Oklahoma, hosted a meet and greet for the opening of a new temporary installment by Choctaw artist Brad Joe on October 31, 2023. Ohoyo Ohoyo Vhleha: The Influence of Matriarchs will be displayed until March 16, 2024.

According to Joe, he was taught how to bead by the women of his father’s family and was encouraged to pursue his artistic talents by his mother, grandmother and aunts. His sisters were among the many visitors who came to the meet and greet.

Joe has been incredibly proud of their brother and hoped that this was the first of many times his art would be displayed.

“I hope they can see the impact that my mother had on me and that they can adopt and do the same with their families,” said Joe.

His sisters were incredibly proud of their brother and hoped that this was the first of many times his art would be displayed.

“It was really special to learn about your family and get to know Brad better. I’ve known you for a while but I knew you from your work before, I think you knew who I was,” said Claire Young, curator at the Choctaw Cultural Center. “I’m very glad to get to display it here at the center. It’s beautiful and I’ve known you for a while and been a fan of your work before, I think you knew who I was,” said Claire Young, curator at the Choctaw Cultural Center. “I’m very glad to get to display it here at the center. It’s beautiful and I’ve known you for a while and been a fan of your work before, I think you knew who I was.”

Two of Joe’s sisters were among the many visitors who came to the meet and greet. His sisters were incredibly proud of their brother and hoped that this was the first of many times his art would be displayed.

“It was really special to learn about your family and get to know Brad better. I’ve known you for a while but I knew you from your work before, I think you knew who I was,” said Claire Young, curator at the Choctaw Cultural Center. “I’m very glad to get to display it here at the center. It’s beautiful and I’ve known you for a while and been a fan of your work before, I think you knew who I was.”

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Joe has been incredibly proud of their brother and hoped that this was the first of many times his art would be displayed.

“My sister was creative in drawing and painting. I also began to be creative through her being around. My sister was creative in drawing and painting. I also began to be creative through her being around.”

The exhibition honors the strong women who shaped Brad Joe into the multifaceted artist he is today. His photography, beadwork and music can be seen and heard at the exhibition.

“My sister was creative in drawing and painting. I also began to be creative through her being around. My sister was creative in drawing and painting. I also began to be creative through her being around.”

Joe said he hopes that through this exhibit, people can take away the importance of honoring the women in their families.

“The number two industry in the state of Oklahoma today is our aerospace and aviation industry,” said Lt. Governor Grayson Ardies, and members of the Federal Aviation Administration. “This one-time payment is available to eligible sovereignty and tribal members break ground where a new Emerging Aviation Technology Center will be located.

Right: A drone is on display in action during the Emerging Aviation Technology Center groundbreaking.

Below: Brad Joe’s family view his exhibit during the meet and greet at the Choctaw Cultural Center.

Photos by Christian Toews

Above: City, state and federal officials, Choctaw Nation Leadership and tribal members break ground where a new Emerging Aviation Technology Center will be located.

The Choctaw Nation holds groundbreaking ceremony for new Emerging Aviation Technology Center

By Christian Toews

Durant, Okla. (October 24, 2023) – The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma (CNO) held a groundbreaking ceremony for the Emerging Aviation Technology Center (EATC) on Tuesday, October 24. The state-of-the-art facility, located near Redden, Okla. will serve as a hub for cutting-edge research, development, testing, and evaluation for manned and unmanned aerial system technologies.

The Choctaw Nation Chief Gary Batton recognized the significance of the groundbreaking ceremony stating, “I truly believe this is going to be the gateway to the future for us, from manufacturing all the opportunities that we desperately need here in southeastern Oklahoma, we believe this is the spark that’s going to grow our economy.”

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Below: Brad Joe’s family view his exhibit during the meet and greet at the Choctaw Cultural Center.

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Above: City, state and federal officials, Choctaw Nation Leadership and tribal members break ground where a new Emerging Aviation Technology Center will be located.
Representatives of the Choctaw Nation, including District 10 Council Member Anthony Dillard, pay their respects to Choctaw hymns—a humbling and emotional experience to participate in.

The Choctaw Nation Leadership recently visited France, where we were honored to participate in the 105th-year celebration of the battle at Saint Mihiel-et-Verdun. Our Choctaw Code Talkers were involved in a war that liberated the town in WWI. Etienne-a-Arnes. Our Choctaw Code Talkers were involved in a war that liberated the town in WWI. Etienne-a-Arnes. Our Choctaw Code Talkers were involved in a war that liberated the town in WWI.

Edgel Samuel is Choctaw Nation’s First Language Speaker of the Month

Edgel Samuel recently graduated from William Jewel College, Magna Cum Laude, in Liberty, Missouri with a Bache- lor of Science in Chemistry. He is the son of Chris and Nicole Engle-
dow. Eli Engledow graduated from William Jewel College, Magna Cum Laude, in Liberty, Missouri with a Bache-
lor of Science in Chemistry.

Eli Engledow is a 2023 AARP Oklahoma Native American Elder Honors recep-
tion. The medals were presented to the honorees by AARP State Prin-
cipal, Speaker. Mr. Edgel Samuel as this month’s First Language

District 10

Melvin Tom is Veteran of the Month

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December 2023 Panther Month – Ke Chis Hwêyi

December 2023 Panther Month – Ke Chis Hwêyi

The Choctaw Nation honored its veterans and Native American Elders at the 2023 AARP Oklahoma Native American Elder Honors. Each year, the Nation recognizes Chahta elders for their service and shares our gratitude for their contributions.

The ceremony was held in Oklahoma City at the First Americans Museum. The floor-to-ceiling windows in The Hall of The People overlooked the FAM Mound, a 21st-century mound that pays tribute to the Mound. The FAM Mound, a 21st-century mound that pays tribute to the

Melvin Tom is Veteran of the Month

Eli Engledow is a 2023 AARP Oklahoma Native American Elder Honors

The 15th annual AARP Oklahoma Native American Elder Honors was established to memorialize the contributions the Native American Elders have made to our communities. The program includes a performance by the Oklahoma Fancy Dancers, a presentation of the Dr. John and Tewanna Edwards In-Memoriam Tribute, a presentation of the Dr. John and Tewanna Edwards Honors, and a performance by the Oklahoma Fancy Dancers.

The program included a performance by the Oklahoma Fancy Dancers, a presentation of the Dr. John and Tewanna Edwards Leadership Award to Carmelita Wamego Skeeter, and the presentation of 47 medals to the 2023 AARP Oklahoma Native American Elder Honors recipients.

The floor-to-ceiling windows in The Hall of The People overlooked the FAM Mound, a 21st-century mound that pays tribute to the Oklahoma tribes who descended from moundbuilders. The floor-to-ceiling windows in The Hall of The People overlooked the FAM Mound, a 21st-century mound that pays tribute to the Oklahoma tribes who descended from moundbuilders.

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**BISKINIK**

**DEC. 2023 Panther Month – Koi Chito Hvshi BISKINIK 5**

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**Editor’s note:** Views and opinions in reader-submitted articles are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the Choctaw Nation.
The most notable trade road in the Southern part of the Choctaw Nation was the Natchez Trace, which began in the southeastern part of the country, just south of the southernmost crossing of the Tombigbee River to the Muscogee Nation. In 1813, the Treaty of Fort St. Stephens was signed, giving the Choctaw Nation control over the lands they occupied. The Choctaw Nation has two premier trout fishing destinations. The Choctaw Nation has two premier trout fishing destinations. The Choctaw Nation has two premier trout fishing destinations. The Choctaw Nation has two premier trout fishing destinations. The Choctaw Nation has two premier trout fishing destinations. The Choctaw Nation has two premier trout fishing destinations.

The history and archaeological evidence show that Choctaw ancestors have lived in this region of Alabama for thousands of years (Thompson 2019). In the late 18th century, Choctaw leaders began to interact with European traders, exchanging goods and information. By the early 19th century, the Choctaw had established a strong trade network with Europeans, particularly with the Spanish. This trade network provided the Choctaw with valuable resources, including manufactured goods and agricultural products.

The Choctaw Nation has a rich history of culture and traditions. The Choctaw people have a long history of fishing, which is still an important part of their way of life today. Fishing is not just for the summer; it is a year-round activity that provides opportunities for socializing and recreation.

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Wells turns 90

Rosa Bryhanah Hess, the last member of a family of 91, died on September 16, 2023, at 90. She retired from teaching in 1987, and she had been a teacher for 35 years. She was the wife of the late Albert Hess, a retired schoolteacher for 35 years. In her later years, she enjoyed traveling, gardening, and spending time with her family.

Price has played produced

Playwright and tribal member Bill Price of the Choctaw Nation has produced a play titled "Here’s Ridge" for the annual Native American Film Festival in Los Angeles. The play follows the story of a father and daughter navigating life in the broken homes of the ridge. It is a touching story about the challenges faced by Indigenous youth in contemporary society.

Englewood earns bachelor’s from Jewel

Eli Englewood graduated from Jewel School, a private school in Oklahoma, on May 1, 2023. He is the son of Chris and Nicole Englewood of Asotin, Washington, and the grandson of Stewart and Victoria Craft of Atlanta, Georgia. He is a student at Jesuit College Preparatory School in Dallas, Texas, majoring in the sciences.

Cayden David Rosenrantz

Cayden David Rosenrantz was born on November 1, 2003, and he is currently a junior at Independence High School in Independence, Missouri. He is a member of the Missouri Western State University baseball team. He is a student at the University of Missouri, Kansas City, and he is majoring in business administration.

Boaumans receives from Purdue

Michelle Wieson Boaumans is a professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics at Purdue University. She is a member of the American Association of Agricultural Economists and the American Economic Association. She is a recipient of the American Academy of Political and Social Science's Distinguished Research Award.
Michael Dean Patekoske
Michael Dean Patekoske, 69, passed away Sept. 10, 2023, in Fritch, Texas, due to natural causes. He was preceded in death by his parents; brothers Ronald Akers, Kenneth Akers, and sisters-in-law Sandy Akers and Pamela Akers. He is survived by his wife, Patricia Patekoske; his daughters, Sherry Loman and husband Darrell, and Jackie Akers and husband John; his grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

Mardie Gail Hernandez
Mardie Gail Hernandez, 87, passed away Oct. 1, 2023, in El Dorado, Arkansas. She was preceded in death by her parents; brothers Ronald Akers, Kenneth Akers, and sisters-in-law Sandy Akers and Pamela Akers. She is survived by her husband; her daughter, Sherry Loman and husband Darrell, and Jackie Akers and husband John; her grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

Wanda Morrison
Wanda (Whitehead) Morrison, 77, passed away Sept. 29, 2023, in Muskogee, Oklahoma. She was preceded in death by her parents; brothers Ronald Akers, Kenneth Akers, and sisters-in-law Sandy Akers and Pamela Akers. She is survived by her husband; her daughter, Sherry Loman and husband Darrell, and Jackie Akers and husband John; her grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

Doyd Dean Akers
Doyd Dean Akers, 77, passed away Oct. 21, 2023, in Sulphur, Oklahoma. He was preceded in death by his parents; brothers Ronald Akers and Glenn Akers; and great-grandparents Marion and John Loman. He is survived by his wife, Alice Akers; his daughter, Sherry Loman and husband Darrell, and Jackie Akers and husband John; his grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

Hazel Faye Larkins
Hazel Faye Larkins, 82, passed away Aug. 2, 2023, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Stanley Loman; and her son, Donald Loman. She is survived by her daughter, Diane Loman and husband; her grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

John David Parker
John David Parker, 70, passed away Oct. 14, 2023, in Talihina, Oklahoma. He was preceded in death by his parents; his wife, Paula Parker; and his sister, Darla Bill. He is survived by his children; his grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

Jacob Page
Jacob Matthew Page, 22, passed away Sept. 9, 2023, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. He was preceded in death by his parents; his siblings; and many other relatives and friends. For the full obituary, please visit Cemetery Funeral Home.

Madie Ann Stubbeledie
Madie Ann Stubbeledie, 90, passed away Sept. 23, 2023, in Quinton, Oklahoma, due to natural causes. She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband; her children; her grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews. For the full obituary, please visit Parker Funeral Home.

Justin Andrew Ratteeree
Justin Andrew Ratteeree, 27, passed away Sept. 10, 2023, in Talihina, Oklahoma. He was preceded in death by his parents; his siblings; and many other relatives and friends. For the full obituary, please visit Serenity Funeral Home.

Samantha Hoyes
Samantha Adkins Hoyes, 27, passed away Sept. 5, 2023, in Sulphur, Oklahoma. She was preceded in death by her parents; her siblings; and many other relatives and friends. For the full obituary, please visit River Funeral Home.

Norman David Micco
Norman David Micco, 79, passed away Sept. 13, 2023, in Sulphur, Oklahoma. He was preceded in death by his parents; his siblings; and many other relatives and friends. For the full obituary, please visit Calvary Chapel.

Gloria Pat Marvin
Gloria D. Marvin, 73, passed away Aug. 30, 2023, in Sulphur, Oklahoma. She was preceded in death by her parents; her siblings; and many other relatives and friends. For the full obituary, please visit Calvary Chapel.

Opioid Policy
Opioid submissions are for Choctaw Nation tribal mem-
bers only. The Biskinik will only accept notices from funer-
ary homes. Full-length handwritten notices will not be accepted. The Biskinik reserves the right to edit notices. Written notices received will be searched online for official obituaries. Notices will be formatted and online notices may be edited to fit the layout of the newspaper. For the full obituary, please visit Biskinik.

Ruby Mae Theophiliadis
Ruby Mae Theophiliadis, 74, passed away Sept. 24, 2023, in Sulphur, Oklahoma. She was preceded in death by her parents; her siblings; and many other relatives and friends. For the full obituary, please visit Serenity Funeral Home.

Ethan Dina Parker
Ethan Dina Parker, 18, passed away Sept. 29, 2023, in Sulphur, Oklahoma. He was preceded in death by his parents; his siblings; and many other relatives and friends. For the full obituary, please visit Cater Funeral Home.

John Wrathel \n
Ethan Dina Parker, 18, passed away Sept. 29, 2023, in Sulphur, Oklahoma. He was preceded in death by his parents; his siblings; and many other relatives and friends. For the full obituary, please visit Cater Funeral Home.

Gloria D. Marvin, 73, passed away Aug. 30, 2023, in Sulphur, Oklahoma. She was preceded in death by her parents; her siblings; and many other relatives and friends. For the full obituary, please visit Calvary Chapel.
CNO hosts 18th Annual Choctaw Powwow

DURANT, Okla. – The 18th Annual Choctaw Powwow was the first event of November’s Native American Heritage Month scheduled for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma (CNO). Regarded as one of the nation’s largest and best powwows, it ran November 3 – 5 at the Choctaw Event Center.

The Choctaw Powwow offered one of the largest purses in the nation, including $1,000 in some dance categories and $10,000 for first-place drum competitors.

Kerry L. Steve, Choctaw Cultural Center director of arts said, “In past years, dancers represented 65 tribes from across the United States and Canada. It has become an international event with live internet coverage reaching almost 700,000 views in more than 100 countries.”

Photos by Mallory Jackson and Sheila Kirven
BISKINIK 10 December 2023 Panther Month - Koi Chito Hvshi

Task Force's report will help strengthen the community-centered law enforcement that have what they need to do their job and Secretary Deb Haaland. “I am grateful for the and our nation's natural resources safe,” said complex crimes and keep personnel, visitors is critical in helping the Department realize Interior Department work every day to ensure Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, programs effectively continue to provide for holistic care—treating the body, mind and them for sure,” Tara said. She also looks up to, gives [her] strength.”

Choctaw traditions helped strengthen her cul- home. Seeing the dancers and taking part in taw heritage but trying to maintain a link with traditional culture. She also learned to make bead- discover my own roots.”

More than a Caregiver

WASHINGTON — The Department of the Interior released new report outlining improvements to low enforcement programs.

The Department’s Law Enforcement Task Force (LETF) was established in 2001 by the House and led by Deputy Secretary Tommy Beaudreau. The LETF is a national institution within the Department of the Interior that works to improve the work of local and tribal law enforcement agencies and is dedicated to identifying and implementing strategies to reduce crime and enhance public safety by working with communities to address their unique law enforcement needs.

The LETF has worked with communities across the country to develop programs that provide training and resources to law enforcement agencies and to promote community engagement and partnerships. The Department’s Law Enforcement Task Force (LETF) was established in 2001 by the House and led by Deputy Secretary Tommy Beaudreau. The LETF is a national institution within the Department of the Interior that works to improve the work of local and tribal law enforcement agencies and is dedicated to identifying and implementing strategies to reduce crime and enhance public safety by working with communities to address their unique law enforcement needs.

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When it comes to choosing or picking one vaccine over another, Burris says that besides injections, there are healthy habits that you can use in your daily life that can help protect you. "It’s been said that 2/3 of all the calories you eat are from what you choose to eat," he said.

"I think that’s always just a very thoughtful, cautious approach to taking care of your health," Burris said.

"And yes, vaccines are the best defense you can have against these viruses. I’ve had several patients that have been vaccinated and have recovered from these illnesses. So if you’re not vaccinated, you’re not protected," he said.

"It’s important to know that vaccines can prevent serious illness and even death. They have helped us eradicate diseases like smallpox and measles. It used to be a serious respiratory illness that affected children. But once the vaccine was developed and widely used, it was no longer a concern.

"Many preventable diseases are dangerous and can cause lasting side effects. It’s important to understand the importance of vaccines.

"There is proof that vaccines do not cause autism. A study published more than 20 years ago first suggested that vaccines cause the disorder, but it has been disproved.

"Vaccines prevent many diseases that used to make people very sick. Now that vaccines are available, you can prevent these diseases. There are many benefits to the vaccines themselves. It used to be a serious respiratory illness that affected children but once the vaccine was developed and widely used, it was no longer a concern.

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BISKINIK 12 December 2023 Panther Month - Koi Chito Hvshi

Beadwork is a fitting metaphor for tribal culture. As a child, Jula attended the Kvlli Tuklo United Methodist Church just outside of Oklahoma City, and at home, her father spoke Creek. Today, Jula speaks mostly Creek, with English and Choctaw words and terms and language play crucial roles in her life.

"It's what I grew up with, mainly," said Jula. "It's who I am, and who I was raised by." While she was aware of Native American culture through crafts, she did not pursue beadwork until 2010, when the CVG (Choctaw Tribal gift) gave her mother a pair of earrings. Jula learned to bead using her mother's pattern book, and before long, she was beading on her own.

Beadwork is more than a skill, though. It's something that Jula has to create for herself. "It makes me feel a sense of resiliency," she said. "It really is important to have that kind of creative outlet, and that's why I'm still doing it." Beadwork is a way for Jula to connect with her ancestors and teach them to future generations. Today's artists are working to reclaim and culture keepers passed away, often making it more challenging to pass on beadwork.

Today's artists are working to reclaim what was lost for generations. The Choctaw Nation has launched the Choctaw Artist Registry, a digital database of Native American artists who met the highest standards of excellence in their respective fields. The registry is a way for artists to showcase their work and connect with others who share their passion for beadwork.

"I love being able to help my friends in any way that I can, whether that be making something for them or sharing my art," said Jula. "It's so rewarding to see others being so strong-willed and strong all the time. It's inspiring." Beadwork has taught Jula to be patient and to work hard, just like her ancestors.

To learn more about Choctaw artists, visit the Choctaw Artist Registry or see what classes are available at the Choctaw Cultural Center.

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Chocotaw Nation Photo

Choctaw Paint Press

Funds from Choctaw Development Fund will help build new terminal, lead in drone program at McAlester Airport.

MCALESTER, Okla. – The Choctaw Development Fund donated $250,000 to construct a $2.7 million state-of-the-art terminal for the City of McAlester that will enhance overall travel experience for residents and visitors.

"These funds will be instrumental in the partnerships with the other state, federal and local funding sources to make this project possible," said the City of McAlester, Choctaw Nation and the Oklahoma Aerospace Commission related the project to growing new businesses and jobs. The airport will play a critical role in the region's economic development and serve and protect their cultures.

The future of Indigenous culture depends on people having access to the tools and materials they need to create. Beadwork is a fitting metaphor for tribal culture. As a child, Jula attended the Kvlli Tuklo United Methodist Church just outside of Oklahoma City, and at home, her father spoke Creek. Today, Jula speaks mostly Creek, with English and Choctaw words and terms and language play crucial roles in her life.

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There are countless ways tribal members can share their culture and heritage with others. Beadwork is a fitting metaphor for tribal culture. As a child, Jula attended the Kvlli Tuklo United Methodist Church just outside of Oklahoma City, and at home, her father spoke Creek. Today, Jula speaks mostly Creek, with English and Choctaw words and terms and language play crucial roles in her life.

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More than a leader

By Kellie Matherly

Today, Gary Batton looks the third-oldest Native American to hold the office of Chief of the Choctaw Nation. He has always been a leader in the Choctaw Nation, and his work has been dedicated to the betterment of the tribe.

Batton was born, grew up, and was raised in Talihina, Oklahoma. His parents were Joe and Alice Batton. Joe committed suicide while their father was in the service. He was a prisoner of war during WWII, where he was forced to endure terrible conditions and was held for four years. Batton was a prisoner of war as well.

As a child, he worked with his grandmother, Sarah, who was full-blood Choctaw. Sarah was an important figure in Gary's life. She instilled in him a strong work ethic and taught him the value of education.

By Kellie Matherly

One of the earliest lessons in finding that water when you've been running, and it's beautiful it is for them to be here standing in front of me right now."

As the Executive Director of Health, he accomplished one of his greatest goals of building the first tribally-funded health facility in the U.S. The hospital at Talihina was a major part of Batton's overall vision for the Choctaw health system, a vision that began at age 16, when he had a case of mono that was initially misdiagnosed as cancer.

"I thought, I'm not going to have a health care system that tells a 16-year-old kid that they're going to get cancer and without even coming to see me. That's not my job. That's why we have the first tribal health system in America," he said.

At age 30, he didn't know anything about health care or medicine, but he knew he wanted to change the system. He knew he wanted to do something for the people. A major part of his work was establishing the health system.

"You hope. You are blessed beyond measure," he said.

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Tribal Council approves Official Choctaw Flag Salute

By Kendra Germany-Wall

On October 14, 2023, the Choctaw Nation Tribal Council approved the Resolution adopting the Official Flag Salute of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

The Salute honors the Choctaw flag and will immediately follow the U.S. Pledge of Allegiance at official meetings.

The Pledge to Chahta reads:

Chahta ola i uhchipa onisqechi li, yooyi oot Chihouma i cimmi hoosot bampa bow shuhi cho. Bep staged chohto choot oot YEMMIL CHERAMAHYWA, MI-CHA AIDNVIPEPES ya oot o ohiho hoositohi heli cho.

The English translation states:

I salute the Flag of the Choctaw Nation; a nation characterized by belief in God, integrity, and resilience, whose members will forever honor its representation of FAITH, FAMILY, AND CULTURE.

The Resolution, proposed by Chief Gary Batton and introduced by Councilmember Ron Perry, was approved unanimously during the October 14 meeting.

The Choctaw Flag is purple and features the Choctaw Nation’s Great Seal, an important image to the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

“A reminder of our history and traditions is on display in everything we do at the Choctaw Nation through our Great Seal. On October 16, 1860, the Choctaw General Council, led by Chief George Hudson, passed an act at the regular annual session held at Broken Arrow, that created the Great Seal of the Choctaw Nation, and Chief Batton.

“The Great Seal of the Choctaw Nation, which consists of an unbroken row symbolizing a peaceful Nation, encompassing three arrows honoring our three Chiefs Pushmataha, Mushulatubbe, and Apukshunabbe; and a smoking pipe-hatchet that represents the desire of the Choctaw people to establish beneficent alliance with neighbors, but also perhaps prowess. The seal has been used on all official papers of the Choctaw Nation since 1860. The seal is a guide for visitors to the Nation to see what we stand for, our traditions and culture.”

Choctaw Nation celebrated its Inaugural Flag Day on October 16, 2023. Since then, tribal members have celebrated Choctaw Flag Day by representing the Choctaw Flag Across the world. Below are a few photos from previous years.

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December 2023

Page 1: Marvel Studios screens the first two episodes of the up- coming series Echo during Choctaw Nation’s annual Powwow.

Page 10: CNO receives over $2.3 million in funding to support Native American victims of intimate partner violence.

Page 12: Learn how Jula Harjo uses her voice and art to speak up for Native communities everywhere.

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Stay Connected to the Nation

CHOCTAWNATION.COM

Page 1: Biskinik Mission Statement: To serve as the source of information for Choctaw Nation tribal members by delivering community news through a variety of communication channels.

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