



All-in-One Membership Card

- 1 The new card may be used as a photo ID when traveling through airports, at tribal facilities, state tag offices and federal buildings.
- 2 On the front, lower left-hand side of the new card, is the information that replaces the old Tribal Membership card.
- 3 The back of the new card will replace the Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood, or CDIB card.
- 4 The new card adds the distinction of "Choctaw Veteran" for members who have served in the military.

New All-in-One Adult Membership Card Front View



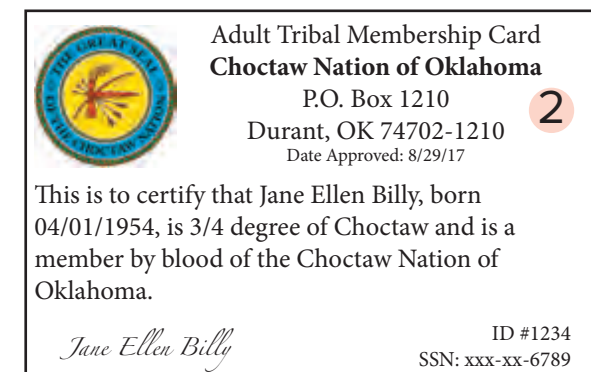
New All-in-One Adult Membership Card Back View



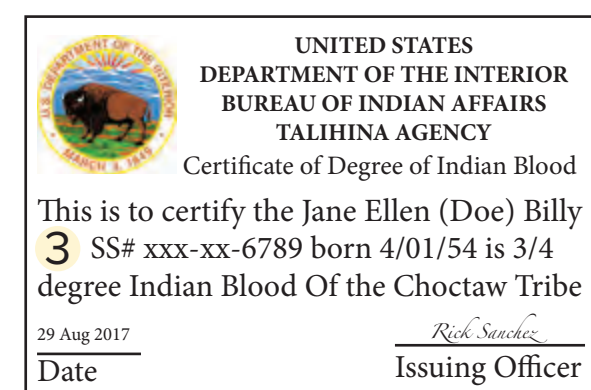
Old Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Photo ID Card



Old Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Photo ID Card



Old Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood Card



December 2017 Issue

Choctaw Nation to Begin Issuing New Cards January 1

by APRYL MOCK

The Choctaw Nation will begin issuing new cards that will replace the Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood, Tribal Membership and Photo ID cards beginning Jan. 1, 2018.

Instead of three separate cards, photo ID, CDIB and tribal membership will now be present on the same card.

The Choctaw Nation decided to make the change in order to simplify the process and make it more convenient for tribal members, according to Terry Stephens, Director of Membership.

The new cards will be acceptable forms of photo ID for airports, tribal facilities, state tag offices and federal buildings.

To receive the new card, tribal members must be verified, meaning all correct birth and death certificates dating back to an original enrollee, as well

as any additional required documents in an individual's lineage must be on file. In addition, a photo ID must be provided.

Acceptable forms of photo ID include current state driver's license, state issued ID card, employee photo ID, military ID, passport or school issued photo ID.

When submitting applications, the membership department asks that you include a "passport style" photo.

It should be from the shoulders up only and on a blank or neutral colored background. Faxed or copied photos will not be used.

Photos must be delivered in person, emailed with application or sent via traditional mail services.

If emailing a photo, please make sure it is high resolution.

Photos from older camera phones, or old photos that have been scanned

are not recommended.

The Membership Department asks that you write your name and date of birth on the back of your photo.

Members will also need a photocopy of their social security card.

The new ID will expire after five years, (this does not affect membership status) at which time the photo and information should be updated.

If you lose your card before it expires, one replacement card will be issued during the five-year period.

Exceptions to this include legal name change, adoption, change of address or name change due to marriage or divorce. Legal documentation will be required for any of these instances.

Children under the age of 14 will be issued a CDIB/Membership card with no photo. Once the child turns 14, they will be eligible to receive the

photo ID as well.

CDIB/Membership cards will also be given to adults who do not provide a photo.

For members who already have their CDIB, Membership and photo ID, it will take approximately one to two weeks for their new card to arrive, provided the applicant is verified.

For individuals applying for the first time, the card will be issued once the application has been approved by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

The Membership Department may be contacted via email at cdib-membership@choctawnation.com or via traditional mail at P.O. Box 1210, Durant, Ok, 74702.

Alternatively, members may visit the Membership Department office, which is open 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The Membership Office is located at 529 N. 16th Ave., Durant, Ok, 74701.

New All-in-One CDIB, Membership, Photo ID Checklist

- Photo ID (Driver's license, Military ID, Passport, Etc.)
- Passport style photo, (from the shoulders up, on a blank or solid colored neutral background) with name and birthday written on back.
- Photocopy of Social Security card

Wright City Choctaw Nation Head Start Opens Doors to Community

by CHARLES D. CLARK

The Choctaw Nation continued to facilitate the growth of McCurtain County when it added a new head start facility in Wright City on Nov. 13.

Chief Gary Batton said, "We've got a new community center and a new head start, and to see the little kids go through and enjoy it, that's our future and that's why our Council does what it does."

The new Wright City facility is located in District 7, which is represented by Councilmember Jack

Austin Sr. He said, "It's a great day... We're making an impact like this all across the 10 ½ counties."

A Ribbon Cutting Ceremony officially opened the doors of Wright City's Choctaw Nation Head Start on Nov. 13. Local community leaders were on hand, as well as the Choctaw Nation Tribal Council, staff, Choctaw parents and elders and children who will be using the facility and program.

Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. emceed the event, the opening prayer was delivered by Council Chaplain Jennifer Woods

and Council Speaker Kenny Bryant introduced members of the Council.

Located at 5704 Rodeo Grounds Rd. in Wright City, the Choctaw Nation Head Start is a 7,352-square-foot, two-classroom facility. The classrooms will accommodate a total of 34 students and include the latest technology, such as high-definition SmartBoards, automatic LED lighting and energy-efficient HVAC.

The facility also houses a FEMA compliant safe room for students and staff, a full commercial

kitchen, full-height windows for natural lighting and nature views, a resource room for parents and all new playground equipment.

The total cost for the facility is \$4.3 million. According to Chief Batton, the new head start and community center will "create dollars for the community."

Councilmember Austin also noted that the staff had been looking forward to getting into the building and using it to its full potential for some time. "And now it's a reality," he said.



by Katy Pickins

Wright City is now home to a state-of-the-art head start facility. The doors were opened with a ribbon cutting ceremony on Nov. 13. Chief Gary Batton, Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr., District 7 Councilmember Jack Austin Sr., community leaders, children, parents and staff members were in attendance to celebrate the new addition to the Wright City community.

C E L E B R A T E

Following Jesus by Serving Others This Christmas Season



Chief Gary Batton

is why several of the Choctaw Nation programs are directed toward improving health and offering assistance in a variety of ways.

Choctaw Nation programs see to many of the needs of tribal members and they go a step further during the holidays.

The Outreach department distributes food vouchers to those tribal members who otherwise wouldn't have a good holiday meal.

The vouchers, presented at both Thanksgiving and Christmas, provide enough for a ham or turkey and all the trimmings.

Tribal funds are also allocated every year to purchase Christmas gifts for approximately 1,026 Choctaw children living in the tribe's 10 1/2 counties, who met the program's income guidelines.

I'm thankful for the Outreach programs and the dedication of the staff to ensure all are distributed by Christmas and the children have a gift to open.

During the summer, before school starts, the Outreach group begins a shoe drive.

Later in the fall, they hold a coat drive, so all the children in the program can start school with a new pair of shoes and have a warm jacket for the winter months.

Tribal services have far-reaching arms in our

mission to offer opportunities for growth and prosperity.

We must always remember the importance of taking care of one another. I feel blessed when I see family, friends and co-workers donating their time to assist with food drives, toy drives, and volunteering to provide angel gifts for the youth and elderly.

We will all face times in life when a caring sister or brother makes a difference and it is good to remember, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve..."

My family and I would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and the best of a new year in 2018.



Chief Gary Batton is pictured with his wife, Angie; son, David and his fiancée, Taylor Walker; and grandchildren, Jeffrey and Kaylyn.

by Jason Hicks

The year has flown by and we are once again celebrating the Christmas season. It's a time I enjoy making memories with family and friends and feeling thankful for our blessings.

Christmas is special to me for many reasons. First and foremost, it is the time we celebrate the birth of Christ.

I once read a statement that said, "Considering all that Christ has done for us, we should be filled with gratitude at Christmastime."

I am grateful for all the blessings God has bestowed on my family and me, especially His Son. Jesus set the perfect example of how to serve those around him.

We have many opportunities at Christmastime to reach out and make someone's day brighter, serving others in the way Jesus taught.

The youth and elderly are the most vulnerable, which

Wishing Everyone a Wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year



Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.

I hope everyone had a blessed Thanksgiving and is enjoying the Christmas season. The autumn foliage has been beautiful in Oklahoma and we have thoroughly appreciated the chance to travel to events throughout the Choctaw Nation.

The Thanksgiving dinners at the Choctaw community centers are, as always, a great time to visit and enjoy the fellowship and delicious food.

I look forward to them every year. It gives Chief Batton and myself a chance to listen to the seniors' needs, as well as to celebrate good news about their family, such as a graduation, wedding, or the birth of new great-grandchild.

We love to hear the Chahta hymns that are often sung and are very thankful for the staff who volunteers to prepare the meal, serve, and clean afterward.

The Choctaw Nation has also held ribboncutting ceremonies recently for the expansion of the Choctaw Casino & Resort-Grant and a new facility for the Choctaw Nation Head Start in Wright City.

As we grow the tribe's businesses, we have the ability to build more facilities such as the new location for the Head Start program. The teachers and students will have the newest technology, new playground equipment, and a safe room.

The location of the facility is close to the community center so I anticipate there will be a lot of fun interaction with the seniors. The students attended the ribboncutting and checked out their new space with lots of happy chatter.

Some of the parents and grandparents were also at the grand opening of the Head Start. It was good to see them take an active interest in the youth's education.

Family is the most important gift. They love us for who we are and in the Choctaw Nation, we have extended families that include friends and the people we spend our days with at work.

We share principles and values. We are becoming more immersed in the Chahta culture. As we move forward, it is with the confidence that we come from a long line of Chahta who faced challenges, showed initiative, and succeeded.

I am proud to tell my grandchildren about their heritage. I am confident they will grow up thinking of the Nation as their home, as their family, and their culture. We give thanks to God every day and include a prayer for the Chahta people. May you all have a wonderful Christmas and a happy New Year.



by Jason Hicks

Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. is pictured with his wife, Philisha; oldest son, Clark and his wife, Tara; daughter, Malacha Sisk and her husband, Ethan; grandsons Dawson and Drake; and youngest son, Samuel.

Pastor Olin Williams

What is Christmas?



Pastor Olin Williams
Employee Chaplain

Christmas is a wonderful time of the year. There is a certain lift and hope in the human heart.

There is a festive spirit within the crisp, wintry, cold air as the spirit of sharing with others seems to come alive in all hearts.

This is the season when we take baskets of fruit and toys to the underprivileged. We take food to the hungry. We visit the nursing homes and hospitals. The poor becomes the object of our attention.

We are busy buying gifts for other people and enjoy shopping with people who have the same common purpose.

We worship together and fill the local churches we used to attend.

What is Christmas to you? Is it the giving or receiving? Where is happiness found? Is it found in a restaurant filled with gaiety and laughter? Is it

in the unwrapping of gifts that have your name on it? Is it the watching of sports and movies and eating more than usual and feeling blessed?

After December 25, melancholic spirit settles in when everybody has gone back home and the Christmas tree stands alone with flashing lights, no gala except the trash left behind.

The churches become empty, the poor are neglected, and the hungry becomes hungry again. The rest homes and hospitals receive no visits from loved ones. The credit cards are maxed out and your favorite teams didn't win.

Jesus put it this way, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Happiness is not found in the department stores, but in the hospital rooms when you take a flower to one who is sick and pray with them and encourage them.

Happiness is when you knock on the door of a shut-in and when you enter in, you notice that person's whole world is that tiny room with the window as its only outlet to the world outside. Their only automobile is the wheelchair they sit in daily.

When we are thinking of others and doing for others, and buying for others, we are discovering unselfishness and the heart of God, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," (John 3:16).

When we start receiving we lapsed back into selfishness. When General Booth, founder of the great Salvation Army, got old and couldn't attend the convention one year, he sent a telegram to be read to the delegates.

Thousands of people were assembled and waited with anticipation for the message from the founder. The telegram was read: "Dear delegates of the Salvation Army Convention: Others! (Signed) General Booth."

Christmas is about others and giving. This is servant leadership. Merry Christmas.

BISKINIK

December 2017

KOI CHITO HVSHI

big panther month

In This Issue Page 1:

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- 4 Education & Sports
- 5 Notes to the Nation
- 6 Thanksgiving Dinners

To make it easier for Choctaw tribal members to receive serves a brand new, all-in-one ID will be available on January 1, 2018. The new card will combine the Choctaw Nation Tribal Membership card and the CDIB card. The card will also identify Choctaw Veterans.

Wright City welcomes a brand-new Choctaw Nation Head Start.

- 8 Obituaries
- 9 People You Know

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.

Stay Connected. ChoctawNation.com features access to information about tribal history, culture, news, services, businesses, applications and contacts. The Choctaw Nation's official publication, the BISKINIK, is available to tribal members by mail and archived editions are on ChoctawNation.com.

www.facebook.com/ChoctawNationofOklahoma

www.twitter.com/ChoctawNationOK

www.instagram.com/ChoctawNationOK

www.youtube.com/ChoctawNationOK

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Youth Work Program

Applications Available:

Monday, January 1, 2018

Eligibility Requirements: Ages 16 - 21 on or before the 1st day of work, reside within 10 1/2 counties of the Choctaw Nation, Tribal Membership or CDIB Card... Stay tuned for more details and eligibility requirements.

Applications will be available online only.

For more information contact: WIOA Staff at 1-800-522-6170.

Keep up to date by liking us on Facebook:
Choctaw Nation Youth Work Program



Photos Provided

(Left to Right) Cayla Mitchell RN, Crystal Hensley RN, and Kristy Petty RN recently achieved Certified Diabetes Educator status by successfully completing the Certification Examination for Diabetes Educators.

Three Choctaw Nation Employees Earn Certified Diabetes Educator Status

The National Certification Board for Diabetes Educators (NCBDE) announced that Cayla Mitchell, RN, Crystal Hensley, RN and Kristy Petty, RN from Choctaw Nation Health Services achieved Certified Diabetes Educator® (CDE®) status by successfully completing the Certification Examination for Diabetes Educators.

Candidates must meet rigorous eligibility requirements to be able to take the examination.

Achieving certification status demonstrates to people with diabetes and employers that the health care professional possesses distinct and specialized knowledge, thereby promoting quality of care for people with diabetes.

Currently, there are over 19,300 diabetes educators who hold NCBDE certification.

Cayla Mitchell RN, CDE is the educator in Hugo and Atoka clinics. She started with Choctaw Nation in October 2014.

Crystal Hensley RN, CDE is the educator in Poteau and Stigler clinics. She started with Choctaw Nation in July of 2014.

Kristy Petty RN, CDE is the educator at the Diabetes Wellness Center in Talihiina. She started with the Choctaw Nation in 2006, then transferred to the DWC in 2014.

In addition to the three new CDEs in Choctaw Nation Health Services, Janet Maddox, RN, CDE provides education in DWC at Talihiina, Eva Waymire, RN is in Family Practice, Talihiina, Lee Ann Sherrill, RN, CDE is in McAlester Choctaw Nation Clinic, and Bernice Williams, RN is in Durant Choctaw Nation Clinic. Annette, Choate, RN, CDE in Idabel Clinic.

All educators are available by appointment or same day appointment. Please schedule to visit with a Diabetes Educator soon.

NURSERY NEWS

Leona Sage Woodral



Leona Sage Woodral was born June 30, 2017, in Talihiina. She weighed 6 pounds, 14.6 ounces and was 19.6 inches long.

Leona's parents are Scotty and Frankie Woodral. Her big sisters are Penelope and Adaline. Leona is the granddaughter of Richard and Eva Cooper, Donnie and Jamie Earn, Scotty D. Woodral and Carla Featherston. Her great-grandparents are Mike

and the late Viola G. Brown, George Waldron, Danny and Ann Woodral, Margaret Pearson. Her uncles and aunts are the late CW2 Randy Lee Billings, Donald Earn, Chase Earn and Lacey Layman. Leona takes her name after her late uncle CW2 Randy Lee Billings, great-grandfather Danny Lee Woodral, and great uncle Monty Lee Woodral and her 4th great-grandma Leona.

Isabelle Marie Boothe



Isabelle Marie Boothe was born on Sept. 28, 2017, at 1:50 p.m. She weighed 5 pounds, 4 ounces and was 19 inches long. She was born at OU Children's hospital in Oklahoma City.

Her proud parents are Phillip and Wanda Boothe. Isabelle is the granddaughter of Lois Weatherly of Calumet, Oklahoma and the late Bobby Weatherly, and Brenda Carter of Oklahoma City and John Boothe of Berryville, Arkansas.

She is the great-granddaughter of the late Mary Jane Beaver and Roscoe York of Hugo. She is the great-great-granddaughter of the late Gaynell Wishon Beaver and also of the late Zennie Cochauer York of Hugo. She has one sibling named Paisley Boothe.

Recipe of the Month Fall Spaghetti



Recipe by Carmen Robertson

- Ingredients**
- 1 pound hamburger
 - 1 onion
 - 1- 15 ounce can tomato sauce
 - 1 cup pumpkin
 - 1- 14.5 ounce diced tomatoes
 - 1 tsp chili powder
 - 1 tsp garlic powder
 - ½ tsp oregano
 - ½ tsp basil
 - 16 ounces spaghetti noodles
 - salt & pepper to taste

Preparation

- Cook hamburger, onion and drain.
- Add seasonings, tomato sauce, diced tomatoes and pumpkin.
- Serve over spaghetti noodles.

Nutrition Facts:

Servings 8
Serving size 266g
(per serving)
Calories 407, Total Fat 12g, Trans Fat 1g, Cholesterol 40mg, Sodium 165mg, Total Carbohydrate 55g, Dietary Fiber 5g, Sugars 8g, Protein 19g, Vitamin A 105%, Vitamin C 23%, Calcium 6% and Iron 26%.

For further information, you may contact Choctaw Nation Nutritionist Carmen Robertson (800) 522-6170 ext. 2733, email crobertson@choctawnation.com, or go to a Cooking with Carmen demonstration.

Cambrey Reece Paulk



Cambrey Reece Paulk was born on Aug. 29, 2017, at 7:10 a.m. in Tulsa. She was 7 pounds, 10 ounces and was 19 and 3/4 inches long.

Cambrey was welcomed into the world by her parents Casey and Cara Paulk.

She is the sister of Carley Paulk. Cambrey is the granddaughter of Tommy and Wylene Hudson of Skiatook, and David and Debbie Paulk

of Blanchard. She is the great-granddaughter of Bobbie Hudson of Skiatook.

Ava Althea Coffman



Ava Althea Coffman was born Sept. 14, 2017 at the Choctaw Nation Health Care Center in Talihiina. She weighed 7 pounds, 8 ounces, and was 20 inches long.

Ava is the daughter of Melissa Aletha and John Coffman II of Haywood.

Ava is the granddaughter of Doug and Aletha Johnson of Haywood, Becky Coffman of California, and the late John Coffman. She is the

great-granddaughter of Jim Gibson and the late Marie Gibson of Haywood, and Patricia Johnson and the late Grover Johnson of McAlester, and Joyce Dervey, the late Wayne Myers, the late Jimmy and Sadie Coffman and Elisabeth Ann Cook.

Marlowe Elise Cunningham Flores



Marlowe Elise Cunningham Flores was born on July 7, 2017.

She was welcomed into the world by her parents, Grace S. Cunningham and Victor Flores of Austin. She is the great-granddaughter of James and Cheryl Cunningham of San Antonio, Texas. Marlowe is the great-great-great-granddaughter of Grace McPhail Mobley, an original enrollee of the Dawes Rolls and teacher in Comanche.

Dawson Lee Curry



Dawson Lee Curry was born on Aug. 24, 2017, in Tulsa. He weighed 8 pounds, 3 ounces and was 19 inches long.

Dawson was welcomed into the world by his parents Dustin and Kaylee Curry and his big sister Kylei.

Dawson is the grandson of Leah Butts and the late Travis Butts, Rebecca Davis and George Curry, all of Tulsa.

| Location | Days | Hours |
|---|----------------------------|--------------------|
| Antlers 580-298-3161 | Every Tue. | 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. |
| Atoka 580-889-5825 | Mon. Wed., Thurs. & Fri. | 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. |
| Battiest 580-241-5458 | 1st & 2nd Tue. Every Month | 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. |
| Boswell 580-380-2518 | 1st Thurs. Every Month | 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. |
| Broken Bow 580-584-2746 | Daily Mon. - Fri | 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. |
| Coalgate 580-927-3641 | 1st Wed. of Every Month | 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. |
| Durant 580-920-2100 x 83517 | Daily Mon – Fri. | 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. |
| Hugo 580-326-5404 | Daily Mon. – Fri. | 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. |
| Idabel 580-286-2510 | Daily Mon. – Fri. | 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. |
| McAlester 918-423-6335 | Daily Mon. – Fri. | 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. |
| Poteau 918-649-1106 | Daily Mon. – Fri. | 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. |
| Smithville 580-244-3289 | 1st Thurs. Every Month | 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. |
| Spiro 918-962-5134 | Wed., Thurs. & Fri. | 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. |
| Stigler 918-867-4211 | Mon. & Tue. | 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. |
| Talihina 918-567-7000 x-6792 | Mon., Tue., Wed. & Fri. | 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. |
| Wilburton 918-465-5641 | Every Thursday | 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. |

CHOCTAW NATION FOOD DISTRIBUTION

WAREHOUSES & MARKETS
Open 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday
Thursday: 9:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
Antlers: 400 S.W. "O" St., (580) 298-6443
Broken Bow: 109 Chahta Road, (580) 584-2842
Durant: 2352 Big Lots Pkwy, (580) 924-7773
McAlester: 3244 Afullota Hina, (918) 420-5716
Poteau: 100 Kerr Ave, (918) 649-0431

January 2018

ANTLERS

Market open weekdays January 1-31, except for:
Closed: January 1, 30 & 31.
Cooking with Carmen: January 5 & 19, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

BROKEN BOW

Market open weekdays January 1-31, except for:
Closed: January 1, 30 & 31.
Cooking with Carmen: January 10 & 25, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

DURANT

Market open weekdays January 1-31, except for:
Closed: January 1, 30 & 31.
Cooking with Carmen: January 11 & 15, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

MCALESTER

Market open weekdays January 1-31, except for:
Closed: January 1, 30 & 31.
Cooking with Carmen: January 12 & 22, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

POTEAU

Market open weekdays January 1-31, except for:
Closed: January 1, 30 & 31.
Cooking with Carmen: January 8 & 23, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; Fax: (202) 690-7442; or Email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Winter Holiday Safety

Winter holidays are a time for families and friends to get together. But that also means a greater risk for fire. Following a few simple tips will ensure a happy and fire-safe holiday season.

HOLIDAY DECORATING

- Be careful with holiday decorations. Choose decorations that are flame resistant or flame retardant.
- Keep lit candles away from decorations and other things that can burn.
- Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Read manufacturer's instructions for number of light strands to connect.
- Use clips, not nails, to hang lights so the cords do not get damaged.
- Keep decorations away from windows and doors.

HOLIDAY ENTERTAINING

- Test your smoke alarms and tell guests about your home fire escape plan.
- Keep children and pets away from lit candles.
- Keep matches and lighters up high in a locked cabinet.
- Stay in the kitchen when cooking on the stovetop.
- Ask smokers to smoke outside. Remind smokers to keep their smoking materials with them so young children do not touch them.
- Provide large, deep ashtrays for smokers. Wet cigarette butts with water before discarding.

FACTS

- Two of every five home decoration fires are started by candles.
- Nearly half of decoration fires happen because decorations are placed too close to a heat source.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Your Source for SAFETY Information
 NFPA Public Education Division • 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02269

Students to Research Insect-Related Diseases at OSU

Twins Taylor and Alexis Coles are freshmen at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater.

The Norman natives are studying entomology and are embarking on a quest to help improve the lives and health of their tribal nation members through their studies on insects.

A recent grant given to the Center for Sovereign Nations at OSU will allow the sisters to join Dr. Wyatt Hoback in a research program.

The program will explore the reasons Native Americans are statistically twice as likely to contract insect-related diseases, like Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, than non-natives.

4

The sisters are pursuing pre-med degrees and feel passionate about the medical field.

In 2009, Alexis was diagnosed with a blood cancer when they were only nine years old. Alexis received a blood marrow transplant from Taylor and the girls knew they wanted to help other people when they got older.

The Coles sisters are two of six Native American students who received research funding from the recent grant.

The United States Department of Agriculture, National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), Higher Education Multicultural Scholars Program was awarded in May 2017.

The four-year grant totaled \$200,000 and will help fund Taylor and Alexis' research, which could potentially save lives.

This grant is a part of the Promise Zone Initiative.

Chief Gary Batton wrote a letter to the USDA designating the application for the Higher Education Multicultural Scholars Program as an official application from the Choctaw Nation Promise Zone Initiative.

The Choctaw Nation was named the first tribal Promise Zone, which entails working through federal and community partnerships to create pathways for a better quality of life and economic development in southeastern Oklahoma.

OSU will train the cohort of incoming American Indian students in entomology so they are prepared for careers including serving their tribal communities' tribal land management and agricultural businesses.

The Choctaw Nation also offered to host students who are part of this program for experiential learning opportunities on lands managed for wildlife and agriculture within the Choctaw Nation.

The Coles and other Native entomology students will be a part of the program cleverly named NATIVES: Native Americans Trained In Various Entomological Sciences.

The NATIVES program will study various effects insects have on humans and livestock.

Humans and livestock are directly and indirectly harmed by insects that cause production losses and transmit diseases and pathogens.

According to various studies, these threats are increasing because of global environmental changes, global travel and global political unrest.

While the threats have increased, the number of scientists trained in entomology have declined, with few Native American students earning degrees in the field.

The NATIVES program will train Native students in Entomology as it impacts agriculture, biology and agricultural biostructure.

Six students were ultimately recruited into the program after Dr. Hoback secured funding for a sixth program participant.

Dr. Payne hired OSU senior accounting honors student Melea Barrick, who is a Chickasaw citizen, to engage the incoming student cohort and to help their transition to campus go smoothly.



Provided by Oklahoma State University

Taylor and Alexis Coles of Norman are twin sisters from Norman. The duo, along with six other Native American students, will take part in the NATIVES program at OSU. This program will conduct entomological research to study the effects of insects on humans and livestock in Native American communities.

Choctaw tribal members and center coordinators, Sky Rogers and Courtney Arnall, developed a plan for the ongoing engagement of the students with academic success resources on campus.

James Jump, center leader and Osage citizen, along with Noah Berryhill, OSU senior mechanical engineering student and Muscogee citizen, helped the students move into their dormitories and ensured they knew their way around campus.

Four of the six students are Choctaw tribal members. The students involved in the project are Alexis Coles (Choctaw) of Norman, Taylor Coles (Choctaw) of Norman, Bailey Posey (Choctaw) of Corinth, Texas, Haylee Stevens (Choctaw) of Claremore, Natalee Taylor (Muscogee) of Henryetta, and Katelynn Montgomery (Cherokee) of Bartlesville.

For more information on this project and the Center for Sovereign Nations, visit sovnationcenter.okstate.edu.

Bishop Named National Merit Scholar Semi-finalist

Mason Bishop, 17, a student at Broken Arrow High School, Oklahoma, was named a National Merit Scholar semi-finalist.

He is the son of Scott and Claudia Bishop and the older brother of Lauren Bishop.

Mason qualified by taking the 2016 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.

Semifinalists are selected from the highest scoring entrants in each state. Semifinalists must submit a scholarship application, have an outstanding academic record and earn SAT scores that reflect their initial performance on the qualifying test. Finalists will be selected in February.



Rasmussen Represents at Native Conference

Clay Chandler Rasmussen, a sophomore at East High School, Denver, Colorado, was selected to represent his school at the National Conference of the American Indian Science and Engineering Society.

The AISES is a national non-profit organization focused on increasing the representation of American Indians in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) studies and careers. He is the son of Dirk and April Rasmussen, the grandson of Betty Ward Chandler and the great-grandson of the late Bud L. Ward.



Basketball Stars Place Third in Nationals

Haelee Hudson, Tayshia Twitty, and their Amateur Athletic Union basketball team Oklahoma Surge placed third in the Primetime Nationals.

The team is coached by Toney Cooper and Chad McNeil.

Both Hudson and Twitty have been playing basketball since they were eight years old.

Hudson is a junior at Noble High School. She is the daughter of Chad and Audrey Hudson and has one sibling, Gabriel, all of Noble. Haelee is the granddaughter of Dickie and Lisa Lewis of Purcell, and Sherri Snider of Purcell.

Twitty is a junior at Norman High School. She is the daughter of Omar



and Shanda Twitty and has seven siblings, Maycie Twitty, Shawna Womack, Steven Womack, Quade Womack, Trendunn Lamoni, Josh Womack and Noah Taylor. Tayshia is the granddaughter of Barbra Smith-Roebuck and the late James Smith of Norman, Lorine Twitty of Paris, Texas, Lanier and Cynthia Parker of Norman, and Frankie Womack of Prince George, Virginia. She is the great-granddaughter of the late John and Peggy Roebuck of Coalgate, and Lanier Parker Sr. of Hugo.



Mother and Daughter Excel in Academics and Sports

Mother and daughter Cynthia Lynne Hardy and Elena Nicole Hardy have recently made numerous academic and sports achievements.

Cynthia completed her dual Masters in Business Administration and Masters in Nursing degree in October 2016. She is currently working in Red Mesa, Arizona with Indian Health Services as a supervisory clinical nurse amongst the Navajo Nation. Cynthia graduated with honors and has recently been accepted to begin her Doctorate in Nursing Practice-Advance Practice Nurse with Johns Hopkins University in Fall 2017.

Elena Nicole Hardy recently finished her eighth grade year at Tse Bit Ai Middle School in Shiprock, New Mexico. Elena was named valedictorian of her class and achieved high academic recognition in core areas of science, mathematics, and English. Elena won second place in the District Science Fair and went on to compete at the state level. Elena also won first place at the New Mexico English Expo for her writing skills and presentation of a children's book she authored and illustrated. Elena also excelled in the sports of cross country and track. She was recruited by the Shiprock High School Varsity coach to run at the varsity level for both cross country and track. Elena earned New Mexico state titles in both cross country and track. She was recognized as the only eighth-grader that qualified for state track in all her running events (3200, 1600, and 800 meter dash). Elena also broke the high school record at Shiprock High for the 3200 meter dash with a time of 12:36. Elena was honored with both sport and academic recognition including class valedictorian, recognition for middle school cross country Shining Star and TEAL award, varsity level recognition as most promising, history maker and Varsity Letter for track. Elena signed her letter of intent to run with Shiprock High School and will begin high school taking dual credits. She hopes to graduate with a high school diploma and associate's degree around the same time.

Cynthia's father Robert Hardy is Choctaw, and her mother Barbara Chaves Hardy is Laguna Pueblo and Paiute.

Cynthia would like to give special recognition to the Choctaw Nation, Bettye Bolen and Debbie Vietta for the assistance with application and processing of educational assistance programs. Elena would like to give special thanks to the Nation and the Choctaw Star program which she has been a recipient of.

Hevalow Wins Multiple National Rodeo Titles



Koltin Hevalow, a freshman at Platte County High School in Platte City, Missouri, was named Reserve National Boys Goat Tying Champion, World Champion Jr. Bull Rider and finished fourth overall in the National Junior High School Finals Rodeo. Koltin and his family then traveled to Abilene, Texas for the 10th annual Youth Bull Riders World Finals, where he earned the title of World Champion Senior Rider. Koltin has won four national titles at rodeo events. Koltin will compete in December at the Youth Bull Riding Cowboy Marketplace. He is the son of Kevin and Jenn Hevalow.

An Important **OPPORTUNITY!**
Choctaw Asset Building
 & Eileen St. Pierre
 The Everyday Financial Planner

host a Financial Webinar
"Identity Theft"
 December 14th
 from 3:30 to 4:00pm

To register go online:
goo.gl/YhNyXt

Tribal Council Holds Regular Session

The Choctaw Nation Tribal Council met in regular session Saturday, Nov. 11, in their chambers at Tvshka Homma.

During the regular session committee reports were presented.

The minutes of the regular session held on Saturday, Oct. 14, were approved.

New business included approval of the following items:

- Letter of re-appointment for Judge Frederick Bobb to the Constitutional Court of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.
- Letter of re-appointment for Chief Judge Payton Phelps to the Court of Appeals of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.
- To dispose of surplus capital assets.
- Choctaw Nation Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program budget FY 2017.
- Funds and budget for the Year Two Continuation for the Tribal Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program – Chahta Inchukka.
- Funds and budget for the Tribal Homeland Security Grant program.
- Funds and budget for the Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitations Purpose Area Seven – Tribal Victims Assistance.
- Funds and budget for the Year Five Continuation for the Native American Career and Technical Education program (NACTEP).
- Funds and budget for the Behavioral Health Integration Initiative – Project Integrate.
- Funds and budget for the Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitations Purpose Area Five – Project Empower.
- Funds and budget for the Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitations Purpose Area Eight – Choctaw Nation Healing to Wellness.
- Funds and budget for the Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitations Purpose Area Nine – ABC Project.
- Funds and budget for the Child Passenger Safety Seat Program.
- Amend CB-139-16 to authorize Chief Gary Batton to place property in Pittsburg County in Trust Status with the United States of America.
- Funding for Housing Tribal Services.

For detailed meeting information on these resolutions and Council bills, go to www.choctaw-nation.com/government/tribal-council/council-meetings-and-bills.

The next Tribal Council meeting will be held on Saturday, Dec. 9, at 10 a.m. in Tvshka Homma.

From the Choctaw Nation Housing Authority:

Rental Property Services is needing to contact Donna Shere. Please ask for Director Melissa Feters or Property Manager Kara Watkins.

The Housing Authority of the Choctaw Nation is now accepting applications for the Lease Purchase (LEAP) Program

The Leap Program is a new homeownership program opportunity for Choctaw Tribal members who meet program income and credit guidelines. The goal of this program is to assist families with credit issues to become mortgage ready and lender qualified over time with credit counseling services available.

For additional program information or for an application, please contact Donna Courtwright at the Housing Authority of the Choctaw Nation at 1-800-235-3087

Gary Batton
Chief

Jack Austin Jr.
Assistant Chief

The Official
Monthly Publication
of the
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

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

If you are receiving more than one BISKINIK at your home or if your address needs to be changed, our Circulation Department would appreciate hearing from you.

The BISKINIK is a nonprofit publication of the Choctaw Nation.

Circulation is monthly. Deadline for articles and photographs to be submitted is the first day of each month to run the following month.

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.



Red Earth Treefest Celebrates Christmas With a Native Twist

The Red Earth Art Center will celebrate the Christmas season with a decidedly Native twist this year when Treefest opens free to the public for an eight week run starting Nov. 13 and ending Jan. 5, 2018 in downtown Oklahoma City.

Red Earth Treefest features 20 Native Tribes from throughout Oklahoma, who were invited to participate in the annual holiday event by creating handmade ornaments and art objects made to highlight their distinctive tribal culture.

The exhibition highlights the diverse Native cultures that make Oklahoma unique.

"Treefest is our family-friendly Christmas gift to the state. Last year we welcomed over 2,000 guests during our annual event and the public loved it," said Teri Stanek, president of the Red Earth board of directors.

"We drew people from all over including a 'Mystery Tour' of 100 people from Abilene, Texas."

Handcrafted ornaments on the Christmas trees are as diverse as the tribes of Oklahoma. Birch bark canoes adorn the Citizen Potawatomi purple-clad tree synonymous with their Great Lakes culture; while intricately painted ponies are featured on the Comanche tree to celebrate their legacy as the "Lords of the Plains."

Oklahoma Native Tribes participating in the 2017 Treefest include the Absentee Shawnee, Caddo, Cherokee, Cheyenne & Arapaho, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Citizen Potawatomi, Comanche, Delaware, Kaw, Muscogee (Creek), Osage, Sac & Fox, Seminole, Kiowa, Otoe Missouri, and Pawnee.

Each tribal organization worked hard for several months creating their handmade ornaments with exhibit copy explaining how each ornament tells their cultural story.

Thirty-nine Native tribes are headquartered in Okla-

homa, giving the state more tribal headquarters than any other.

Nearly every Oklahoma tribe has homelands in other parts of the country—from the Pacific Northwest to the Florida Everglades—creating a diverse tribal palette unique to Oklahoma.

Additional trees include the Red Earth docent tree with hundreds of handmade ornaments including beaded corn, dreamcatchers, mini tipis, drums and parfleche bags; and a tree featuring ornaments created by Oklahoma Native artists available for sale.

"We are thrilled to carry on this Christmas tradition for the people of Oklahoma," said Stanek. "I know our guests will thoroughly enjoy our beautiful display of Christmas trees adorned with ornaments that represent our tribal cultures so well."

Red Earth Treefest is presented free to the public 10-5 p.m. Monday through Friday, Nov. 13 through Jan. 5, 2018.

A special Open House is scheduled Saturday, Dec. 9 from 10-3 p.m. with hot wassail, holiday treats and Christmas shopping.

Red Earth Art Center is located at 6 Santa Fe Plaza next to the historic Skirvin Hilton Hotel in downtown Oklahoma City. Visit www.RedEarth.org or call (405) 427-5228 for additional information.



Photo provided by Shelley Garner

Left to right Malinda Steve, Kay Jackson, Debbie Damron and Nicole Narcomey pose in front of their tree at the 2017 Treefest. They assisted in making the ornaments and decorating the tree.

From the Choctaw Nation Mail Room

When sending mail to the Nation please address as follows:

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
(Name of Department)
P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702

Choctaw Nation Housing Authority Post Purchase Education Workshop

12-12 Wilburton

Pre-registration required.

Please contact Amanda Russell at (800) 522-6170 ext. 4127 or arussell@ChoctawHousing.com to pre-register.

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Legal Assistance

A licensed attorney will be available by appointment ONLY to provide assistance with simple legal documents free to all Choctaw members. Examples of matters that the attorney may be able to assist with:

- Family law (divorces, custody, child support)
- Contracts and leases
- Guardianships and modifications

The office does not provide representation in court or assist in criminal matters. At this time the legal department is not providing assistance with wills and probate. To make an appointment, or for any questions, contact Samantha Guinn at (580) 380-8149.

December Community Center Schedule

12-7 Stigler: 10-1 & 1:30-3
12-14 Wilburton: 10-1 & 1:30-3

January 2018 Community Center Schedule

1-4 McAlester: 10-1 & 1:30-3
1-11 Durant: 10-1 & 1:30-3
1-18 Smithville: 10-1 & 1:30-3
1-25 Atoka: 10-1 & 1:30-3

Southeastern Oklahoma Indian Credit Association and Choctaw Revolving Loan Fund

The Southeastern Oklahoma Indian Credit Association offers small business, home, home improvement, and agriculture loans. To be eligible to apply, a person must reside within the 10 1/2-county service area of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and must possess a Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) from a federally recognized tribe. Micro-loans are available for emergency home improvements and small businesses. The loans are available up to \$2,500 and are to be repaid within 24 months. To be eligible to apply you must be Choctaw, possess a CDIB and reside within the 10½ county area of the Choctaw Nation.

For more information, please contact Susan Edwards at (580) 924-8280 ext. 2161 or toll-free (800) 522-6170.

If you are interested in applying for a loan from the SOICA or the Choctaw Revolving Loan Fund, there will be a representative from the Choctaw Nation Credit Department at the:

Spiro Community Center
December 11
10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Biskinik Announcement Policy

We welcome all letters from Choctaw tribal members. However, because of the volume of mail, it isn't possible to publish all letters our readers send. Letters chosen for publication must be under 150 words. We require full contact information. Only the writer's full name and city will be published.

All events sent to the Biskinik will run the month of the event or the month prior to the event if the event falls in the first of the month.

We apologize for any inconvenience. This is a necessary adjustment due to rising production and mailing expenses.

Send to:
Biskinik, Attn: Notes to the Nation
P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702
or email to:
biskinik@ChoctawNation.com

Judicial Branch Seeking Peacemakers

The Choctaw Nation Judicial Branch is currently seeking Peacemakers to serve the Tribal District Court in an effort to resolve disputes in a fair, informal manner in accordance with the traditions of the Choctaw people. Applicants must be of good moral character, be familiar with the history and traditions of the Choctaw people, and proficient in oral and written communication. Interested applicants should contact Donna Hettin by phone at 918-567-4134 or email: dhettin@choctawnation.com.

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
Schedule of Revenues and Expenditures- Unaudited
For the Twelve Months Ended September 30, 2017

| | Tribal Government | Choctaw Businesses | Total |
|------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Revenues | 303,408,582 | 1,204,608,204 | 1,508,016,786 |
| Expenditures | | | |
| General Government | 149,373,436 | - | 149,373,436 |
| Health | 123,896,970 | - | 123,896,970 |
| Education | 38,722,309 | - | 38,722,309 |
| Human | 23,367,194 | - | 23,367,194 |
| Community | 16,730,406 | - | 16,730,406 |
| Cultural | 12,063,843 | - | 12,063,843 |
| Judiciary | 2,011,907 | - | 2,011,907 |
| Internal Service | 95,608 | - | 95,608 |
| Choctaw Businesses | | 807,161,717 | 807,161,717 |
| Total Expenditures | 366,261,673 | 807,161,717 | 1,173,423,390 |
| Transfers | 383,566,637 | (383,566,637) | - |
| Increase in Net Assets | 320,713,546 | 13,879,850 | 334,593,395 |
| Beginning Net Assets | 2,000,181,518 | 844,717,305 | 2,844,898,823 |
| Ending Net Assets | 2,320,895,064 | 858,597,155 | 3,179,492,219 |

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Schedule of Net Assets- Unaudited As of September 30, 2017

| | Tribal Government | Choctaw Businesses | Total |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Cash and Investments | 1,741,562,326 | 168,579,167 | 1,910,141,493 |
| Receivables | 280,014,351 | 35,732,712 | 315,747,063 |
| Inventory | 3,562,311 | 15,906,620 | 19,468,931 |
| Prepaid Expenses | 5,858,186 | 8,343,593 | 14,201,779 |
| Other Assets | - | - | - |
| Fixed Assets | 753,465,235 | 716,196,441 | 1,469,661,676 |
| Less Payables | (463,567,346) | (86,161,378) | (549,728,724) |
| Net Assets | 2,320,895,063 | 858,597,155 | 3,179,492,218 |

Choctaw Nation Vocational Rehabilitation

January 2018

Durant - Monday, Wednesday and Friday Broken Bow - Monday, Wednesday and Friday Idabel by appointment
Phone: (580) 326-8304; Fax: (580) 326-0115 Email: ddavenport@choctawnation.com

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|-----|--------------------------|------------------------------|---|-----|------------------------------------|-----|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 Antlers by appt. | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 8 Durant 8:00-4:30 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 Wright City by appt. | 13 |
| 14 | 15 | 16 Talihina 10:00-2:00 | 17 McAlester 10:00-2:00 Stigler by appt. | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 Idabel by appt. | 23 Crowder by appt. | 24 Poteau 11:30-1:00 | 25 | 26 Atoka & Coalgate By appt. | 27 |
| 28 | 29 | 30 Wilburton by appt. | 31 Broken Bow by appt. | | | |

Thanksgiving Community Dinners 2017



Maricie Smith is excited for the meal at the Atoka Thanksgiving Dinner on Nov. 8.



Jacob Johnson, age 1, catches a ride on mom Taylor Johnson's hip at the Broken Bow Thanksgiving Dinner.



Cruz Serrano, age 5, tastes pumpkin pie for the very first time with help from his mom, Dana Serrano at the Idabel dinner.



Edwin Hendricks posts the United States flag at the beginning of the Spiro Thanksgiving Dinner on Nov. 15.



Quinton Belknap took a little time to pose for the camera before the Smithville Thanksgiving Dinner on Nov. 15.



District 10 Councilmember Anthony Dillard addresses the crowd at the Atoka Thanksgiving Dinner on Nov. 8.



The District 9 Princesses perform The Lord's Prayer before the Durant Ted Dosh Thanksgiving Dinner on Nov. 7.



Councilmember Delton Cox, Chief Gary Batton, and Councilmember Ron Perry (standing) spend time with brothers JB, Grady and Silas Adams at the Spiro Thanksgiving Dinner.



Margie Jones waits for the Talihina Thanksgiving Dinner to begin on Nov. 16.



Maggie Anderson, 93, poses for a photo with Chief Gary Batton and District 12 Councilmember James Frazier at the Coalgate Thanksgiving Dinner on Nov. 12.



Caleb Perry, Gayle Salinas, Vince Ott, Nekoda Wainwright are ready to eat at the Coalgate Thanksgiving Dinner.



Volunteers are ready to serve up meals at the Crowder Thanksgiving Dinner on Nov. 15.



Mary Kelly and Ethelyn Moore enjoy the fellowship at the Spiro Thanksgiving Dinner on Nov. 15.



District 8 Councilmember Perry Thompson visits with Buck Eastwood and Lyndell Finch at the Hugo Thanksgiving Dinner.



Kaydence Kyle Tiffie waits patiently for dinner to be served at the Poteau Thanksgiving Dinner on Nov. 16.



Betty and Bolton Walker celebrating their 57th wedding anniversary at the Wright City Thanksgiving Dinner on Nov. 16.



Jackson Tisho gets some snuggles from his grandmother Dorthy Willis before the Battiest/Bethel Thanksgiving Dinner.



District 5 Councilmember Ron Perry and Chief Gary Batton pose for a photo with a few Choctaw elders at the Stigler Thanksgiving Dinner.



Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. and Councilmember Jack Austin Sr. visit at the Tvshka Homma Thanksgiving Dinner.



District 2 Councilmember Tony Ward visits with 87 year old Lucy White during the Battiest/Bethel Thanksgiving Dinner.



Northern Wellness Center Director Chase Henson passes out pies during the Wilburton Thanksgiving Dinner.



Choctaw Nation employee Beth Bray delivers meals to those in attendance of the Stigler Thanksgiving Dinner on Nov. 8.



District 1 Councilmember Thomas Williston joins two elders in singing Choctaw Hymn 112 at the Idabel dinner.



Anita and Alan Reich are excited to dig in to a delicious meal at the Antlers Thanksgiving Dinner.



Three generations of Choctaws attended the Durant Ted Dosh Thanksgiving Dinner together. Jeff, Ken, and JW Elden had a great night filled with food and fellowship.



District 3 Councilmember Kenny Bryant poses for a photo with a group of elders at the Talihina Thanksgiving Dinner.



Donna Smith and Mary Phillips pose for a photo with District 3 Councilmember Kenny Bryant at the Smithville Thanksgiving Dinner.



Eleanor Caldwell reads the November issue of the Biskinik as folks gather for the Wright City Thanksgiving Dinner.



District 12 Councilmember James Frazier addresses the audience at the Crowder Thanksgiving Dinner.



Tom Parish poses for a photo with District 7 Councilmember Jack Austin Sr. at the Antlers Thanksgiving Dinner.



Marissa Grady, 6 months old, attends her very first Thanksgiving dinner at the Hugo community center.



Choctaw elders and the District 12 princesses sing Choctaw hymns at the Crowder Thanksgiving Dinner.



District 7 Junior Miss Melissa Wren and Rebecca Spurlock are ready to hand out tea glasses at the Tvshka Homma Thanksgiving Dinner.



District 4 Councilmember Delton Cox addresses the crowd at the Poteau Thanksgiving Dinner.



Christian Frazier, age 4, receives a high five from officer Robert Toon at the Broken Bow Thanksgiving dinner.



Albert Tom and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. visit with each other at the Antlers Thanksgiving Dinner on Nov. 15.



Jean Jones helps get the drinks ready for everyone at McAlester's dinner.



Lilly Ann LeFlore is enjoying her pumpkin pie at McAlester.



District 12 Councilmember James Frazier, Nellie Hunter and Chief Gary Batton pose for a photo at the Coalgate Thanksgiving Dinner on Nov. 12.



Marry Hill and her son Asher cheese for the camera at the Crowder Thanksgiving Dinner.



Chief Gary Batton and District 2 Councilmember Tony Ward visit with members of the community at the Broken Bow community Thanksgiving dinner.



District 9 Councilmember James Dry addresses the crowd at the Durant Ted Dosh Thanksgiving Dinner on Nov. 7.



Raymond Johnson leads Choctaw hymns before lunch was served at the Talihina Thanksgiving Dinner.



The cooks are laughing, singing and enjoying each other's company at the Hugo Thanksgiving dinner.



Nick, Mike, Larry, Marietha, Lonnie and Rhon Bond are all smiles at the Battiest/Bethel Thanksgiving Dinner on Nov. 2.



This crew is ready for lunch at Wright City. Pictured are Katrina Harris, Braylee Battiest, Brycen Amos and Kiesha Amos.



Joie Ester and Ray Luman have a little fun before the Poteau Thanksgiving Dinner.



Wilburton Head Start students perform a song in Choctaw for the audience at the Wilburton Thanksgiving Dinner.



District 11 Jr. Miss Ariana Byington, Councilmember Bob Pate, and Little Miss Jordan Washington at the McAlester Thanksgiving dinner on Nov. 19.



District 6 Councilmember Jennifer Woods and Little Miss Emma Battiest say the Pledge of Allegiance before the Wilburton Thanksgiving Dinner.



Anita LeFlore, Lucy Nelson, Anna Scott and Debra Lynn Peters pose for a photo at the Atoka Thanksgiving Dinner.



Jasmin Green smiles for the camera at the Tvshka Homma Thanksgiving Dinner on Nov. 2.



The crowd patiently waits for their meals at the Stigler Thanksgiving Dinner on Nov. 8.



Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. displays true servant leadership at the Idabel Thanksgiving dinner by helping serve food.

Photos by Apryl Mock, Deidre Elrod, Katy Pickens, Kendra Germany, Kim Eberl, Krislan Turner, Lisa Reed, Melissa Stevens, and Stacy Hutto.

8 OBITUARIES

Calvin C. Postoak

Calvin C. Postoak, 90, passed away Oct. 16. Calvin was born Nov. 7, 1927, in Ardmore, Oklahoma to Sam J. and Bernice (Gillard) Postoak.

Calvin was preceded in death by his parents, sons Dennis and Cal Jr.; siblings Martha Watson, Jack, John, Edmond and Walter Postoak, Teresa Wallace and Marshall Keith Postoak.

Calvin is survived by one son, Richard Postoak, one brother, Wayne Postoak; four sisters, Etta Johnson, Lucille Keith, Nora Birdshead and spouse Clifford and Barbara Postoak; one sister-in-law, Doris Postoak and numerous nieces and nephews.

For the full obituary, please visit [Craddock Funeral Home](#).

Donald Wayne Zellner

Donald Wayne Zellner, 83, passed away on Sept. 21, at his home in Tuttle, Oklahoma. He was born Feb. 7, 1934, in Tuttle, Oklahoma to Bert and Bessie Lee (Buckholtz) Zellner.

He is survived by his children, Donna Phillips and her spouse, John, Dennis Zellner and his spouse, Elizabeth and Dwayne Earl Zellner.

For the full obituary, please visit [Sevier Funeral Home](#).

Theodore "Ted" Lundquist

Theodore "Ted" Lundquist, 76, passed away Sept. 15. Ted was born Sept. 16, 1940, in Seattle, Washington.

He was preceded in death by his brother Mitchell and two nieces, Stephanie Arnold and Tracy Adams.

Ted is survived by his wife Kathy (Kuper), six children, Dana Tate and spouse John, Charles and spouse Donna, Kenneth and spouse Michelle, Kristyn Carey and spouse Sean, Tandra Chester and spouse Jack, and Erica Soto and 10 grandchildren.

For the full obituary, please visit [Mountain View Funeral Home & Memorial Park](#).

Nina Margaret Dumond

Nina Margaret (Cody) Dumond, 97, of Denton, Texas passed away Oct. 2.

Nina was born Aug. 20, 1920, in Ervin, Oklahoma to William Cody and Harriet (Oakes) Cody (an original enrollee of the Choctaw Nation).

Nina was preceded in death by her parents, husband Elmer Dumond, brother Gene Cody, son James Cody Mitchell, two grandsons and one great-grandson.

Nina is survived by daughters Carol Fredde and Sandra Parker; granddaughters Sherry Booher, Shelly Hoover, Candace Wimbish, Crystal Mackey and Collette Parker, nephew Larry Cody, nine great-grandchildren, eight great-great-grandchildren and numerous cousins.

Nina was laid to rest at Roselawn Cemetery, Denton, Texas.

For the full obituary, please visit [DeBerry Funeral Home](#).

Louis Geye Hulsey

Pastor Louis Geye Hulsey, 73, passed away Nov. 1. He was born on Nov. 12, 1943, to Veirl and Olivia Hulsey in Bisbee, Arizona.

He is survived by his wife, Naomi; six daughters and sons, Ramona Bailey, Louis Hulsey II, Charis Miller, Victor, Loren and Joshua Hulsey; siblings, Maria Rainwater, Pam Felkins, A.W. Welch, Elderine Wyrick, Rene Stone and Paul Welch and 25 grandchildren.

For the full obituary, please visit [J. Warren Funeral Home](#).



Guftin Eugene Moore

Guftin Eugene Moore, 23, passed away Aug. 9.

Guftin was born Jan. 11, 1994, in Ada, Oklahoma to Justin Cox and Patsy (Lawrence) Moore.

Guftin is survived by his wife, Samantha Moore, his daughter, Everly Lane Moore, his mother, Patsy Moore and spouse "Hound Dog" Gormly, his brother, Jerred Moore and fiancé Haley, one sister, Amy Pino and spouse Michael, paternal grandmother, Patsy Lawrence, maternal grandparents, Steve and Michelle Wegner, three nieces, Whitney Pino, Rylee Pino and Marlee Wegner with one more niece on the way and a host of extended family and friends.

Guftin was laid to rest in Okfuskee Cemetery.

For the full obituary, please visit [Parks Brothers Funeral Home](#).



Johnny Ward Jr.

Johnny Ward Jr., 56, of Idabel, Oklahoma passed away on Oct. 25.

Johnny was born on Sept. 12, 1961, in Broken Bow, Oklahoma to Johnny Ward Sr. and Mary Stewart Ward.

He was preceded in death by his parents; and his brother, Jonathan Ward.

Johnny is survived by two daughters, Candace Patrice Ward and Larisa Natalya Ward and spouse Allen Neel; two brothers, Dalton Ward and Nathan Ward; two sisters, Loretta Nash and spouse, Carrol and Roberta Ward; one grandson, William Caleb Allen Neel and several nieces, nephews, cousins and other relatives and friends.

For the full obituary, please visit [White Family Funeral Home](#).



Janella Barnett

Janella L. Barnett, 78, of North Little Rock, Arkansas passed away Aug. 21. She was born on Oct. 31, 1938, in Tahlequah, Oklahoma to Barney and Agnes Morris. She was preceded in death by her parents and son, Justin Barnett.

Janella is survived by her husband of 62 years, Dwight Barnett; three children, Jeff (Lisa), Justina and Javonna Barnett; nine grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren and one sister, Ida LaNell LaMons. Janella was laid to rest in Edgewood Memorial Park in North Little Rock, Arkansas. For the full obituary, please visit [A Natural State Funeral Service](#).



Timothy James

Timothy James, 81, passed away Nov. 8.

Timothy Homer James was born June 17, 1936, in Soper, Oklahoma to Jonas James and Bessie (Homer).

He was preceded in death by his parents, adoptive parents, Ben and Esterline James and two brothers, Johnny James and Robert Chubbee.

He is survived by his companion, Wyona Webb; two sons, Michael and Stephen James; four daughters, Dianne Hyland, Tammie Chadrick, Rose and Taylor James; four sisters, Lucy Pride, Sandra Crippin, Aline McClure and Theda Lamb; 13 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren along with many other relatives and friends.

Timothy was laid to rest at Goodland Cemetery, Goodland, Oklahoma.

For the full obituary, please visit [Miller & Miller Funeral Home](#).



Ronald "Dale" Thomas

Ronald "Dale" Thomas, 63, passed away Aug. 19. Dale was born on Oct. 9, 1953, to Sam and Juanita Thomas.

He was preceded in death by his parents, brother Elvis Lee Thomas, and sisters Myreta Don Sugg and Jo Ann Thomas.

He is survived by his wife Kathy Thomas, his two daughters Kristen Maupin and Haley Thomas, brother Gary Mac Thomas, twin sister Linda Gayle Marshall, and numerous nieces and nephews.

For the full obituary, please visit [Emerald Coast Funeral Home](#).



Anthony "Tony" Vessakosol

Anthony "Tony" Victor Vessakosol, 51, of Rockwall, Texas, passed away Aug. 25.

Anthony was born Jan. 12, 1966, in Gladewater, Texas, to Virothai "Vic" Vessakosol and Floy Jeanne (Meadows) Vessakosol.

Tony was preceded in death by his grandparents, Floyd and Willa Mae Meadows and Governor Kiat and Samorn Vessakosol, uncles; Todd Vessakosol and Charles Meadows and cousins; Bryan Meadows, John Wayne Cox, Jr., Lek Vessakosol and Yai Vessakosol.

Tony is survived by his wife of 15 years, Donnessa (Myers) Vessakosol, daughters; Halley and Addison, parents, Vic and Floy Vessakosol, sister, Krista Hibbs and spouse Dr. Doug, brother Timmy Vessakosol, sisters-in-law, Amanda Henry and spouse David and Jennifer Fernandez and spouse Steve and brother-in-law, Steven Myers and spouse Stephanie; nieces and nephews Helen Hope Hibbs, Joey Henry, Ann Henry, Elena Fernandez, Natalie Fernandez, Emily Fernandez and Caelan Myers.

He was laid to rest in Friendship Cemetery, Gladewater, Texas. For the full obituary and a full list of surviving relatives, please visit [Rest Haven Funeral Home](#).



Leonard Ray Jackson

Leonard Ray Jackson, 33, passed away Sept. 10. Leonard was born to Donna Melton on Sept. 28, 1983, at Talihina, Oklahoma.

He was preceded in death by his grandmother Loretta Melton and grandfather Melvin Jackson Sr.

Leonard is survived by his mother Donna Melton; brother Mitchell and Souphi Melton; two sisters Marsha Melton, and Teresa Jackson; three nephews Daquinlin Pell, Dylan Melton, and Seth Murray; niece Nystazhia Melton; grandfather James Melton; numerous family and a host of friends.

Graveside Services were held Sept. 18 at the New Talihina Cemetery. For the full obituary, please visit [Burkhart Funeral Service](#).



Glenn Dale Billy

Glenn Dale Billy, 63, passed away July 26 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Glenn was born Jan. 23, 1954, in Talihina, Oklahoma, to Clelland Billy and Rose Willie Billy.

Glenn was preceded in death by his father, sister, Karen Billy; grandparents, Simon and Hattie Billy and Simon and Laura Willie.

Glenn is survived by his son, mother, one sister, Janice McCaulley and spouse Marshall, nieces and nephews, Karen and Steve St. Hilaire, Samuel and Jason Brown and Clayton McCaulley; great-nieces and nephews, Gracie St. Hilaire, Giana St. Hilaire, Maya, Messiah and Knight Brown and one uncle, Ed Billy.

For the full obituary, please visit [Bunch-Singleton Funeral Home Chapel](#).



Darla Sue (Bailey) Carrington

Darla Sue (Bailey) Carrington, 58, passed away July 12.

Darla was born June 26, 1959, to James and Mary Bailey at Houston, Texas.

Darla is survived by her parents, three children, Lisa McGillvary, Raina Martin and April Buchanan; two brothers, James Bailey Jr. and Doyle Bailey; one sister, Loretta Nalley; six grandchildren, Cody Slawson, Samatha Slawson, Waylon Kelley, Amanda Kelley, James Martin, Braxtyn Buchanan; and numerous family and friends.

For the full obituary, please visit [Burkhart Funeral Service](#).



Shaun Anthony Noah

Shaun Anthony Noah, 31, passed away Oct. 28. Shaun was born March 19, 1986, in Talihina, Oklahoma to Johnson Lee and Martha Lou (Sullivan) Noah.

Shaun was preceded in death by his father, Johnson Noah; maternal grandparents, J.L. and Betty Sullivan; maternal great-grandparents, Carlo and Esien Wade; paternal grandparents, Culbertson and Ora Noah; uncles, Donald Noah and Culbertson Noah, Jr.; great-uncle, Cecil Wade; and aunt, Marilyn "Kaye" Thomas.

Shaun is survived by his mother, Martha Noah; brothers, Bo Noah, and wife, Andrea, and Chris Noah; sisters, Melanie Noah and Kaylyn Noah; and a host of other relatives and friends.

Shaun was laid to rest at Battiest Cemetery in Battiest, Oklahoma.

For the full obituary, please visit [Brumley Funeral Home](#).



Leo Lowrimore

Leo Lowrimore, 88, passed away July 30.

Leo was born Feb. 11, 1929, in Lona Valley, Oklahoma to Henry and Viola Lowrimore.

Leo was preceded in death by his parents, Henry and Viola Lowrimore; his wife of 61 years, Naomi Lowrimore.

Leo is survived by his two daughters, Toni and husband Josef Fritz, Patti Lowrimore; a sister, Sybil Foster.

Leo was laid to rest at Quinton Cemetery.

For the full obituary, please visit [King & Shearwood Funeral Home](#).



Dora Maye Dennis

Dora Maye Dennis, 81, passed away Nov. 15 in Whitefield, Oklahoma.

Dora was born Oct. 1, 1936, in Elk City, Oklahoma to Hazel Elizabeth (Hollomon) and General Dallas Cooper.

Dora was preceded in death by five brothers, Jimmy Wayne Cooper, Adam Cooper, SA Malone, Dallas Cooper and an infant brother, one sister, Elsie Benton and her parents.

She is survived by her husband of 63 years, Wendell Dennis, three daughters, Donna Hatfield and spouse Ray Hatfield, Betty Buckner and spouse Tommy Buckner and Norma Buckner and spouse Elmer Buckner, one son, Irvin Dennis, one sister, Loretta Taylor, two brothers, John Leroy Cooper and spouse Tara Cooper, Calvin Warren and spouse Melva Warren, seven grandchildren, Travis, Melissa, Bud, Kent, Heather, T.J., Jolene "Jo", and 19 great-grandchildren.

Dora was laid to rest at Sans Bois Cemetery in Kinta, Oklahoma.

For the full obituary, please visit [Mallory-Martin Funeral Home](#).



Obituary Policy

Obituary submissions are for Choctaw tribal members and are free of charge. The Biskinik will only accept obituary notices from funeral homes. Family members/individuals may still submit funeral notices as long as the notice is from the funeral home or printed in their local newspapers through a funeral home service. Full-length handwritten notices will not be accepted. The Biskinik strives to serve all Choctaws, therefore, any handwritten notices received will be searched online for official funeral home notices. If none are found, efforts will be made to contact the family and make arrangements for an official notice. Due to space limitations, there is a 150 word limit for obituaries. Full obituaries can be read online.

Send official obituary notices to:

Biskinik
PO Box 1210
Durant OK 74702
or email: biskinik@ChoctawNation.com

Iti Fabussa Last Choctaw Removal to Ardmore

As Choctaw people, we embrace our sacred duty to honor our ancestors.

Whether they left our homeland on the Trail of Tears during the first removal period in the 1830s, or subsequent removals, their courage and resilient spirit live on when we remember.

This Christmas we would like to share an almost forgotten story of Choctaw ancestors who made their way by train to Ardmore, Indian Territory, during the

long trip westward.

Once in Ardmore, they were essentially imprisoned in the Love Building, east of the Santa Fe railroad tracks on Main Street.

They had no sanitation, no heat, no ventilation and inadequate food for the duration of the brutal winter. Some of these Mississippi Choctaw were later moved out onto farms in the surrounding Ardmore area to avoid detection.

By the closing of the Dawes Rolls in 1907, the attorney and his financial backers reportedly claimed to have liens on over 90 percent of Mississippi Choctaw allotted lands in exchange for their safe removal to Indian Territory.

What is worse, his company of men planned to sell each of the Mississippi Choctaw into slavery. It is not known how they planned to avoid the 14th Amendment or whom they planned to sell the Mississippi Choctaw to, but at least one individual was sold to a citizen of Purcell with plans to sell more (Day 1903).

In early February of 1903, someone alerted the Commission to the Five Civilized Tribes to the attorney's scheme and reported the horrible condition of the recently emigrated Mississippi Choctaw in Ardmore.

The Commission to the Five Civilized Tribes responded by sending Horace Day to investigate. He arrived on February 12 and used the next week to interview Mississippi Choctaw families around Ardmore.

Day learned that the attorney had coaxed each of the stranded Mississippi Choctaw to Ardmore with the promise of a built home, horses, wagons, and ample supplies of food and necessities, in exchange for half of their allotted land for three years, then they could purchase the land back.

After making the trip, they received none of what they were promised. Instead, they lived with 20 or more individuals in a one room house, barely enough clothes to cover them, no food, no shoes, and in the most desperate conditions.

During the first month along, at least 10 died from pneumonia or other ailments. Survivors were threatened with arrest and imprisonment if they attempted to return to Mississippi.

The Commission to the Five Civilized Tribes did not issue a statement about the situation, but Mississippi Choctaw were allotted their lands without liens later that spring.

Some settled near Ardmore in the immediate area, others as far south as Marietta and as far north as Purcell. A few made their way east to Atoka to settle with other Choctaw families.

The Mississippi Choctaw held a deep passion for the preservation of their culture, especially their songs, dances, and dress.

These Choctaw people lived together in communities away from Euro-American society; a number of them practiced traditional medicine. Having signed contracts they could not read, they were loaded like cattle into box cars, for the

This passion led to the formation of the Choctaw-Chickasaw Heritage Committee of Ardmore, Oklahoma (Levine 1993).

The committee hosted both private and public outdoor traditional gatherings for the community, some lasting through the night (Levine 1993).

Gatherings were held outside at a well-maintained Choctaw dance ground in the Yellow Hills, near Ardmore (Levine 1993).

Singers cycled through over 400 songs while dancers performed deeply symbolic dances (Levine 1993). To the best of our knowledge, these same ancestors were responsible for bringing to Oklahoma the Choctaw diamond shirt and diamond dress we wear today.

Those of us with Mississippi Choctaw on our CDIB cards have ancestors who survived these last Trail of Tears removals.

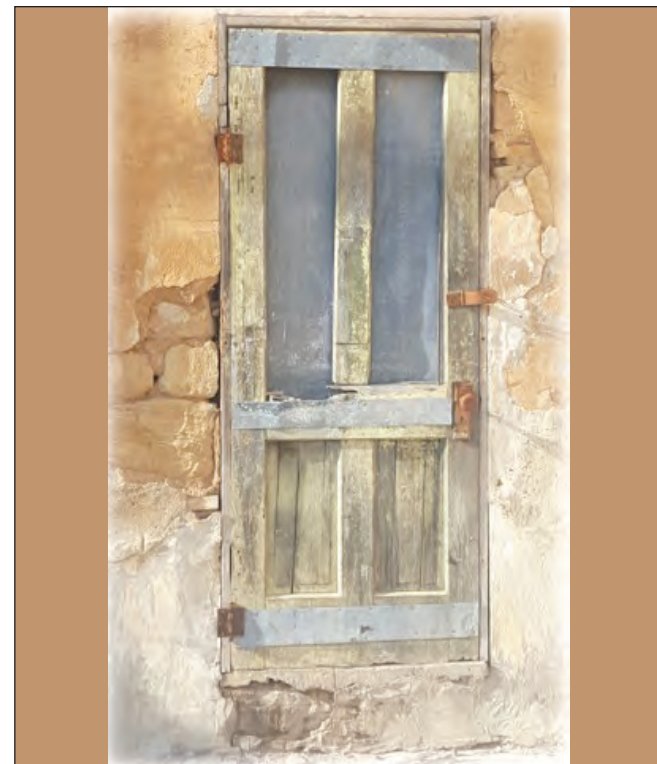
As we enjoy this Christmas, let us take a moment to remember all of our ancestors for their courage, their loss, their sacrifice, and their resilient spirit along the Trail of Tears. It is in us, that they live on.

The Historic Preservation Department continues to research the families that settled in Indian Territory during this time period and would like to learn more from our readers.

Does your family have stories from these last Trail of Tears removals to share?

If so, please contact either Deanna Byrd at dbyrd@choctawnation.com or 580-924-8280 ext. 2353 or Joseph Wolf at jwolf@choctawnation.com 580-924-8280 ext. 2559.

For a list of the sources mentioned in this article please go to www.ChoctawNation.com and click on the History tab.



Courtesy of Deanna Byrd, RPA, Choctaw Nation Historic Preservation Department

Love Building doorway in Ardmore, Oklahoma. Choctaws coming from Mississippi were kept in the Love Building. There was no sanitation, no heat, no ventilation and not enough food to last the winter.

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last removals. We hope to honor them as we remember their journey.

With Oklahoma statehood fast approaching, the United States Congress sought to dissolve the Choctaw Nation in Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma) and redistribute land to individual tribal members.

The General Allotment Act, or Dawes Act, was enacted for this purpose on Feb. 8, 1887.

As part of this effort, the federal government offered land allotments to Choctaw people who were still in Mississippi if they would relocate to Indian Territory.

Since many Choctaw living in Mississippi could not afford their own emigration expenses out west, the United States government planned to assist moving them in a series of removals by train before the closing of the rolls on March 4, 1907.

In researching these last removals, it became clear that land speculators used the most dishonorable methods to entice Mississippi Choctaw to go west with them, instead of waiting for free transportation from the federal government.

Sponsored by investment companies and politicians, they took full advantage of the language barrier faced by the Mississippi Choctaw people and their distrust of the government.

Land speculators used attorneys to draw up contracts in English and schemed to offer financial assistance for an alternative safe passage to Indian Territory.

Faced with the prospect of possibly being mistreated at the hands of the government, many Choctaw families in Mississippi reluctantly signed these contracts in exchange for liens on up to half their allotted lands (Roberts 1986:95).

One particular scheme was allegedly led by an Ardmore-based attorney. He organized several waves of migrations of Mississippi Choctaw people into Indian Territory, totaling over 1,000 individuals.

The attorney specifically targeted full blood, traditional Choctaw people that spoke little to no English.

Jones Academy Hosts Family Fun Day Fiesta



by David Sanchez

Jones Academy Superintendent Jay McAdams greets students and their families in the Jones Academy Gym and welcomes them to the Family Day.

by DAVID SANCHEZ

Family Day was held at Jones Academy on Oct. 14.

The day proved to be a day of fun, festivities and fiesta.

Staff, students and family gathered for the annual event on a warm and sunny Saturday afternoon.

An enthusiastic crowd of about 150 family members and guests attended the celebration.

The event allowed the students to visit with their families and friends after

nine weeks of enduring the intense labor of school and learning.

The fiesta theme was a salute to southwest traditions.

The gym was filled with music, carnival games, refreshments, prizes, a sombrero cakewalk and family photos.

There were outdoor activities as well, including snow cones, games and inflatables on the campus grounds.

The free time allowed Jones Academy Superintendent Jay McAdams,

Jones Academy Elementary School Principal Robert Ray, along with teachers and staff to visit with families and parents of students in a relaxed and leisurely setting.

The dining room staff provided guests and students with lunch and dinner, including a Mexican food entree of beef tacos, cheese nachos, beans and rice for dinner.

Family Day was a festive success. At the end of the day, one could hear a collective cry from the crowd of "Caramba!"

Reserve your 2018 Labor Day RV Site

In order to reserve an RV site with electric and water hookups for the 2018 Labor Day Festival, please mail the reservation request form below no earlier than January 2, 2018. RV sites will be reserved on a lottery style basis.

Please include a copy of your CDIB card only. Make sure you include the Year, Make, Model, length and number of slide outs of your RV/camper.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND ANY MONEY AT THIS TIME.

If your name is drawn, you will be notified by mail. At that time you will send in your cashier's check or money order in the amount of \$75.00. **NO PERSONAL CHECKS WILL BE ACCEPTED**

No phone reservations will be accepted.

Please only send one reservation per family. We will do our best to respect the requests for preferred RV sites; however, we cannot guarantee you will get the pad number requested.

Please watch the Biskinik newspaper for future articles or changes in RV Reservations

2018 RV Space Reservation

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Daytime Phone Number _____

CELL Phone Number _____

Email Address where you can be contacted _____

RV Camper description: Year: _____ Make: _____ Model _____

Length of RV/Travel Trailer: _____ **(this is very important)**

Number of slide-outs _____ Width of slide-outs _____

No reservations will be accepted prior to January 2, 2018

Please return to:

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
Attn: Janita Jeffreys
RV Reservations
2101 West Arkansas Street
Durant, OK 74701

District 9 Councilmember James Dry visits the Early Head Start in Durant on Sept. 20, where he reads stories to students.

A crowd of children gather around and point out different pictures as he reads the story.



by Deidre Elrod

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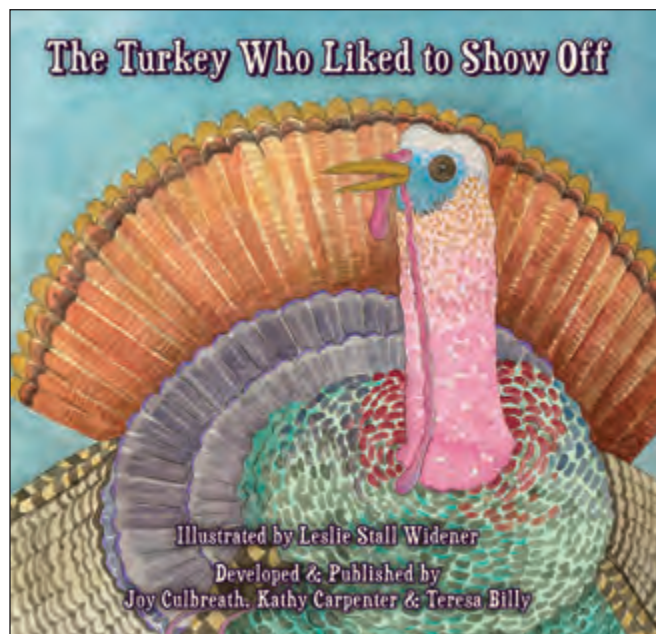



Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma FAITH • FAMILY • CULTURE



Choctaw Children's Book Released

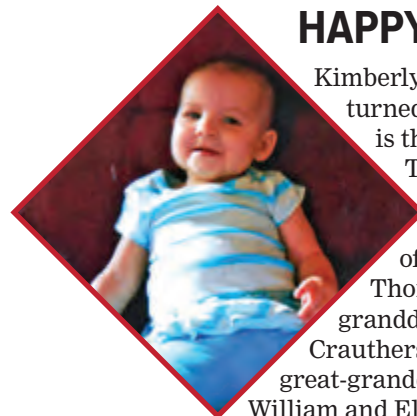
"The Turkey Who Liked to Show Off" First in Series



"The Turkey Who Liked to Show Off" is the first in a series of children's books which will feature Choctaw "shukha anumpa" or "pig tales."

The book introduces children to Choctaw words and includes a Choctaw to English translation. It is currently available at the Choctaw Store in the Choctaw Welcome Center of Colbert, Oklahoma and online at www.choctawstore.com. It will soon be available at the Choctaw Nation Headquarters. Updates will be posted on the Choctaw Store Facebook page.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



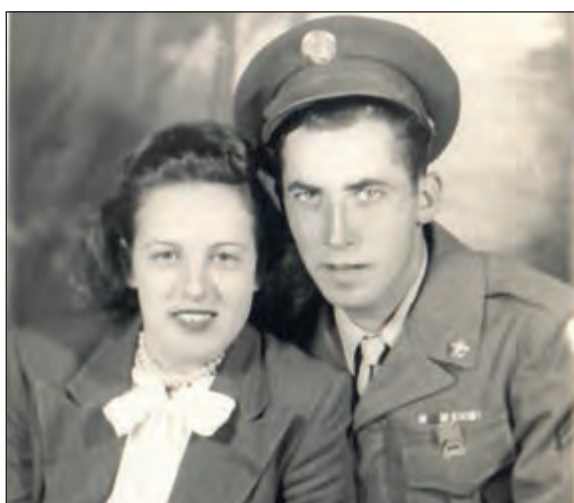
Kimberly Ruth Leamond turned 1 on Sept. 19. She is the daughter of Aine Thorne and John Leamond, the granddaughter of John and Marie Thorne, the great-granddaughter of LaHome Crauthers and the great-great-granddaughter of the late William and Ella Murphy.

TO YOU

Gianna Jones turned 16 on Jan. 2. Gianna is a sophomore at Norfolk Academy in Norfolk, Virginia. She plays violin in the orchestra and is on the drama team. Gianna has traveled with her grandparents to China, Greece, Germany, Switzerland and throughout the U. S. Her dream is to become a Psychologist.



The Thomases Celebrate 75th Anniversary



Jay and Geraline are celebrating 75 years of marriage.

Jay and Geraline Thomas celebrated their 75th wedding anniversary on Nov. 25.

They were married on Wednesday, Nov. 25, 1942. Jay served in the United States Army Air Corps during World War II.

Geraline Thomas is the granddaughter of original Choctaw Nation enrollee Della McIntyre.

Both Geraline and Jay are originally from the Mead/Silo area or rural Oklahoma.

Jay and Geraline Thom-

as have lived in either Durant, Oklahoma or Mead, Oklahoma for the majority of their marriage.

Jay and Geraline have two daughters, Deanna Leuzinger, and Natoma Stephens and spouse Buddy Stephens.

They also have three grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Interestingly, the day after they were married, the classic romantic drama film Casablanca, premiered at the Hollywood Theatre in New York City.

AND YOU



Wallace Berry Henry turned 90-years-old on Nov. 9. He was born in 1927, to Martha Ellen (McMurtrey) Henry and William Henry. His family says, "We love you!"

AND YOU

Brecklyn Rae Newcomb recently celebrated her first birthday. Brecklyn's parents are Lane and Paige Newcomb, her grandparents are Brent and Tiffany Newcomb and Wayne and Melissa Burrows and her great-grandparents are Jerry and Peggy Newcomb, Randall and Linda Robinson and Debbie McCowan.



AND YOU



Bianca Genevieve Fuller turns 13 on Dec. 17. Her family says, "Our precious angel is going from a tween to teen. She is such a blessing and has brought such joy to our lives. Happy Birthday Bianca, we love you to the moon and back." Love, Dad and Princess.

Happy 60th Anniversary to Kay and Michael Basura



Kay and Michael are all smiles on their wedding day June 15, 1957.

On June 15, 1957, Michael and Kay Basura were married in the Shatto Chapel of The First Congressional Church in Los Angeles, California.

They have two sons, Brian and his spouse Claudia, and Bruce and his spouse Melissa, and three grandchildren, Michelle and Michael Yuma and John Denali.

They said, "We are blessed to be able to celebrate 60 years together and with our family."



Michael and Kay are celebrating 60 years of marriage.



Wright City and Idabel Language Classes Graduate



Wright City and Idabel Chahta Anumpa Aikhnanchi Conversational Choctaw class, taught by Eleanor Caldwell, received Certificates of Completion in May. Top, from left Completing the Idabel class were Tammy Baker, Joyce Beck, Tracy Cooper, Sharon Logan, Bruce Jacob, Carrie Logan, Pamela Middleton and Flo Crosby. Bottom, from left from the Wright City class are Carolyn Bohanon, Stacy Caldwell, Jackie Davis, Tina Parker and Shirley Geller.

Young Man Sets Up Vegetable Stand



Brycen Shannon, 7, sells vegetables at the Founder's Day celebration in Pittsburg, Oklahoma.

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FAITH ♦ FAMILY ♦ CULTURE

Choctaw Poet Tells Stories of the Southwest in New Chapbook

By KENDRA GERMANY

Storytelling has always been a part of Choctaw culture. Our ancestors used storytelling to pass down our history.

Today, storytelling is still alive and well.

We have many talented artists, authors, and poets that use their talents to share stories. One of those storytellers is Choctaw tribal member and poet J. Todd Hawkins.

Hawkins uses his storytelling talents to tell the stories of Texas and the Southwest region.

Hawkins has a unique way of approaching poetry, seeking inspiration in his-

Hawkins says that it wasn't until he was exposed to great literature in high school that he truly fell in love with writing.

Hawkins went on to attend college at the University of Texas at Austin, where he earned his B.A. in English.

"I encountered a lot of other great poets. Around the time I was in college, I started writing for an audience. Shortly after that, I got a couple of pieces published. Ever since then, I've continued to write and get a piece published here and there. That led up to the chapbook publication," said Hawkins.

Hawkins' chapbook, titled "Ten Counties Away," is published by Finishing Press.

"Ten Counties Away" focuses on life in the southwest.

"I tend to write historical poetry, using different historical persona as subject matter. I kind of try to focus on some of the history, not the major figures, but some of those people that are in the periphery," said Hawkins.

When it comes to his Choctaw roots, Hawkins recalls a memory from his childhood.

"It was third grade, during one of my first biographical essays for school. I was assigned Andrew Jackson. I was like, Andrew Jackson! He's great. President of the United States and hero of the War of 1812. I wrote this great essay about Andrew Jackson and I showed it to my dad. He told me what he thought of Andrew Jackson in language that probably would not be appropriate for this venue," laughed Hawkins. "That was one of the first instances where I found out that there was a different story than the one you learn in school. That was an opportunity for him to discuss the Trail of Tears. That kind of fostered my interest in looking beyond the stories you encounter for their face value and delving a little deeper."

Hawkins uses his poetry to tell the stories of Natives as well.

"One of the poems in my chapbook concerns Sylvia Ridley, who was a Choctaw internee at the Hiawatha Asylum for Insane Indians. I got the opportunity to research her life. There's just not a lot known. I could go back and look at historical sources to find out about her, and try to kind of give her a voice," said Hawkins.



by Kendra Germany

Tribal member and poet J. Todd Hawkins reads a poem from his chapbook, *Ten Counties Away*, at a poetry reading at Deep Vellum Books in the Deep Ellum entertainment district in Dallas on Oct. 20.

Hawkins enjoys giving a voice to the individuals he writes about.

Hawkins also encourages other Choctaws out there who are interested in poetry to write. His advice is to simply write.

"Write, write, write, write. Write as much as you possibly can," said Hawkins. "There are two reasons to write poetry. You write poetry for yourself and you write poetry for an audience. It's just like anything else. You have to practice. The more you write, even if it's not something you're going to be proud of or want others to read it's good practice."

For more of J. Todd Hawkins' story, visit the ChoctawNationOK YouTube page.

To keep up with J. Todd Hawkins events and news visit www.jtoddhawkins.com. If you would like to purchase the chapbook "Ten Counties Away," it is available for purchase at www.finishingpress.com/product/ten-counties-away-by-todd-hawkins.

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historical sources and family stories that relate to the little-known stories of the Southwest.

"A lot of my poems will focus on kind of rural subject matter, which isn't something you often see in poetry these days," said Hawkins "It tends to be a little more urban."

Hawkins chose rural Texas and Southwest life as his subject matter from personal experiences.

"We've got a family ranch that's not too far from Austin. A lot of my poems focus on the land and being in that part of the state," said Hawkins.

Hawkins and his wife Shannon live in the Fort Worth area, and they have three children. In his professional life, Hawkins works as an editor for an educational publishing company and does poetry on the side.

Though poetry isn't his main source of income, Hawkins has been making a name for himself in an industry that he enjoys.

His journey started at a young age.

"In middle school, I started writing as just a part of expression, not necessarily writing for an audience. Just journaling and things like that," explained Hawkins.

— YOUTH OF THE NATION —

My Educational Plans

by
KayLindra Rains

When I was 13 years old something happened in my family that affected my future occupational choice.

My father had a massive heart attack. It was a shock to my family.

From my perspective as a young girl I had never had to face the idea of death for someone close to me that I loved.

However, at 13 I was old enough to recognize the impact my dad's heart attack was having on my whole family.

This was an extremely scary time of not knowing what was going to happen: whether he would live, what that would mean for our family, for me, and how I would go on without him if he didn't make it. Looking back on that period, it was also an eye-opening realization that death can happen any time to anyone. This was a powerful instance in my childhood.

It was the experience in the hospital when I began to understand the abilities, strength, and service of a nurse. He or she needs the knowledge to help fix the problems in the body. And in addition to that, they have the ability to help the ill person's loved ones too.

As much as my mom tried to reassure me that we were going to be okay, I was still frightened. Seeing him in the hospital bed connected to machines and waiting to find out how the surgery had gone, are moments that are seared into my memory. And so are the nurses.

They were kind and patient. They didn't talk to me like I was annoying them with my questions. They answered me honestly, with understanding and sympathy. It was the first time I had seen him so weak. And the nurses treated him with dignity and importance.

From that experience, I learned that the meaning and purpose of nursing is to serve others; whether they are sick in their body, like my dad, or sick in their heart, like me.

I want to serve others this way too, and positively impact both the patients and their families. I'll never forget the nurses and I want to give the same kindness and care to people who find themselves in the position I was in five years ago.

Serving others is the Choctaw way and I am excited about the possibility of serving my tribe at one of the clinics or the hospital. I have been working towards my educational goal for two years as a concurrent student at Southeastern Oklahoma State University.

I hope to win this scholarship because it will help me reach my goal to complete my Bachelors of Science in Nursing degree after my high school graduation. I am a responsible girl and these funds will go to books, tuition, room, and board. Thank you for taking the time to read this essay about my educational plans. Yakoke!

Editors Note: This was the first place essay for the CDIB Scholarship. The second and third place essays will be in upcoming issues of the Biskinik.



Photo Provided

YAB Bryan County Chapter Secretary Aliyah Tomlinson, left, presents the first place CDIB scholarship to KayLindra Rains, right.

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Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Chahta Anumpa

Aiikhvna

◆◆◆ Lesson of the Month ◆◆◆

Conversational Phrases

1. I am happy to see you. Chi pisa li kv̄t, sv nayukpa...or...na sv yukpa.
2. I am happy to meet you. Chi afvma li kv̄t, sv nayukpa...or...na sv yukpa.
3. I am happy you came. Ish vla tuk a, sv nayukpa...or...na sv yukpa.
4. Come back again! Anonti, falamvt ish vla chike!
5. Would you open the door for me? Okhisa is sy tiwa hinla ho?
6. Would you open the door for him? Okhisa ish i tiwa hinla ho?
7. Is that door open? Okhisa mvt tiwa ho?
8. Close that door. Okhisa ma akv̄mi.
9. Who is with you? Kv̄ta hosh chi awant is chi?
10. I want to go too. Vno akkia ia sv bv̄nna. *Con conversationally* Vnak kia ia sv bv̄nna.
11. I want to eat too. Vno akkia impa sv bv̄nna. *Con conversationally* Vnak kia impa sv bv̄nna.
12. Are you going by yourself? Chishno ak bano hosh ish ia chi ho? *Con conversationally* Chishnak bano hosh ish ia chi ho?
13. Where are you? Katimma ish aya?
14. What were you doing? Nanta ish vtta tuk?
15. What did you do? Nanta ish katimi tuk?
16. What's the matter with you? Nanta hosh chim akatimi?
17. I am glad to hear that. Ma haklo li kv̄t, sa nayukpa...or...na sv yukpa.
18. I'll be back soon. Chekosikma ish falama chi ho?
19. Will you be back soon? Chekosikma ish falama chi ho?
20. Are you coming back? Falvmvt ish vla chi ho?
21. I will go and return. Ont falama la chi.

www.choctawschool.com

FREE ACT PREP WORKSHOP

Thursday, December 7, 2017

Kiamichi VoTech Center

3205 NE Lincoln Rd
Idabel, OK 74745

8:30 -9:00 a.m.

Registration

9:00 a.m.-noon

Workshop

Requirements for eligibility:

- Must be a Choctaw CDIB card holder OR a Talent Search Student
- Must be enrolled in grades 9-12
- Pre-registration is required (call 800-522-6170, ext 2711)

EDUCATIONAL TALENT SEARCH

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
800-522-6170, EXT. 2711

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Veterans Honored During Ceremony at Tvshka Homma

by STACY HUTTO

On a cool and windy Saturday morning, under gray clouds, Chahta veterans were honored on the Choctaw Capitol Grounds at Tvshka Homma on Nov. 11. Over 600 people were at the Choctaw Nation's 2017 Annual Veterans Ceremony.

The ceremony was held on the stone stage, which is near the memorials for Chahta warriors killed in action during the War on Terrorism, Vietnam, Korea, World War I and World War II, as well as the memorial for the Choctaw Code Talkers.

Before the ceremony began, Choctaw veterans were given a new jacket and hat. They were also given a ticket to be entered into a drawing for the Veterans Hunt.

Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. welcomed veterans and their families and Tribal Council Chaplain Jennifer Woods gave the invocation.

The Choctaw Nation Color Guard posted the colors and the Talihina High School Marching band played the National Anthem.

Scott Wesley's powerful voice filled the valley as he sang "The Lord's Prayer," accompanied by Miss Choctaw Nation Breanna Jefferson, Junior Miss Choctaw Nation Jade Cossey and Little Miss Choctaw Nation Mya Thomas, who performed the song in sign language.

Wesley took the stage once again to present the Tvshka Chunkash, or Heart of the Warrior, Scholarship. The Tvshka Chunkash Scholarship was established in 2013 and is the result of donations given to the Chahta Foundation by retired veteran Teri Scroggins, according to the Chahta Foundation.

The scholarship was created to help active duty and retired United States armed services veterans who are seeking post secondary higher education.

The 2017 Tvshka Chunkash Scholarship recipient is Jason Clinton. Unfortunately, Clinton was unable to attend the Veterans Ceremony in Tvshka Homma.

He served in the Navy and is a public administration major. Clinton has served with the Las Vegas Fire rescue for 16 years and is currently a captain.

According to Clinton, "Being Choctaw means that I am part of something greater than myself and part of a proud people who are making their mark on

our nation." Clinton lives in Las Vegas, Nevada with his wife and two children.

The Talihina High School Marching Band played the Army's "The Army Goes Rolling Along," the Marine Corps' "The Marines Hymn," the Navy's "Anchors Aweigh," the Air Force's "Official U.S. Air Force Song," and the Coast Guard's "Semper Paratus." Assistant Chief Austin encouraged veterans to stand and be recognized when the band played their branch's song.

When Chief Gary Batton took the stage he spoke about today's veterans having the "heart of a warrior."

He also said the Choctaw Nation has been accredited by the Veterans Affairs and can now track and process various applications.

To date, "Four million dollars in claims have benefited Choctaw veterans," according to Chief Batton.

The Choctaw Nation has assisted in flying 121 missions, getting veterans and their families to hospitals, home and more as part of the Veterans Airlift Command.

"The Choctaw Nation is number two in the country for assisting with the Veteran Airlift Command," Chief Batton said.

The guest speaker was Choctaw employee, City of Durant mayor and U.S. Marine Corps veteran Jerry Tomlinson.

"We're here today to honor our service members and to remember the sacrifices they have made and the courage it takes to defend honor, duty and country," Tomlinson said.

He went on to talk about his own family's history in the military that went all the way back to the Revolutionary War.

In addition to honoring veterans, the ceremony also honored the spouses and family members who kept the home fires burning.

One of the sponsors of the ceremony was the Choctaw Nation Veterans Advocacy Department.

They are available to help veterans in filing service-related claims, receiving medical and military records and other help.

The department regularly sends care packages to active military in combat zones.

Veterans Advocacy can be reached at (800) 522-6170, or by email at veteransadvocacy@ChoctawNation.com.



Louie Hattensty was at the Veterans Ceremony with his granddaughters. Louie wore a shirt honoring the members of his family who served in the military. The front says "Choctaw, Some Gave All" and lists Thomas Paul Hattensty-S.S. and Lola Pearl Hattensty-Gold Star. The back says "All Gave Some" and lists T.P. Hattensty-KIA (Tommy Hattensty is listed on the World War II Monument, below, at Tvshka Homma.), James R.-Purple Heart, LeRoy B.-Purple Heart, Jack E. S.S. and Louie A.-S.S. Pictured, from left, are Haley Hamilton, Jennifer Briscoe, Louie Hattensty and Nataleigh Briscoe.



Nataleigh Briscoe shows the back of the shirt she and her grandfather, Louie Hattensty, are wearing. The back of the shirt lists Louie and his brothers.



The Choctaw Nation Color Guard opened the Veterans Day Ceremony by posting the colors. At the end of the ceremony they gave a 21-gun salute and the bugler played "Taps."



Jason Clinton, a captain with the Las Vegas Fire rescue and Navy veteran, is the 2017 recipient of the Tvshka Chunkash, or Heart of the Warrior, Scholarship.



Jerry Tomlinson was the guest speaker at the Veterans Ceremony. Tomlinson is a Marine Corps veteran. He is also the Mayor of Durant and a Choctaw employee.



Over 600 people were at Tvshka Homma on Saturday, Nov. 11, for the Annual Veterans Day Ceremony.

CHOCTAW HUNTING & FISHING LICENSE

Must be a Choctaw tribal member and Oklahoma resident

2017 licenses will be automatically renewed for 2018 and mailed to the address on your previous application.

If you applied in 2017 and did not receive your license, contact us by phone or email below.

New applications are currently being taken for 2018:

- Request an application be mailed to you or apply by phone 580-924-8280, ext. 2503
- Email huntingandfishing@choctawnation.com
- Online huntingandfishing.choctawnation.com

DISCOVER THE SPIRIT OF OUTDOORS

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Photos by Lisa Reed and Stacy Hutto

Do you have an address change for the Biskinik?

If you are not receiving your copy of the Biskinik, or need to change your address, please give us a call.

We'll make sure your contact information is correct.

The Circulation Department can be reached at:

(800) 522-6170
Ext. 2116, 2409, or 2310

From the Choctaw Nation Mail Room

When sending mail to the Nation please address as follows:

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
(Name of Department)
P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702

If You're A Choctaw Veteran, We Want You.

Tell us your story for a video library. Send your information to the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Veterans Advocacy. veteransadvocacy@choctawnation.com

Contact Roger Hamill
Deputy Director
(800)522-6170 ext. 2100

Senior Citizens Dinners & Kids Parties

| Event | Date | Time |
|-----------------------------|-------|------------|
| Antlers Kids | 12/3 | 2 p.m. |
| Antlers Seniors | 12/13 | Noon |
| Atoka Kids | 12/7 | 5 p.m. |
| Atoka Seniors | 12/6 | Noon |
| Bethel/Battiest Kids | 12/18 | 6 p.m. |
| Bethel/Battiest Seniors | 12/13 | 11:30 a.m. |
| Broken Bow Kids | 12/15 | 6 p.m. |
| Broken Bow Seniors | 12/20 | 11:30 a.m. |
| Buffalo Valley Kids | 12/5 | 6 p.m. |
| Coalgate Kids | 12/6 | Noon |
| Coalgate Seniors | 12/9 | 1 p.m. |
| Crowder Kids | 12/13 | 11:30 a.m. |
| Crowder Seniors | 12/1 | 6 p.m. |
| Durant Kids | 12/20 | 11:30 a.m. |
| Durant Seniors | 12/15 | 6 p.m. |
| Hugo Kids | 12/13 | 11:30 a.m. |
| Hugo Community | 12/13 | 6 p.m. |
| Idabel Kids | 12/18 | 6 p.m. |
| Idabel Seniors | 12/19 | 6 p.m. |
| McAlester Kids | 12/9 | 1 p.m. |
| McAlester Seniors | 12/13 | 11:15 a.m. |
| Poteau Kids | 12/16 | 4 p.m. |
| Poteau Seniors | 12/19 | 11 a.m. |
| Quinton Kids | 12/7 | 6 p.m. |
| Smithville Kids | 12/12 | Noon |
| Smithville Seniors | 12/20 | 4 p.m. |
| Spiro Kids | 12/20 | 11:30 a.m. |
| Spiro Seniors | 12/13 | 11:30 a.m. |
| Stigler Community | 12/14 | 4 p.m. |
| Stigler Kids | 12/17 | 2 p.m. |
| Summerfield Kids | 12/15 | 7 p.m. |
| Talihina Kids | 12/15 | 7 p.m. |
| Talihina Seniors | 12/18 | 11:45 a.m. |
| Tvshka Homma Cafeteria Kids | 12/2 | 2 p.m. |
| Wilburton Kids | 12/9 | 2 p.m. |
| Wilburton Seniors | 12/13 | Noon |
| Wright City Kids | 12/10 | 2 p.m. |
| Wright City Seniors | 12/14 | Noon |

