



August 2024 Issue



Choctaw Nation prepares for another crowd-pleasing Labor Day Festival

By Kendra Germany-Wall

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma invites everyone to attend this year's Choctaw Labor Day Festival from August 30 through September 1.

In this month's issue of the Biskinik, we bring you a preview of this year's festival, giving you details on what to expect so you can plan your perfect festival trip.

For many years, the Choctaw people have gathered on the grounds of the Choctaw Capitol during Labor Day weekend to celebrate family, fellowship together and honor Choctaw traditions.

Labor Day weekend will be an opportunity for visitors to fellowship and honor Choctaw traditions, with three days of faith, family, and cultural for all ages.

The annual event, held at Tvshka Homma on the grounds of the historic Choctaw Capitol, is southeastern Oklahoma's largest gathering.

Here is a guide to what to expect at this year's festival.

Culture

Choctaw Village- Experience cultural activities and games at the Choctaw Village. Find out more about what to expect at this year's Village on page 8 of the Biskinik.

Chahta Cab- This on-the-spot Choctaw language game is similar to the popular game show Cash Cab. You never know if you will be chosen to participate, so it's a good idea to brush up on your Chahta Anumpa skills before you head out to the festival.

Quilt Show- Throughout the weekend, the Tribal Membership Building will be the venue for this competition, and you can check out beautiful, handmade quilts.

Gourd Dancing- Join in on the dance or enjoy watching the magic happen on Friday, August 30 from 1 p.m.-7 p.m. on the Capitol Lawn.

Eternal Heart Unveiling Ceremony- Join the Choctaw Nation on Friday, August 30, at 1 p.m. for the newest sculpture art unveiling at the Council House. This sculpture honors the relationship between the Choctaw Nation and the people of Ireland. The project was funded jointly by the Choctaw Nation and the Government of Ireland. Samuel Stiitt, of Spokane Valley, Washington, a member of the Choctaw Nation, created the sculpture, combining a Celtic trinity shape intertwined with a heart.

Chief's Welcome Ceremony- Chief Gary Batton will give a welcome speech and State of the Nation preview prior to the princess pageant at the Amphitheater at 4 p.m. on Friday, August 30.

Princess and Royalty Pageant- On Friday, August 30, at 6 p.m., contestants from each district in the Choctaw Nation who have won in their districts will vie to become the Little Miss, Junior Miss or Miss Choctaw Nation.

Buffalo Tours- Throughout the weekend, from 9 a.m.-12 p.m., see the Choctaw Nation's majestic buffalo herd grazing in the beautiful hills outside the festival grounds. These tours depart from the Capitol Museum. Look for the buses behind the museum.

Children's Service- A special message of faith tailored for young guests will be held on Sunday, September 1, in the Chapel from 10 a.m.-11 a.m. A parent or guardian must accompany the children.

Worship Services- Worship services are open to all festival attendees on Sunday, September 1, in the Chapel from 11 a.m.-12 p.m.

The Choctaw Code Talker Association Board Meeting- Association members meet yearly at the Choctaw Labor Day Festival. Join this year's meeting on Sunday, September 1 at 1:30 p.m. in the Capitol Museum.

Traditional Choctaw Hymn Singing- Learn traditional Choctaw hymns and join in the singing on Sunday, September 1, at 7 p.m.

Arts and Crafts Building- Don't forget to check out the Arts and Crafts Building. Here you can buy art and goods from Choctaw Artists and soak in some much needed air conditioning.

Entertainment

Gospel Singing- Enjoy songs of praise from local artist from 12 p.m.-6 p.m. at the Amphitheater.

The Close- The Close is a collective of introspective lyricists who pen genre-blending melodies wrapped in stellar harmonies. Choctaw tribal member Lori Rowton, Shannon Walker and James McKinney share songwriting and lead vocals, originally from Tushka, Oklahoma. Watch them play on Saturday, August 31 at 6 p.m. at the Amphitheater.

Joey Green- Choctaw artist Joey Green has seen tremendous success since appearing on NBC's The Voice. Watch him play on Saturday, August 31 at 6:45 p.m. at the Amphitheater.

Rhett Akins- American country music singer and songwriter Rhett Akins continues the evening's entertainment with his hits. Watch him play Saturday, August 31 at 7:30 p.m. at the Amphitheater.

Rodney Atkins- Rodney Atkins has sold over 14 million records, multiple No. 1 singles, and over 1.5 billion on-demand streams. Watch him play Saturday, August 31 at 9 p.m. at the Amphitheater.

Gold City- Don't miss gospel quartet music at its finest with Gold City. Watch them play Sunday, September 1 at 6 p.m. at the Amphitheater.

Jason Crabb- Don't miss GRAMMY award-winning Jason Crabb as he ministers through his powerhouse performance. Watch him play Sunday, September 1 at 7 p.m. at the Amphitheater.

Casting Crowns- Finish up the festival by listening to a favorite returning Christian group, Casting Crowns. Watch them play Sunday, September 1 at 8:30 p.m. at the Amphitheater.

Wristband Drawing- Children 12 and younger whose parents register them and receive a wristband (in the event of a lost child) will have the opportunity to win a \$100 Visa gift card. Get signed up at the Lost Child Tent.

Mobile Library- All weekend long, the Mobile Library is chance for our young readers to enjoy a good book on the playground. Check it out all three days from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at the playground.

Youth Crafts- Younger festival goers make traditional Choctaw crafts and learn the stories behind them. Check it out Friday, August 30 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at the playground.

Carnival- Check out this crowd favorite attraction for carnival rides, games, food and more from 12 p.m.-12 a.m. Friday and Saturday and 1 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. on Sunday.

Sports

Cornhole Tournament- Teams of two compete in this popular bag toss game (Beginners and Advanced Brackets). Check it out at Red Warrior Park Friday, August 30, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Stickball Tournament- Also known as Little Brother of War, stickball is a fast-paced, exciting game that has ancient roots in Choctaw culture. Teams from across Oklahoma and Mississippi will compete for the title. Check it out Friday, August 30-Sunday, September 1 at the Stickball field.

Youth Physical Fitness Challenge- Young festival guests compete in tests of physical fitness at Red Warrior Park from 5 p.m.-8 p.m. Friday, August 30.

Fast Pitch Softball Tournament- Teams from across Oklahoma and Mississippi compete to win the championship. Check it out Friday, August 30-Sunday, September 1 at Red Warrior Park.

5k- A morning run through the beautiful area around the capitol grounds. The run begins and ends at the Capitol Museum. Check it out Saturday, August 31 from 7 a.m.-10 a.m.

Co-Ed Volleyball- Watch volleyball teams as they compete for the championship from 9 a.m. -2 p.m. at Red Warrior Park.

Horseshoes Tournament- Teams compete in this classic toss game for the championship. Watch Saturday, August 31, from 9 a.m. -8 p.m. at Red Warrior Park.

Bow Shoot (Youth)- Young competitors use traditional long bows to shoot 3-D targets. Check it out from 9 a.m.-11 a.m. in the Choctaw Village on Saturday, August 31.

Bow Shoot (Adult)- Older competitors use traditional Choctaw long bows to shoot at 3-D targets. Check it out from 9 a.m. -11 a.m. in the Choctaw Village on Sunday, September 1.

Fittest Warrior- Watch as the best of the best compete for this physical fitness title. Watch from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. Saturday, August 31 in Red Warrior Park.

War Hoops- Watch 3-on-3 basketball teams compete in this exciting tournament Saturday, August 31, from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at Red Warrior Park.

Tough Tough Contest- A popular strength challenge for men and women. Watch or participate from 4 p.m.-7 p.m. at Red Warrior Park.

Dominos/Checkers Tournament- Participants play to win the championship in this highly competitive tournament. Check it out Sunday, September 1 from 1 p.m.-7 p.m.

For more information on Labor Day sporting events, check out page 12 of this month's Biskinik.

CHECK OUT PAGE 14 FOR THE FULL LIST OF EVENTS.
VISIT LABORDAY.CHOCTAWNATION.COM FOR MORE DETAILS.
FOR UPDATES, TEXT "LABORDAY" TO 888777.



Faith, Family, Culture

Na Yimmi, Chukka Achvffa, Im Aivlhpesa



Chief Gary Batton

Summertime Internships Are a Great Way to Gain Experience

I love summertime in the Choctaw Nation! Opportunities are as plentiful as the soaring temperatures across the reservation. From various summer sports camps for our K-12 students to early career opportunities for our college students via our Choctaw Nation Internship Program, the summer provides Choctaw Nation students of all ages with the chance to learn and improve. It's exciting to see our youth take advantage of the many opportunities that our Nation provides each summer.

Choctaw Nation Internship Program

As you can tell, I'm a big fan of the Choctaw Nation's Internship Program. The program provides opportunities for Choctaw students from area colleges to gain career fundamentals at Choctaw Nation offices throughout the CNO

Reservation while also earning college credits. The program offers temporary, paid positions and is mutually beneficial for both the intern and hosting department.

Students are rewarded with academic and professional experience. CNO benefits from the additional support and expertise interns provide to help meet business and operational needs. This year marks the tenth year that the Choctaw Nation Internship Program has hosted students for its internship program. And from 2014 to 2024, the program has seen significant growth. This year our interns here at the Choctaw Nation are learning about housing, arts, culture, social work, public works, health and wellness just to name a few job topics.

Fifty-one interns representing 25 different educational institutions are participating in the summer program.

The program's goal is to allow interns to get real-world experience and help us hire more tribal members. Some interns are so impressed in their summertime role at the Choctaw Nation that they are offered a full-time job with the Nation after their internship as the program annually helps bring the best and brightest to the Choctaw Nation job force. And it's always one of my favorite days of the summer when I get to meet each year's interns for the first time. I appreciate their focus on their future, and we are thrilled to have our interns here again this year!

If you want to learn more about the internship program, you can contact Sharon Dodson at 800-522-6170. While this year's intern class is set, it's never too early for Choctaw tribal members in college to start thinking about applying for the 2025 class of interns at the Choctaw Nation.

To apply, you will fill out the application on the Chahta Achvffa membership portal. You can also contact Heather Thompson directly at 580-642-7921 for more information.

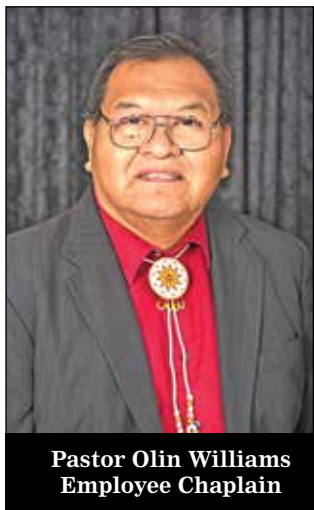
Co-Op Program

The Choctaw Nation also has opportunities for our Co-Op and general seasonal employment for people looking for summer work while school is out. We have internships and camps and other programs that can help out-of-school students looking for work.

The Choctaw Nation's Co-Op Program was developed to identify talent at Southeastern Oklahoma State University (SOSU). The program's primary focus is project-based work that exposes students to challenging and rewarding work experiences.

In the student's senior year, the Co-Op Program focuses on assessing career fields of interest, job shadowing and job placement. Co-Op associates will work 20 hours per week, year-round. Positions are competitive. Positions are posted on careers.choctawnation.com. You can also contact Heather Thompson directly at 580-642-7921 for more information.

There are many great opportunities within the Choctaw Nation in the summer and throughout the year; so, look and find something you might enjoy learning about and sign up. Yakoke and God Bless!



Pastor Olin Williams
Employee Chaplain

The Persistence in Prayer

Matthew 7:7- In the Sermon on the mount, Jesus is explaining the process of prayer.

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you."

Real prayer changes the person praying. Time spent with God in prayer changes the heart and attitude of the person. His inward prayer changes his facial tone.

There is a phrase that says, "the skin of their faces shone." This means being with God for so long; they have developed a face of confidence in the faith and answered prayer. This phrase is taken from Exodus 34: 29,30: "And it came to pass, when Moses came down from Mt Sinai, with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him. And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold the skin

of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him." Sometimes, it is not possible to receive God's answer to prayer within 30 seconds. There may be a need to linger in his presence before a request is granted. That may be the reason the Savior divided prayer into three categories.

First is asking. Asking is petitioning. Seeking is persistence. Knocking means perseverance. If you don't get an answer at first, try again. God likes to know his children mean business. A casual prayer sometimes only reaches the ceiling. A man or woman who is convinced they are praying in God's Will will not cease prayer until God answers. In this type of prayer, God may deal with a person with the request if they are living right and worthy of asking. We quickly tell others; I will pray for you, but never do. This has become part of polite social conversation.



Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.

Labor Day Festival is a Choctaw Nation Labor of Love

One of my favorite Choctaw Nation events that I attend is the annual Labor Day Festival. For many years, the nation has set aside the holiday weekend as a time of faith, family, and culture where all our friends and family have a chance to have fun and fellowship together.

The festival honors Choctaw culture and our ancestors who made the Choctaw Nation what it is today – a thriving, progressive, sovereign, self-empowered tribe. There are many cultural events on the schedule, such as stickball games, the princess pageant, arts and crafts, dancing and native arts and crafts. There will also be concerts, a free 5k run and much more! There are many festival

events, and there is something that will surely cater to your idea of entertainment and fun – and yes, there will be carnival rides and great food as well!

This year's festival is from Aug. 30 through Sept. 1. Chief Batton will kick off the festival with a welcome address to the festival at 4 p.m. at the Amphitheater.

At 1 p.m. the Chief, along with members of the Government of Ireland, will dedicate a new statue, called Eternal Heart, on the Choctaw Capitol grounds that embodies the friendship between the Choctaw Nation and Ireland.

Eternal Heart was selected after a call for submissions. The project is funded jointly by the Choctaw Nation and the Government of Ireland. The winning entry was submitted by a member of the Choctaw Nation, Samuel Stitt, of Spokane Valley in Washington state. The design incorporates both Choctaw and Irish symbolism, with the Celtic trinity shape intertwined with a heart.

The Choctaw and Irish relationship began in 1847, when the Choctaws, who had only recently arrived from "trail of tears and death" to what is now Oklahoma, took up a donation and collected over \$5,000 (in today's money) to support the Irish during the potato famine. The famine ravaged Ireland during the 1840s. The donation was given with such kindness that it forged an unbreakable bond between the Irish and Choctaw that thrives still today.

On Sunday, festival attendees can attend our church services and stay for the Chahta gospel singing. The festival is rooted in our faith, and that will be on display throughout the event. We have entertainment and concerts during the festival, and you are invited to come out to enjoy the weekend with free admission. Take in all the Choctaw Nation has to offer and learn about the Chahta Spirit of Faith, Family and Culture while also having good food, fellowship, entertainment and fun.

ARPA Food Security Programs coming to an end

By Kellie Matherly

Federal law requires the Choctaw Nation to obligate all ARPA funding for the Elder and Disability Food Security Programs by the end of December 2024.

To help tribal members for as long as possible through these services, the Nation will roll out a final set of payments intended to cover applicants through September of 2025. Eligible tribal members can apply for assistance starting July 30, 2024.

The Biden Administration's American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) allotted federal funds for relief efforts during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, including a substantial amount paid to tribes to use for projects and assistance programs on reservations across the country. The Choctaw Nation received \$944 million in initial funding.

According to Council Bill 88-21, \$627,154,677 of ARPA funding was allocated to the Tribal Member Relief Fund to provide assistance, "including but not limited to assistance with food security, housing security, necessary living expenses, childcare, and internet and technology access."

Two of the ARPA-funded programs the Nation gave eligible elders and tribal members with disabilities who applied a \$200 per month stipend for groceries. Since its inception, these programs have helped well over 100,000 people.

The initial ARPA funding was always set to expire in December 2024, which is just around the corner, so the Nation has allocated the remaining funds to comply with the federal mandate.

Beginning July 30, 2024, eligible tribal members can apply for the final payments through the Chahta Achvffa Member Portal. Both programs are nationwide. Applications will close September 30, 2024. Once the application is approved, the applicant will receive a new card, which will be loaded each month from October through December.

The structure of the final phase of the program will be \$200 in October and \$200 in November. In December, program participants will receive \$2000, which is meant to cover their \$200 stipends through September 2025.

Eligibility requirements for the Elder Food Security program are as follows:

- Tribal members aged 55-74 with individual income less than \$40,000.
- Tribal members aged 75+ at any individual income level.
- Anyone wishing to receive assistance must apply, even if they have received Food Security funds before.
- Tribal members must attest that they have been negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Eligibility for requirements for the Disability Food Security program are as follows:

- Disabled tribal members under age 55 at any income level.
- Disabled tribal members aged 55-74 making more than \$40,000.
- Anyone wishing to receive assistance must apply, even if they have received Food Security funds before.
- Tribal members must attest that they have been negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is important to remember that tribal members who meet the eligibility criteria for both programs can only receive funding for one of them. Tribal members can get more information at www.choctawnation.com/covidrelief.



HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT SERVICES

OUR GOAL | To assist our students with academic information to promote education and/or career path beyond high school.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL **800.522.6170** OR EMAIL HIGHSCHOOLSTUDENTSERVICES@CHOCTAWNATION.COM

Choctaw Nation High School Student Services

APPLICATIONS ARE OPEN UNTIL AUGUST 31

SSAF APPLICATION NOW OPEN

Parents and students can now apply for the Student School and Activity Fund (SSAF), which provides a \$100 annual grant to purchase school supplies and clothing for eligible Choctaw students.

Submit your application today!

CHOCTAWNATION.COM/SERVICES/SSAF

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For more information scan the QR code

Choctaw Nation College Freshman Year Initiative

Kelbie Kennedy: More than an advocate

By Kellie Matherly

Choctaw tribal member Kelbie Kennedy is a proud citizen of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and serves as the first-ever National Tribal Affairs Advocate for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Born and raised in Buffalo Valley, Oklahoma, Kelbie grew up in a close-knit, rural community known for its farming and cattle-raising. Kelbie's upbringing in Buffalo Valley, surrounded by family, shaped her strong sense of community and responsibility.

"Buffalo Valley has about 3,000 citizens living there, and about 2,800 of them are cattle," Kelbie jokes.

Her early education took place in small local schools, but despite the small size of her schools, she was actively involved in various activities, including Future Farmers of America (FFA), speech and debate, and varsity sports. Her summers were spent working on her family's farm, learning the value of hard work and community support.

"Some of my best memories are from growing up on a farm, everybody helping out," said Kelbie. "Everybody had their role...but it was all going toward helping the family, being able to make sure that we could feed the cattle during the winter."

Her involvement with her tribal community started early, participating in the Choctaw Nation's Youth Advisory Board and attending cultural events. Influenced by her experiences and the encouragement of Chief Gary Batton, Kelbie pursued a career in law, focusing on federal Indian law and international law. She was driven by a desire to protect the rights and improve the lives of Indigenous people.

"Growing up in Buffalo Valley, I saw a lot of situations where people were being taken advantage of, and I knew that knowledge of the law could have a large impact in the community," she said. "And so, how can I not be attracted to being able to have such a large impact on my community, growing up out in Indian Country?"

After graduating from Eastern Oklahoma State College in 2010, Kelbie went on to earn her Juris Doctor degree and certificate in American Indian Law from the University of Oklahoma, College of Law. During her time in graduate school, she was awarded the Udall Fellowship, which is an internship that allows Native American students to study policy at the U.S. Department of the Interior in Washington, D.C.

"I realized, oh, my gosh, I could do so much good if I was working here," Kelbie remembered.

Although she did eventually return to Washington, D.C., to work on tribal issues, Kelbie took a detour that would put her international law studies to good use. She was working for an internal training program at a Native American tribe when she realized she couldn't see herself doing that work long-term. As it happened, an opportunity opened to practice law for the Federated States of Micronesia, a small country near Guam.

She took a risk and applied, thinking she didn't have a

chance at the position, but a week later, she found herself interviewing at the Micronesian Embassy in Washington, D.C., to be the Assistant Attorney General. To her surprise, she was offered the job, and Kelbie began leading a team of Indigenous prosecutors trying international Indigenous law cases for the Micronesian government.

Kelbie's career path eventually took her back to Washington, D.C., where she worked for the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI). She handled portfolios related to the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), Indian Child Welfare Act, and emergency management. Her personal experiences with domestic violence fueled her dedication to advocating for stronger legal protections for Native women and children.

"It's like dropping a pebble into a pond, right," said Kelbie. "I wanted to be part of the waves that protected our people for the next seven generations."

Her work on VAWA is especially close to her heart, not only because of her own experiences but also because she has been inspired by the work others have done to help.

Several years ago, at the Choctaw Nation's annual Labor Day Festival, Kelbie noticed a flyer in the restroom with phone numbers women could tear off to get help from Strong Hearts Native Helpline, an organization that offers resources for those who are trying to leave violent situations. She said at 10:00 a.m., the phone numbers were all still there, but when she returned an hour later, they were all gone.

"So that's why I focused a huge chunk of my career on domestic violence, sexual assault, and helping not just Native women but Native children get to somewhere safe," Kelbie said.

In 2022, President Biden appointed Kelbie to be the National Tribal Affairs Advocate for FEMA. Although she had no real experience with emergency management on the government side, growing up in Buffalo Valley she had plenty of experience with Tornado Alley weather and seeing first-hand how local tribes show up to help those affected.

"One of my earliest memories in Buffalo Valley is being a toddler and looking out the back window at our pasture and seeing a tornado going across the way and then my mother yanking my little toddler leg underneath the bed," she said. "Heck, my high school graduation a tornado literally went around my aunt's house, and we donated all the food from my high school graduation party to the recovery efforts. But again, the Choctaw Nation was there leading the way."

As the National Tribal Affairs Advocate at FEMA, Kelbie advises the FEMA Administrator on all issues related to tribal nations. She strives to ensure that FEMA's policies and programs respect tribal sovereignty and meet the needs of tribal communities. Her work includes consulting with tribal leaders, advocating for policy changes, and educating both FEMA staff and tribal nations about disaster relief and emergency management.

The unique nature of her position is not lost on Kelbie.



"There are times in my current job, and it's not just my current job, even my job at NCAI and even when I was the Assistant Attorney General of Micronesia, where I had to just sit down and be like, 'My job's so cool.'"

Kelbie's role is groundbreaking because she is the first political appointee for tribal affairs in FEMA's history. She works to integrate tribal considerations into FEMA's operations and policies, ensuring that tribal nations are prioritized and supported effectively. Her goal is to create a lasting framework within FEMA that will continue to benefit tribal nations for generations.

"I'm lucky in the fact that I get to stand on the shoulders of giants," Kelbie said, giving credit to mentors like Robert Holden, Deputy Director of NCAI and a Choctaw tribal member from McAlester, Oklahoma. She also expressed thanks to David Monroe from the Department of Homeland Security and Jeff Hansen, Director of the Choctaw Nation's Office of Emergency Management. "There were several tribal emergency managers who were very generous with their time and their knowledge that really educated me," she added.

Throughout her career, Kennedy has faced challenges, including overcoming barriers in her field and balancing her dedication to her work with personal well-being. She emphasizes the importance of perseverance and self-care, recognizing that sustaining oneself is crucial to effectively supporting others.

"You have to be able to hold space for yourself because if you don't hold space for yourself and find rest and find balance in your life, you can't show up for anyone else," she said. "You can't pour water out of an empty cup, right?"

Kelbie Kennedy's journey from Buffalo Valley to becoming a key advocate for tribal nations at FEMA exemplifies her commitment to her community, her resilience, and her passion for justice and equity for Indigenous peoples. But she still holds her small town roots close to her heart.

"My plan is still to come back home to my nation someday and being able to live in my nation and work for our community. But I knew I was going to go somewhere. I just didn't know the ways. And luckily my entire life pathways have opened up. And what I mean is my road to being here was not something I ever planned," Kelbie said. "I really hope that there are more young Choctaws that come up to Washington, DC to make a difference."

Five Tribes to honor each other's hunting and fishing licenses through reciprocity agreement

TULSA, Okla. (July 12, 2024) – Tribal members and citizens of the Cherokee Nation, Chickasaw Nation, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Muscogee Nation and very soon Seminole Nation can utilize their tribal membership to enjoy hunting and fishing in participating tribes' treaty territories.

The Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes announced the Five Tribe Wildlife Management Reciprocity Agreement at its July quarterly meeting at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tulsa July 12, allowing hunting and fishing licenses issued through each tribe to be recognized by the other tribes that are party to the agreement, on respective reservation land. Most tribes allow for their tribal membership cards to serve as their credential or license.

All Oklahoma residents with valid state-issued hunting and fishing licenses are eligible to hunt and fish within these tribal treaty territories in accordance with all applicable laws.

Hunting and fishing licenses were made available to tribal members and citizens in October 2022.

This agreement will allow the Five Tribes to collaborate on wildlife management within their reservations and enhance their ability to effectively manage natural resources in a sustainable manner.

Today's agreement states hunting and fishing activities by tribal members and citizens under this agreement will be subject to the laws of the tribe on whose reservation the activity is taking place. It is the responsibility of the individuals engaging in these activities in the various reservations to know and abide by any applicable laws. Tribal citizens will also be responsible for securing permissions to access land owned by others to engage in hunting and fishing, though each Tribe will manage programs to provide access to Tribally owned areas.

Tribal citizens or members reporting harvests will report this to the tribe to which they are a citizen or member. Hunting and fishing limits are considered aggregate statewide, and limits do not reset in or outside each reservation.

Each tribe will report basic harvest data each year by Feb. 28 to help regulate and manage wildlife.

State game wardens cross-deputized with the respective tribes can ticket and enforce laws on these reservations, as well. The Tribes indicated that they look forward to working with State and Federal partners as they implement this agreement and continue to identify partnerships for advancing wildlife conservation.

Quotes from Tribal Leaders

"Hunting and fishing are inherent treaty rights among our five tribal nations and have been vital to food security for generations of Cherokees," said Cherokee Nation Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr. "As Cherokees, we can use tribal citizenship photo IDs to hunt and fish on our 7,000-square-mile reservation. For the past two years, this has proven to be a highly successful initiative for both the tribe and our outdoor sportsmen. This new Five Tribes agreement makes hunting and fishing in eastern Oklahoma more sustainable, and more diverse for all our citizens. The adoption of uniform codes by all tribal governments involved is a significant accomplishment and demonstrates the strength of our collective sovereignty."

"We have established the Choctaw Nation Wildlife Conservation Department to assert our tribal sovereignty. This department determines how our citizens hunt and fish on our reservation by using their tribal membership," said Choctaw Nation Chief Gary Batton. "We have now taken a significant step forward by partnering with the Inter-Tribal Council. This partnership will provide further opportunities for our tribal members to hunt and fish on our reservations using their tribal membership. Together, we are asserting our tribal sovereignty and benefiting approximately 815,000 tribal citizens as well as all Oklahomans."

"Since time immemorial, our people have been the original environmentalists, looking to the land for sustenance and abundant life," said Muscogee Nation Principal Chief David Hill. "I'm proud of this new agreement with the Five Tribes, as it not only shows a strengthening of our sovereign rights to hunt and fish on these lands, but gives us greater autonomy over the care and preservation of them for generations that follow. It's a special gift to our citizens, many of them outdoorsmen, who have dreamed of a day that they could register their harvests under the flag and authority of their own Nation. That day is now, and we couldn't be happier."

"Before recorded history, Chickasaw people engaged in sustainable management of natural resources and wildlife, as did our First American neighbors, as a means to sustain our families throughout the seasons," Chickasaw Nation Governor Bill Anoatubby said. "Just as we now work to preserve our history and culture, we are also stewards of our natural resources and wildlife. For this reason, we are pleased to commit to the careful management of fish and wildlife by partnering with the Inter-Tribal Council for this agreement. This will enhance our efforts to effectively manage our wildlife conservation efforts, in accordance with all applicable laws, as it expands opportunities for sportsmen throughout the participating tribal territories."



Photo Provided

People of the Cherokee Nation, Chickasaw Nation, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Muscogee Nation and very soon Seminole Nation can utilize their tribal membership to enjoy hunting and fishing in participating tribes' treaty territories.

Contact information for each tribal wildlife management program is below:

- Cherokee Nation Wildlife Conservation
918-453-5333 | wildlife@cherokee.org
- Chickasaw Nation Fish and Wildlife Service
580-310-6466 | cnrangers@chickasaw.net
- Choctaw Nation Wildlife Conservation
800-522-6170 | wildlife@choctawnation.com
- Muscogee Nation Wildlife Program
918-490-7074 | wildlife@muscogeenation.com
- Seminole Nation Wildlife, Park & Recreation Department
405-666-0620 | wpr@sno-nsn.gov

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The registration deadline is September 1, 2024

Choctaw Nation Johnson-O'Malley Program

LOOK FOR THE LABEL IT'S A SAFER CHOICE

epa.gov/saferchoice

Safer Choice helps consumers, businesses, and purchasers find products that contain ingredients that are safer for human health and the environment and still perform. Safer Choice is an EPA Pollution Prevention (P2) program, which includes practices that reduce, eliminate, or prevent pollution at its source, such as using safer ingredients in products.

Scan to learn more about this program

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM APPLICATION NOW OPEN

The application for the 2024 Fall semester is now open. The deadline to apply is **October 1, 2024.**

Scan to learn more about the program.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO APPLY NOW AT
CHOCTAWNATION.COM/SERVICES/HIGHER-EDUCATION/

Choctaw Nation Higher Education Program

READY TO KICK START YOUR NEXT STEPS IN LIFE?

SECOND CHANCE RESOURCE FAIR

is an opportunity to connect with FREE legal aid services, re-entry programs, and career and educational opportunities. You will leave empowered with knowledge!

The fair is open to CDIB cardholders from any federally recognized tribe.

August 8, 2024 | 11 AM – 2 PM
Choctaw Nation Community Center – McAlester
3274 Afullotha Hina, McAlester, OK 74501

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:
HOPE SCOTT | 539-316-2154
HSCOTT@CNHSA.COM

Choctaw Nation Health Services



Jennifer Woods

District 6

Halito from District 6, the Heart of the Nation. The heat of this summer has been extreme, but it hasn't slowed us down much. We had a wonderful Independence Day celebration, not only with Boom In The Valley in Tuskahoma but also with the parade and fireworks show after the Relics and Rod Car Show in Wilburton that we helped sponsor, as well as the Red Oak parade and fireworks.

The District 6 princesses, Aiana Holman, Sr. Princess, Isabella Muncy, Jr. Miss Princess, and Omba Ramsey, Little Miss Princess, helped us represent our district in the parades.

We are very thankful to be a part of this great nation and to be able to celebrate our freedoms.

Our seniors have been very busy for the past few months traveling all over the reservation playing chair volleyball as well as touring the Three Rivers Meat Company in Octavia, Oklahoma and the new Choctaw Landing Resort in Broken Bow. They are already preparing for the Labor Day Festival, where they will set up their Indian taco concession trailer. It takes a lot of preparation and volunteers to be ready for the sale during the festival. We appreciate all their hard work and dedication to having a successful Indian taco sale which helps provide the finances they need for the trips they enjoy throughout the year.

We want to encourage our seniors ages 55 to 74 with individual incomes less than \$40,000 and elders 75+ at all income levels to apply for the Elder Food Security card. Federal law requires the Choctaw Nation to obligate all ARPA funding for this program by the end of December 2024. Approved applicants will be issued a new card for October and November payments of \$200 each. For the December payment, the Nation will load the card with a lump sum of \$2,000 that is meant to cover elders through September 2025 at a rate of \$200 a month. You have until September 30, 2024, to apply on the Chahta Achvffa Portal.

If you need assistance in applying for any service on our portal, please contact the District 6 Community Center, where our staff is available to assist you.

Chief Gary Batton and I had the privilege of attending a "Meet and Greet" in Quinton, Oklahoma. We had a good visit with the people in the community and loved hearing the stories they shared. We appreciated the Jones Academy summer youth for serving during the meeting. Yakoke to all those who attended.



CNO opens new housing options in Broken Bow

BROKEN BOW, Okla. (June 18, 2024) – Broken Bow residents have new homes after the Choctaw Nation held two ribbon-cutting ceremonies on Thursday, June 13, opening more tribal member housing and the Timber View Apartments in Broken Bow.



Choctaw Nation Photo

City officials, tribal leaders, housing residents and tribal members gather to open the Timber View apartments ribbon cutting ceremony.

The Timber View Apartments in Broken Bow offers 120 one- and two-bedroom units equipped with washers and dryers, providing a comfortable and convenient living experience. In addition, the complex is set to feature a dog park and playground, enhancing the quality of life for its residents. The apartments aim to support the housing needs of Choctaw Tribal members and associates, including the employees of the new Choctaw Landing.

"We are thrilled to open the doors of Timber View Apartments and provide our community with high-quality housing options," said Chief Gary Batton of the Choctaw Nation. "This development reflects our commitment to meeting the needs of our tribal members and associates, ensuring they have access to safe and affordable housing."

Alongside the Timber View Apartments, the Choctaw Nation Housing Authority also announced the opening of 16 LEAP (Lease with an Option to Purchase) homes and 20 Affordable Rental units in Broken Bow. This brings the total number of completed homes in Choctaw Nation District 2 to 131, including 60 Affordable Rental, 61 LEAP, and 10 Independent Elder homes. These additional housing options aim to address the growing demand for affordable and accessible housing for tribal members.

To further expand housing opportunities, Timber View Apartments is now accepting leasing applications from the public. Interested individuals can apply online or visit the leasing office at 57 Yvnnvsh #1101, Broken Bow, Oklahoma.

For more information about the Timber View Apartments and other housing initiatives by the Choctaw Nation, please visit Services > Housing or timberview.choctawvillages.com.

Turner is Veteran of the Month

William Turner, District #10, is Choctaw Nation's Veteran of the Month.

Turner was born in Atoka, Okla., where he lived until joining the military on June 8, 1973, enlisting in the OK National Guard Combat Support Company 180, 45th division.

Turner did his basic training and AIT at Ft. Polk, LA., and was in a Four Duce (4.2) Mortar Platoon as ammo bearer, assistant gunner, then gunner, FDC (Fire Direction Center) and FO (Forward Observer.)

He worked for the National Guard in Atoka before joining the US Army in Oct. 1977. He was sent to Schweinfurt, Germany, to the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Infantry Division under Gen. Alexander Haig and Henry Kissinger. He served under eight presidents, starting off in a Mortar Platoon, a FO for artillery, and a 1st Sergeant Driver.

Turner was discharged in 1979, stayed out for a year, and re-enlisted in the National Guard for the next three years. He was a Squad Leader in the mortar platoon and FDC.

In 1993, Turner was assigned to the 95th Division in Durant, Okla., where he worked until they closed, then went to Shawnee, and then to Okla. City with the 95th, training NCO. He conducted numerous trainings/instructions throughout the U.S. until retiring on Dec. 7, 2010, with the rank of E7.

Turner's favorite duty station was in Germany where he enjoyed the food, people, transportation system, and the language. He earned awards including the Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Award, 9 RComs, 9 Army Achievement Medals, Global War on Terrorism Medal, Army Forces Medal, Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Operation Enduring Freedom Medal, and other citations and certificates of appreciation.

After retirement, Turner began employment with Choctaw Nation, working on buses, then as assistant grounds manager before promoting to manager. He has two daughters, Michelle and Sarah, eight grandchildren, and his first great-grandchild is expected next month.

The Choctaw Nation holds our veterans in the highest esteem and appreciates their sacrifices and contributions to preserve our freedoms and the way of life we hold dear.



WILDLIFE & OUTDOORS

By Matt Gamble

The Five Tribes Wildlife Management Reciprocity Agreement was signed by tribal leaders on July 11, 2024. This marks a historic agreement among the Five Tribes to bolster hunting and fishing opportunities for tribal members. Each tribe can now recognize the hunting and fishing licenses issued by tribes that are part of the agreement. For now, this includes the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Chickasaw Nation, Cherokee Nation, and Muscogee Nation. The Seminole Nation may join very soon. Tribal members hunting outside these tribal boundaries must comply with Oklahoma licensing and regulation requirements.

What does this mean for Choctaw tribal members? You may now use your tribal membership identification to hunt and fish in the Chickasaw, Cherokee, and Muscogee Nations. Choctaw tribal members must follow the rules and regulations established by the tribe whose jurisdiction in which they are fishing or hunting. Choctaw tribal members will check their harvest through the Chahta Achvffa membership portal regardless of which tribal nation the animal is harvested. For example, if a Choctaw tribal member harvests a buck during archery season in Garvin County (Chickasaw Nation), they will register the harvest in Chahta Achvffa as killed in Garvin County. One aggregate (combined) limit applies to all persons across all reservations and the State of Oklahoma per season. For example, if a person harvests their Spring season limit of one tom turkey in the Choctaw Nation, they may not duplicate that limit in another tribal nation or anywhere else in Oklahoma.

Each tribal nation's wildlife department will share harvest information to collect accurate harvest data. Harvest statistics will also be shared with the state. This ensures that populations are monitored for sustainable hunting seasons.

This monumental step forward opened much more land to Choctaw tribal members, who used their tribal identification as their hunting and fishing license. The Inter-Tribal Wildlife Working Group did a great job of moving this agreement forward with tremendous support from tribal leadership. Each tribe in the agreement is committed to conserving the resources that we share and providing opportunities to our members and citizens.

Private land boundaries still must be respected in this agreement. Tribal members must still have permission to access any private land. Any state, county, or city land that requires an entrance permit must still be obtained by tribal members. Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation game wardens are cross commissioned to enforce tribal codes on the Reservations.

Please contact wildlife@choctawnation.com for any questions. Stay safe and enjoy the Choctaw Outdoors.



Scott is First Language Speaker of the Month

Nathan Scott, a lifelong resident of Tushka, Oklahoma, was honored at the July 13 Choctaw Tribal Council Meeting as the First Language Speaker of the Month.

Nathan was recognized for his dedication to preserving the Choctaw Language. He enjoys speaking to others in Choctaw and listening to Choctaw hymns. Nathan grew up in a home without running water or electricity until he was 16. Before that, he would go to the creek and draw water for the family. Nathan worked for the Choctaw Nation for 13 years under cemetery preservation and was a Tribal Transit driver for many years. He attended ministry school in McKenzie, Tennessee, where he received his ministry license. Nathan's been married to his wife for 26 years. Together, they have three children and five grandchildren. He is currently retired, is the pastor of six churches, and serves as treasurer for the Choctaw Cumberland Presbyterian Church.



APPRENTICE POSITIONS NOW OPEN

The Choctaw language is vital to the culture and sovereignty of the Nation. The Language Department offers innovative programs to preserve and protect the Choctaw language for future generations.

Scan the QR code with your smartphone for eligibility requirements and more information.

Housing Headlines

By Bobby Yandell

We are truly experiencing the dog days of summer this year. With that said, how is your HVAC system holding up?

With temperatures as hot as we are experiencing, it's best to set your thermostat a little higher during the day to allow your system to not work as hard in cooling your home. HVAC technicians will tell you to set the thermostat 20 degrees cooler than the outside temperature. Most of us are not going to set our thermostats above 80 degrees but when heat indexes are over 105, 75-78 degrees is as low as you should set your system to prevent it from freezing up. If a system is not cooling to the temperature set, setting the temperature colder will not help. It's best to set the temperature higher to allow the system to rest and then maintain that temperature.

Other things you can do to keep your system in top working order is ensure you change your filter regularly. Most calls we send technicians to about a system not working properly involves a clogged filter. Changing your filter monthly is a good rule of thumb, but it should be changed no less than every three months.

Keep your outside unit free of weeds and grass that prevent air flow. It's also best to keep shrubs away as well.

Lastly, it's never a bad idea to get your system looked at by a licensed HVAC technician annually, just to make sure it is working properly.

Choctaw Nation Housing Authority

Stay Connected
CHOCTAWNATION.COM

NOTES & EVENTS

A Heartfelt Thank You from John Germany and Family
John Germany and his family would like to thank the communities of Atoka, Bryan, Coal, Johnston and Pontotoc counties and the Choctaw Nation for their outpouring of generosity, kindness, love and support. Thanks to your help, Big John can go through his stem cell transplant without worrying about the financial burden. We would like to thank everyone who donated desserts, auction items and time. We'd also like to give a huge shoutout to the Coleman Volunteer Fire Department for serving the meal and auctioneer Matt Sandmann for conducting the live cake auction. There isn't enough room in this paper to thank you all individually. It was incredible to see how many people care for and love Big John. This benefit made us realize how amazing Southeastern Oklahoma truly is. Thank you (yakoke)!

OILS Choctaw Nation Outreach Events

OILS will be available to provide answers to legal questions and take applications for legal services. OILS cannot provide advice if you currently have an attorney. We cannot provide advice for criminal matters involving the state district courts. OILS must follow federal poverty guidelines to provide services.

Durant Choctaw Community Center – Aug. 14, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Talihina Choctaw Community Center – Aug. 21, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
McAlester Choctaw Community Center – Sept. 25, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
www.oilsonline.org, 405.943.6457, 800.658.1497 (In-State Only)



FOOD DISTRIBUTION PARTICIPANTS MUST REPORT HOUSEHOLD CHANGES
FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT CHOCTAWNATION.COM/FOOD-DISTRIBUTION
Choctaw Nation Food Distribution



HONOR GUARD
— POSITIONS AVAILABLE —
APPLY BY CONTACTING: 580-642-8451
VETERANSADVOCACY@CHOCTAWNATION.COM



LIFE IS BETTER WITH BLOOD DONORS
Every two seconds, someone in our community urgently needs blood. This could be a child battling cancer, a trauma victim, a patient undergoing surgery, or someone with a chronic illness.
Imagine the hope, relief and second chance your donation can bring them and their families.
By becoming a blood donor, you can become a lifeline for those who desperately need it.
Join the Annual Blood Drive Challenge and help save a life.
Scan to learn more about the challenge.
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Biskinik Announcement Guidelines

We accept milestone birthday greetings for ages 1, 5, 13, 15, 16, 18, 21, 30, 40, 50, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80 and above.
Couples may send announcements of silver wedding anniversary at 25 years of marriage, golden anniversary at 50 years, or 60+ anniversaries. We do not post wedding announcements.
News from graduates of higher education only and sports submissions will be accepted as space allows.
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 on the first of the month.
Mail to: Biskinik
P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702
or email: biskinik@choctawnation.com

Gary Batton Chief *Jack Austin Jr.* Assistant Chief

The Official Monthly Publication of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
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Durant, OK 74702
580-924-8280 • 800-522-6170
www.ChoctawNation.com
email: biskinik@choctawnation.com

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 and 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. Faxed photos will not be accepted.

If you are receiving more than one BISKINIK or your address needs to be changed, our Circulation Department would appreciate hearing from you at ext. 4028.

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 in 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.



WHEELOCK FEASIBILITY SURVEY
TO TAKE THE SURVEY, VISIT CHOCTA.WS/REUSE-SURVEY
Choctaw Nation Wheelock Academy Historic Site

CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA TRIBAL COUNCIL
REGULAR SESSION AGENDA
July 13, 2024

- CALL TO ORDER
- OPENING PRAYER/FLAG SALUTE
- ROLL CALL
- APPROVAL OF MINUTES
 - Regular Session June 8, 2024
 - Special Session June 13, 2024
- WELCOME GUESTS/SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS
 - Veteran of the Month, District #10 – William Turner
 - First Language Speaker of the Month, District #10 – Nathan Scott
- PUBLIC COMMENTS – None
- REPORTS OF COMMITTEES
- NEW BUSINESS
 - Letter of Appointment for Teresa Huggins to serve as a Commissioner of the Housing Authority of Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
 - Letter of Appointment for Teresa Huggins to serve as a Trustee of the Choctaw Home Finance Corporation
 - Approve the Disposal of Surplus Capital Assets – Equipment
 - Approve the Disposal of Surplus Capital Assets – Vehicles
 - Approve Grazing Lease G09-2078 in Favor of C.J. Winn on Land Held by the USA in Trust for the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations of Oklahoma in Pittsburg County, Oklahoma
 - F1-F7 - Combined vote by Consent:
 - Approve Canadian Valley Telephone LLC's Application for the United States Department of Agriculture 2024 Rural EConnectivity (ReConnect) Program
 - Approve Oklahoma Western Telephone Company's Application for the United States Department of Agriculture 2024 Rural EConnectivity (ReConnect) Program.
 - Approve Oklahoma Fiber Network's Application for the United States Department of Agriculture 2024 Rural EConnectivity (ReConnect) Program
 - Approve Phoenix LD's Application for the United States Department of Agriculture 2024 Rural EConnectivity (ReConnect) Program
 - Approve Pine Telephone's Application for the United States Department of Agriculture 2024 Rural EConnectivity (ReConnect) Program
 - Approve Valliant Telephone Company's Application for the United States Department of Agriculture 2024 Rural EConnectivity (ReConnect) Program
 - Approve Pine Cellular's Application for the United States Department of Agriculture 2024 Rural EConnectivity (ReConnect) Program
 - Approve Grazing Lease G09-2077 in Favor of Choctaw Ranches on Land Held by the USA in Trust for the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations in Atoka Co., Oklahoma
 - Approve Application for Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program FY25 Funding from the United States Department of Health and Human Services
 - Approve the Application for Head Start Continuation Funds for FY 2024-2025 and for Head Start One-Time Funds for FY 2024-2025
 - Approve the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 Indian Housing Plan for Year FY2025
 - Approve a Waterline Easement in Favor of the City of Broken Bow, on Land Held by the USA in Trust for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma in McCurtain County, Oklahoma
 - Approve an Electric Line Easement in Favor of Kiamichi Electric Cooperative, Inc., on Choctaw Nation Fee Land in Atoka County, Oklahoma
 - Approve the Demolition of the Food Distribution Center in Poteau, Oklahoma
 - Approve the Construction of Supportive Housing for Victims of Domestic Violence
 - Resolution Opposing the Southeast Oklahoma Power Corporation's Proposal for the Pushmataha County Pumped Storage Hydroelectric Project
 - Resolution Proclaiming October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month
 - Resolution to Name the New Forestry Building the Shane Sparks Forestry Building
 - Approve Application for FY25 Community Services Block Grant Funding from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
- OTHER NEW BUSINESS
- OLD BUSINESS
- ADJOURNMENT
- CLOSING PRAYER

All votes passed unanimously

Chahta Anumpa Aikhhvna Akvs Language Lesson

Common word phrases – Sometimes knowing how to put two words together to express the meaning one is trying to convey can be daunting. Here are a couple of examples of 'phrases' used frequently.

vpa – to eat a named food item	pisa – to see	“vpvt pisa”
Put these two words together and the definition becomes “to taste” or “to try and see” in the sense of tasting, testing or trying out a new food item. Both words are verbs, so the first verb must add the suffix 't'.		
Tobi lusa vpvt pisa li tuk.	I tasted the black beans.	
Na champuli himona ma vpvt ish pisa ha?	Did you try out the new dessert?	
foka – to put on an article of clothing	pisa – to see	“fokvt pisa”
These two words together mean to 'try on' an article of clothing. Both words are verbs, add the suffix 't'.		
Ilefoka ma fokvt ish pisa ha?	Did you try on that dress?	
Fokvt pisa li hokako ossi chohmi tuk.	I tried it on, but it was somewhat small.	
ikhvna – to learn	pisa – to see	“ikhvnvt pisa”
These two words together mean 'to try and learn'. Add the suffix 't' to the first verb.		
Guitar washoha ikhvnvt pisa sv bvna.	I want to try to learn how to play the guitar.	
Nahullo anumpa ikhvnvt pisa li maka chi.	I will try to learn to speak English.	

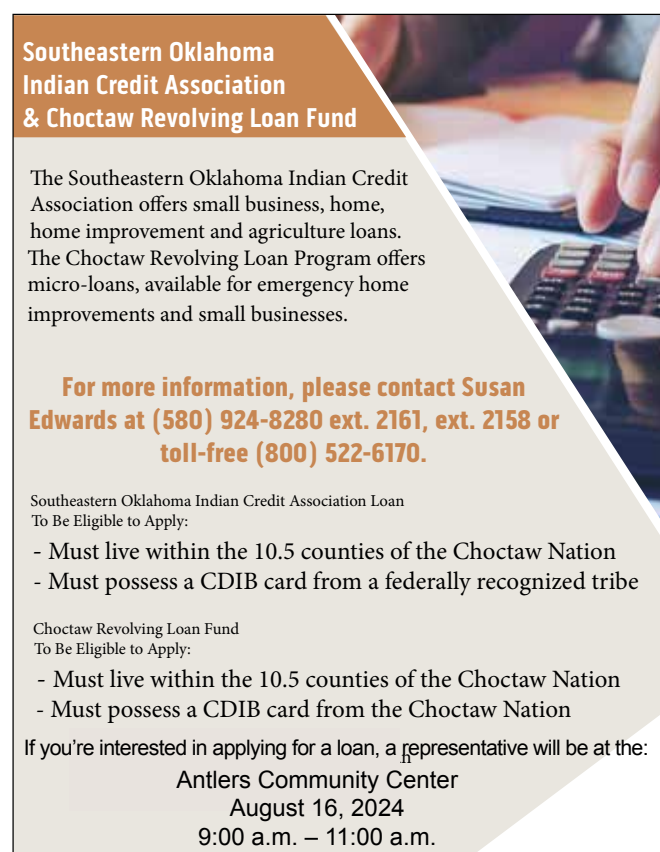
www.choctawschool.com



JUROR SUMMONS
Choctaw Nation tribal members, spouses of tribal members, and any Choctaw Nation associate residing within Choctaw Nation territory may be summoned to jury duty with the Choctaw Nation court system.
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma



EMPLOYMENT TRAINING SERVICES
Do you need assistance finding a job or paying for job training?
The 477 Employment Training Services aim to help people succeed in the workforce by providing opportunities for employment, education and training.
Services are available within **Choctaw Nation Reservation.**
Scan to learn more and to apply!
Choctaw Nation 477 Program



Southeastern Oklahoma Indian Credit Association & Choctaw Revolving Loan Fund
The Southeastern Oklahoma Indian Credit Association offers small business, home, home improvement and agriculture loans. The Choctaw Revolving Loan Program offers micro-loans, available for emergency home improvements and small businesses.
For more information, please contact Susan Edwards at (580) 924-8280 ext. 2161, ext. 2158 or toll-free (800) 522-6170.
Southeastern Oklahoma Indian Credit Association Loan
To Be Eligible to Apply:
- Must live within the 10.5 counties of the Choctaw Nation
- Must possess a CDIB card from a federally recognized tribe
Choctaw Revolving Loan Fund
To Be Eligible to Apply:
- Must live within the 10.5 counties of the Choctaw Nation
- Must possess a CDIB card from the Choctaw Nation
If you're interested in applying for a loan, a representative will be at the:
Antlers Community Center
August 16, 2024
9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Hoff earns OEA Excellence Award

Avery Hoff was awarded the Oklahoma Education Award for Arts Excellence in Drama at a ceremony in Guthrie, Oklahoma, on April 23, 2024.

It is an award that honors juniors and seniors who have achieved artistic and academic excellence. It is also the highest accolade by the State of Oklahoma for students, teachers and administrators who exemplify arts excellence.



Beau Emmitt Bergeron

Beau Emmitt Bergeron was born on April 19, 2024, to Emily and Colin Bergeron. Beau is the great-grandson of Ruth Okemah (Tims) Hancock and the great-great-grandson of Edgar and Lucille Tims.



Boehm graduates from Del Mar

Teddy and Carla Boehm would like to announce the graduation of their son Dillon Boehm from Del Mar College with an Associate of Applied Science in Radiology Technology Degree.

He graduated on May 17, 2024, at the American Bank Center in Corpus Christi, Texas.

“We would like to thank the Choctaw Nation and Career Foundation for all their help in his achievement.”



Matthews turns 92

Dovie Howard Matthews turned 92 on June 8.

“Happy Birthday to the beautiful Dovie Howard Mathews!

Grandma, you are so loved by your children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren.. You inspire us all to live our dreams, and pursue lives full of adventure, love, virtue and learning. We are so grateful for your kindness and wisdom. We hope you have a beautiful day and blessed year!”



McMannis turns 80

Earl McMannis, Jr. was born July 14, 1944, in Vallejo, California, and moved to Texas in December of that year. Earl spent most of his childhood in Corpus Christi, Texas. Always interested in the Native American cultures, he enjoyed digging and hunting for artifacts. In 1965, he joined the Air Force. After serving eight years in Asia, Earl returned in 1974. He was stationed in Arizona for the majority of his time, retiring in 1983 to Austin, Texas, where he resides today.



Joneses celebrate 65 years of marriage

Gene and Kaye Jones recently celebrated their 65th anniversary on June 6, 2024.

The couple lives in Anadarko, Oklahoma, where they operate an Oklahoma Centennial Farm. They have three children and seven grandchildren.



Andoe graduates from OU

Asher Jae Andoe graduated on May 11 from the University of Oklahoma with his Bachelor of Science from the Mewbourne College of Earth and Energy.

Thank you to the Choctaw Nation for your support.



Gurney appointed to Colorado 4th Judicial District Court

On May 16, 2024, Colorado Governor Jared Polis made judicial appointments to the 19th Judicial District Court, 4th Judicial District Court, and Lincoln County Court in the 18th Judicial District.

Governor Polis appointed Hilary A.P. Gurney (Choctaw tribal member) and Dennis L. McGuire to the 4th Judicial District Court.

Gurney’s appointment fills a vacancy created by the resignation of the Honorable Marla Prudek and was effective June 1, 2024.

Gurney is a District Court Magistrate in the 4th Judicial District, a position she has held since 2022. Her docket consists of criminal matters. Previously, she was a Supervising Deputy Public Defender (2019-2022), Senior Deputy Public Defender (2010-2019), Deputy Public Defender (2007-2010) in the Colorado Springs Office, and Deputy Public Defender in the Steamboat Springs Office (2010-2011). Gurney earned her B.S. from the University of Michigan in 2003 and her J.D. from the University of Colorado Law School in 2007.



Peters earns an associate from NCTC

Justin Peters, a Gainesville High School Class of 2024 graduate, recently completed the 60 hours of required coursework to earn an Associate of Arts from North Central Texas College.

He is the son of Justin and Mandy Peters. Justin will be attending Texas Tech University and studying biology (pre-med). He plans to go to medical school to become an Emergency Room physician. While attending GHS, Justin was also enrolled in dual credit classes all four years. He played basketball for two years and was a member of the National Honor Society.



Byington a part of Leadership Ohio Class of 24

Kile Byington, Fiscal Officer, Twinsburg Public Library was recently selected as one of 35 fellows for Leadership Ohio Class of 2024 Leadership Ohio Class of 2024

A lifelong library patron, Byington began her professional library journey performing story times in the children’s department of her local library and has since worn many hats including tutor, reference associate, and collection development specialist. She has served rural, urban, and suburban libraries with budgets from \$250K to \$20M. Byington has worked in library administration for more than eight years. Originally from Wichita, Kansas, she has lived in Ohio for more than ten years, two years in the Cincinnati area and the remainder in Brunswick, a short drive from Cleveland.

When not working, she enjoys disc golfing, running, and vintage baseball; Byington has played for the Ohio Village Diamonds for two years, supporting 1860s baseball throughout Ohio as part of the Ohio History Connection (OHC), Muffins/Diamonds organization. Byington is a proud member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and supports cultural retention through beadwork, moccasin making, and crafting other types of tribal and intertribal regalia. Chahta sia, oke. (I am Choctaw).

Byington is supported in her personal and professional endeavors by her family, including two children, Xavier in Tucson, Arizona, and Lexi in Wichita, Kansas, and by her partner Jason, without whom she would not likely have seen the opportunity to move to the number one state in the nation regarding community and governmental library support. Byington holds a Bachelor of Arts in Economics from the University of Akron and is currently pursuing a Master of Public Administration from Wichita State University.



Clay graduates from Swarthmore

Madeline Loraine Clay graduated from Swarthmore College on May 26, 2024, with a Bachelor of Arts in Special Major for Indigenous Studies.

Madeline is the child of Roy L. Clay and Toni G. Clay of Athens, Texas, grandchild of Jerry Clay of Athens, Texas and great-grandchild of Roy Clay of Antlers, Oklahoma.



Stahl graduates from SDSU

Jordan Samuel Stahl graduated from San Diego State University with a Bachelor of Science in Business Marketing and a minor in TV, Film and Media Studies.

“Many thanks to the Choctaw Nation for their assistance and support.”



Wright graduates from ASU

Michael Wright graduated from Arizona State University (ASU) with a Master of Urban and Environmental Planning degree. With Distinction (4.0 GPA), Class 2024.

“Yakoke (thank you) to the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma for your kind support and the Chahta scholarship program.”



Palmer turns 80

Sallie (Wallace) Palmer turned 80 on July 21, 2024. She was born in California when her father was in military service and grew up in Ardmore where she still lives.

Her children are Bruce Palmer, Laquitta Palmer, and Marcelino Salcedo. Grandchildren are Amy, Stephanie, Tally, and Blane. Great-grandchildren are Halen and Derrick (now deceased.)

Sallie will celebrate her birthday with family at a party at her son’s home in Oklahoma City.



Thea Josefina Polverini

Thea Josefina Polverini was born August 17, 2023, at 9:47 a.m. at Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center in Knoxville, Tennessee. She weighed 4lbs 4oz and was 17in long.

Thea is the daughter of Jordan and Becker Polverini. She is the granddaughter of Ruthie Burner and the late Clifford Burner, and Barbosa and Celso Polverini. She is the great-granddaughter of Patricia Burner and the late Rex Burner, and the late Inez and Junior Cotton.



Hebert graduates from Wharton

In a beautiful ceremony on May 19, surrounded by family, Tim Hebert graduated from the Wharton School of Business with a master’s in business administration, majoring in finance. The Choctaw Nation supported Tim unbridled, enabling him to successfully complete his substantial academic and military career.

Tim and his wife Jackie will be welcoming their first baby and newest member of the Choctaw Nation late this summer. They will reside in Houston, where Tim will begin working in investment banking. The Choctaw Nation played a pivotal role not only in Tim’s personal success but also in helping his mother combat cancer and in aiding his grandmother in senior support. He is forever grateful to the Choctaw Nation.



Patton earns doctorate

Titus Patton was conferred a Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine from Oklahoma State University on May 10, 2024.

He graduated summa cum laude and was accepted into the Phi Zeta National Honor Society for Veterinary Medicine as a top-10 student in the Class of 2024. He would like to thank the Choctaw Nation for supporting his education through the Higher Education and Career Development Programs.

He has accepted a one-year position as a Small Animal Rotating Intern at Iowa State University beginning in June. He hopes that this will lead to an opportunity for advanced training in small animal surgery. He and his wife, Claire, look forward to welcoming their first child in August.

Titus is the son of Jason and Beth Patton and the grandson of Brenda and Leon Patton of Calera, Oklahoma.



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Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM INCREASES FOOD AMOUNTS AND OFFERS NEW SELECTIONS

Beginning in June, Choctaw Nation Food Distribution Program participants will see an increase in the following food amounts they receive:

- Meat/Poultry/Fish (increase from five to six units)
- Vegetables (increase from 18 to 20 units)

New food items will also be available.

Scan here for information on the program and how to apply.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

McGee says yakoke



“I recently graduated Summa Cum Laude (May 4th) from the University of Southern Maine, earning my Master’s of Nursing Education degree.

I plan to teach at collegiate and professional levels, to aid future generations of nurses in their own healthcare career journeys. I wish a heartfelt thank you to the Choctaw Nation for the encouragement, kindness, and support given in reaching this educational milestone! “

- Tracey McGee

Holt earns OU Spirit Team Award



Bixby’s Trevon Holt, a senior co-ed cheerleader at the University of Oklahoma, was recently honored by OU’s Spirit Team officials with the Leadership Award for his contributions to the spirit squad.

Holt, a two-sport athlete at Bixby who won three football state championship rings before graduating in 2020, plans to join OU’s co-ed cheer team in 2024 and compete in the national competition in early January 2025 in Orlando, Florida.

A Choctaw Nation member, Holt has excelled academically at OU. He earned a bachelor’s degree in management information systems and has a minor in accounting. He’ll complete the requirements for a master’s degree in information technology during the fall semester.

Holt is the son of Chris Holt of Bixby and Darla Holt of Broken Arrow and is the grandson of Ron and Becky Holt of Bixby. His great-grandmother is Choctaw Nation elder Gladys Bowden Holt, formerly of Ardmore.

Clement graduates from Stanford



Caroline Starla Clement graduated from Stanford University on June 16, 2024. Caroline earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology with honors. Caroline intends to pursue her MD specializing in pediatric neurology.

“Her family is so proud of her and wishes to thank the Higher Education Program and Choctaw Nation for their support and assistance. We can’t wait to see how Caroline changes the world for the better. Yakoke!”

Hooser turns 100



John A. Hooser lives in the house he was born in. That house in rural Clayton is on the Federal land given to his mother, Helen (Hudson) Hooser, who was an original role of the Choctaw.

The house was built by his father, Newt Hooser. The original four-room home has seen several additions to its current layout. As a boy, John traveled the area by horseback and helped with the family farm. An important lesson from his parents, to help people in need, has stayed with John throughout his life. Growing up, hunting and fishing as a boy continued to be hobbies in his adult life.

John has always been proud of his heritage and being a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. John, along with his brother Earnest, has been honored by the Choctaw Nation as a distinguished elder.

John spent much of his life working in science education. As a state science supervisor for the state of Missouri, John rose to be a leader in the National Association of Science Supervisors. After retiring John and his wife Lucille moved back from Missouri to live in his boyhood home. John and Lucille both were teachers and got there starts at Stanley for Lucille and John’s Valley for John.

Lucille passed in April of 2020. John is cared for by his daughter, Hoitema. He will be surrounded by family and friends on his birthday and then again over the Labor Day holiday.

Valiant robotics team has a successful year



For the first time in the program’s history, the Valliant Elementary Robotics team exceeded beyond all expectations. Half of the students in the team were Choctaw tribal members.

“We started with borrowed parts and eventually gained our own parts through grants,” said Gina Dansby, the team’s coach. “A Choctaw member, my son Traeton Dansby, helped us get the program off the ground and waived the fees for our first two tournaments. Two of our three teams were then invited to attend a signature event match that was for tribal teams only.”

After this competition, all three teams qualified for the State Championship, and one team won the highest award in the state, the Excellence Award, which qualified them for the VEX World Championship competition.

This competition was held in Dallas, Texas, in May. Over 8,000 teams worldwide vied for the chance to attend this tournament, and only 420 were invited.

“Through attending the tribal event and because our elementary school is in the Choctaw Nation, we were chosen to represent the Choctaw Nation in the opening ceremony’s Parade of Nations,” said Dansby. “We had the honor of carrying the Choctaw Nation flag alongside 77 other nations from around the world.”

Valiant Public Schools and the robotics team would like to thank the tribe and Councilman Thomas Williston for supporting their teams this year!

Blemmel plays on all Native lacrosse team



Cohen Blemmel started playing on the Tvshka Waya youth Stickball team at the age of six. He was heartbroken to move away from his teammates, coaches and people eight years later when he relocated to Oregon. He started playing on his high school lacrosse team in an attempt to find the community he had longed for since his move. Meanwhile, JD Elquist, a Native lacrosse coach, had an idea to form an all-Native boys Lacrosse team to bring awareness and representation to an Indigenous sport. Cohen found his way to PNW Native LAX, and in June, they entered their first tournament after only meeting each other the day before the tournament started.

The Northwest Summer Open witnessed a historic event this past weekend as the PNW Native Lacrosse Team, composed entirely of Native American boys 17 and under, made an incredible run to the championship game. Representing 24 different tribes, these young athletes met for the first time on Friday and, against all odds, advanced to the championship game on Sunday.

The team’s journey was nothing short of remarkable. In a sport deeply rooted in Native American culture, the PNW Native Lacrosse Team showcased exceptional talent, teamwork, and resilience. Despite their limited time together, they managed to navigate through the tournament, defeating several seasoned teams along the way.

Their dream run culminated in a fiercely contested championship game against Lilac City. While they ultimately fell short, the team’s achievement in reaching the final is a testament to their skill and determination. Coaches, parents, and spectators were in awe of how quickly the boys gelled and performed as a cohesive unit.

The Northwest Summer Open was a celebration of lacrosse, but it also became a celebration of Native American pride and unity. The PNW Native Lacrosse team not only competed at a high level but also brought visibility to the rich tradition and ongoing contributions of Native American communities to the sport.

Thompson chosen for Honor Flight



“In 1967, while still in high school, I received my military draft notice two months before graduation. I served two years in the Army stationed in Germany. I left the service but returned to active duty serving in the Air Force, retiring in 1994. I graduated from Colorado State University in 2005 with a Bachelor of Science Degree.

Recently, I was chosen to go to Washington, DC, on the Rocky Mountain Honor Flight for veterans. It’s a national organization with a mission of honoring our nation’s veterans by bringing them to Washington, DC, to visit the memorials dedicated to their service and sacrifice. The Rocky Mountain Honor Flight takes veterans from the following eras: World War II, Korean War, Vietnam Conflict, and Gulf War Conflict on a three-day, all-expense paid trip to our nation’s capital.

As a member of the Choctaw tribe, I was deeply honored to be able to represent my Tribe in being selected with 180 veterans for the Rocky Mountain Honor Flight. The ‘journey’ of the Honor flight includes spending several hours at the World War II Memorial and visiting other Washington landmarks such as the Korean War Memorial, Vietnam Wall, Lincoln Memorial, Arlington National Cemetery and changing of the Guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the Marine Corps War Memorial.

It truly was a privilege and an honor for me to be among these honored veterans as a proud Choctaw, Army and Air Force veteran.”

- Steven D. Thompson

Butler competes in Junior Olympics



Jonas “Tank” Butler, a straight-A student-athlete out of Grand Prairie, Texas, qualified for a second time for the Track & Field Junior Olympics in North Carolina in 2024

Jonas ranks fourth in the Region for the Triple Jump and fifth in the Region for the 400m hurdles. At only 14 years old, going into his Freshman year of high school, Jonas is competing against 15-16-year-old sophomores and Juniors.

Jonas is excited to participate once again in the Junior Olympic Games and represent the Choctaw tribe on a national level.

Townsend earns SAIG award



Lt. Justin Townsend has been awarded the 2024 Society of American Indian Government Employees (SAIGE) award at a ceremony in Spokane, Washington.

The SAIGE Military Meritorious Award recognizes those who serve in uniform (or have previously served) who have contributed beyond the mission while promoting American Indian and/or Alaskan Native culture.

Townsend, a proud member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, assumed the duties of Executive Officer of the Coast Guard’s Cryptologic Unit in Colorado in June of 2021 while serving as Deputy Chief of a joint service mission at National Security Agency/Central Security Service (NSA/CSS) Colorado (NSAC), which includes civilians, military and contract workers. On top of his role in the agency, he also volunteered to lead NSAC’s American Indian/Alaska Native Employee Resource Group, serving more than 1,000 joint military members and civilians.

Townsend was among a team of intelligence professionals that received a White House Award for a new and sophisticated intelligence collection project in support of international efforts against illegal and unreported fishing practices.

Beyond these roles, Townsend is also a member of SAIGE. Townsend recently spearheaded a joint Coast Guard and NSAC celebration of National American Indian Heritage Month at the Aerospace Data Facility in Colorado. Townsend presented on the many tribes involved in the Code Talker programs — and their success — during World Wars I and II. Townsend also invited indigenous representatives from various tribal nations to perform a traditional powwow dance for attendees.

“To see thousands of employees here and it was National American Indian Heritage Month. It was a proud moment to be an American Indian. I am working in the American government and being able to positively portray our culture to people who may or may not have experienced it — it was a really proud moment,” said Townsend.

Townsend’s off-hour interests include podcasting and serving as the chief executive officer and founder of Harvesting Nature, an outdoor education company that teaches people how to gather, prepare, and consume wild food. His passion for hunting, fishing, and foraging is connected to his upbringing in Southeastern Oklahoma. It is built on the foundation of fond memories of fishing trips with his grandfather and cooking deer meat with his grandmother.

He plays rugby for a local club, coaches youth rugby, and was selected to play on the Coast Guard’s Rugby team in 2023. He frequently mentors high school students and enlisted military members. He also volunteers with Denver Health as a firearm advocate for suicide prevention and distributes suicide prevention materials to local gun stores.

Townsend graduated from the University of New Orleans in 2010 with a bachelor’s degree in anthropology and geography. He earned his commission from the Coast Guard’s Officer Candidate School in 2016.

“I am most proud of the work. It was recognizing the needs in my community that was the big driver behind what I was doing,” said Townsend. “I think it’s cool and I am proud to be the recipient of this award.”

UARK hosts Stickball Tournament



The Native American Student Association (NASA) of the University of Arkansas held its 2nd annual UARK Choctaw Stickball Tournament and Shootout on April 27 on the UA campus. It has grown quickly and was the 3rd Stickball tournament of the year! The 15 v 15 tournament was well attended, having 6 teams from Oklahoma and 2 teams from Mississippi. The referee crew was a mix of Mississippi and Oklahoma refs (Glen Billie, Sam John, Rodney Ana, BJ Frogg and Tim Comby). The MBCI announcers, Jon Denson and Jeremy Bell were even present to call the games! Mark D Williams of Digital Feather Media videoed the game and events. The weather was almost perfect, and there were many spectators throughout the day. It was truly an outstanding day for all involved!

The winning team, Chahta Warriors, was made up of players from mostly the Durant, Broken Bow and Ada area (with a few players from Mississippi).

The Shootout winner was Alonso Henry from Bok Chito, Mississippi. The two MVPs of the tournament were Brias Bell from Bok Chito, Mississippi and Jay Pajaro from McAlester, Oklahoma.

NASA members who played in the tournament included Misty Goings, Brayden Bird, Carly Keats, tournament organizer, and director Hayes Murphy. Carly Keats is a member of the MBCI and is also one of the star players for the University of Arkansas’s Women’s Basketball team.

Carly also presented the awards on behalf of NASA and the University of Arkansas Razorbacks.

Many people from the CNO and the MBCI helped make the tournament possible, and a special shoutout out to Dewayne Hornbuckle for helping organize this year’s (and last year’s) tournament!

Plans and preparations are already being made for next year’s UARK Choctaw Stickball Tournament and Shootout! If you or your team are interested in being a part of our fun and growing tournament next year, contact Hayes Murphy, Carly Keats or any University of Arkansas NASA member,” said J. Mark Drummonds.

YEAR-AROUND YOUTH EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Youth Employment Services is transitioning from a traditional 5-week summer work experience to a year-round employment opportunity with Project Aautvchi and Project Tokisvi, allowing participants to work up to 200 hours at any time of the year.

Scan to learn more about the program.

Choctaw Nation 477 Program

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CHOCTAW CULTURAL CENTER

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma awards 12 businesses with Chahtapreneur honors

Fincher of Southeastern Recycling named Chahtapreneur of the Year

DURANT, Okla. (June 26, 2024)- The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma recognized 12 small businesses at its annual Chahtapreneur Award Ceremony inside Choctaw Casino & Resort – Durant on Tuesday night.

Each year, Choctaw Nation gives Chahtapreneur Awards to a Choctaw business in each of the reservation's 12 districts, as well as crowning one business Chahtapreneur of the Year. This year, the highest honor went to Southeastern Recycling in Atoka.

Southeastern Recycling is owned and operated by Kyle Fincher, who's worked closely with Choctaw Nation Small Business Development to grow his business.

"We love our annual awards ceremony because it's a chance to highlight the effort and dedication of our Chahtapreneurs," said Billy Hamilton, director of Choctaw Nation Small Business Development. "These business owners utilize our programs and resources to better their businesses, and in turn give back to their communities. We're proud to partner with so many incredible tribal members, and we look forward to working with even more in the coming year."

Award nominations are based on business owners' participation in the Choctaw Nation Small Business Development

program, community involvement and community impact. Below is a complete list of Chahtapreneur Award winners by district:

- District 1: My Doctor Pediatrics & Urgent Care (Idabel)
- District 2: DK Firewood (Broken Bow)
- District 3: Pine Mountain Lures, LLC (Heavener)
- District 4: Baby Bear's Home Cooking (Wister)
- District 5: Rusty Wire Consulting (Stigler)
- District 6: The Sparkle Shop (Talihina)
- District 7: Highway 2 RV Park (Clayton)
- District 8: Holy Roller Small Engine Service & Repair (Boswell)
- District 9: Zolo Creations LLC (Durant)
- District 10: Southeastern Recycling (Atoka)
- District 11: HeavenScent Fragrances & More (McAlester)
- District 12: Choctaw Websites (Arpelar)

Choctaw Nation Small Business Development's focus is delivering technical assistance, training programs and access to capital for entrepreneurs in an effort to build successful, job-creating, Choctaw-owned companies within the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

For more information on Choctaw Nation Small Business Development, visit <https://choctawsmallbusiness.com/>.



Choctaw Nation Photo

Southeastern Recycling, owned and operated by Kyle Fincher, recently won the 2024 Chahtapreneur of the Year Award. Fincher has worked closely with Choctaw Nation Small Business Development to grow his business.

Don't forget to visit the Choctaw Museum this Labor Day Festival

By Shelia Kirven

If you attend the Choctaw Nation Labor Day Festival at Tvshka Homma this year, you won't want to miss the opportunity to see what is new at the historic Choctaw Capitol Building Museum.

"Choctaw Churches," the museum's newest exhibit, will be featured during the festival. Museum manager Regina Green said of the exhibit, "It's a miniature replica of a Choctaw church where you can experience the congregation singing Choctaw hymns." Green said the museum has implemented a new exhibit every year for the last 12 years.

Be sure to drop by the museum's gift shop as well and check out the items for sale, ranging from books to clothing and handmade jewelry to kids' items. It has something for everyone.

Green also said, "The gallery received a beautiful upgrade last year and features many renowned Choctaw artists." It will feature purchased selections from the past 18 years of Choctaw Nation art shows. She said the collection even includes a rare Norma Howard original.

Choctaw artists from around the country enter the art show competition each year. In 2023, the show transitioned to the new Choctaw Cultural Center in Durant. For the 2024 Choctaw Art Show, art pieces will be displayed at the Choctaw Cultural Center from August 16 to September 2.

Upon entering or exiting the Choctaw Capitol building, be sure to experience the walking trail in front of the building, which features informational panels highlighting the Choctaw Journey and several monumental sculptures.

You can read more about the history of the Choctaw Capitol at <https://www.choctawnation.com/biskinik/iti-fabvssa/architectural-history-of-the-choctaw-nation-capitol-at-tuskahoma-1883-present/>.



Choctaw Nation Photo

Choctaw Village: Celebrating Tradition and Culture

By Christian Chaney

This year, the Choctaw Village once again opens its doors to display the traditional, historical, and cultural lifeways of the Choctaw people.

The Choctaw Village, which opened in 2001, has been a focal point for cultural preservation and education.

The event offers an immersive experience where visitors can witness and participate in various cultural demonstrations, hands-on activities and educational displays.

Cultural Demonstrators at the Choctaw Village will showcase their expertise in traditional arts, allowing visitors to observe and engage in these cultural practices.

Highlights include sampling authentic Choctaw dishes such as 'banaha' and 'tanchi labona' at the traditional Choctaw Food Booth.

Guests can also experience pounding corn using a traditional Choctaw mortar and pestle, known as a 'kitih'.

Hands-on cultural arts will be available, including pottery, flintknapping, basketry, beadwork, rabbit stick throw and blowgun demonstrations.

Choctaw artisans will demonstrate and share their knowledge of primitive weapons crafting, dressmaking, stickball stick making and ball making.

Throughout the day, participants are invited to join in various ongoing activities, including Choctaw dancing, stickball skills, hymn singing and language activities.

Children will find plenty to do with engaging activities tailored just for them.

They can participate in the fun and interactive Rabbit Stick Throw activity and the robust and competitive Corn Game.

Choctaw storytellers will entertain with stories filled with wit, wisdom and oral traditions. Nearby, children and visitors can help 'mud' the exterior of a traditional Choctaw hut, contributing to its construction.

Sunday afternoon promises to be a highlight.

Choctaw dancing will begin at 4:00 p.m. on the Capitol lawn, followed by stickball exhibition games for all ages at 5:00 p.m.

Everyone is invited to attend and participate, ensuring a memorable experience for all.

Come celebrate the Choctaw culture, participate in unique activities, and take home memories of a vibrant heritage.



Photo by Chris Jennings

Tent camping is a tradition for many at Labor Day Festival

By Christian Toews

Tent camping has been a part of the Choctaw Nation Labor Day festival for as long as the festival has existed. Hundreds of people travel from across the country to sleep under the stars at the Tvshka Homma, Oklahoma, event.

According to Kerry Steve, her family has been tent camping at the Labor Day festival for most of her life.

Steve's family would try to arrive early to rope off an area so their extended family could join them.

For Steve, one of the most meaningful memories of the Labor Day festival was camping with her extended family.

"We really didn't care who we were by as long as we were together. It was a homecoming kind of feel," she said.

Tent camping has changed over the years.

Steve remembers camping where the general store is now located and waiting in long lines for the bathroom.

The tent camping area has moved, and improvements to the grounds have allowed easier access to water and bathrooms. However, the rush to get a camping spot has stayed the same.

Janita Jeffreys manages tent camping, among many other things, at the Labor Day festival.

According to Jeffreys, they call the opening day of tent camping "the Tent Scramble" because it describes it so well.

"People line up and are ready when we open the gates on Saturday morning. They rush in and rope off their area," she said. "It's literally a scramble."



Jeffreys echoed Steve's sentiment when considering the years of tent camping.

"We have huge families come in, and they do their vacation and reunions here," said Jeffreys. "That's the neatest part about it because you see all the families come together."

According to Jeffreys, anywhere from 750 to 1000 people will gather in Tvshka Homma to tent camp. Many families return to the same spot each year and keep the tradition alive.

Steve said that as she has gotten older, she prefers "glamping" in an RV more than tent camping, but she will always look back fondly to the years her parents took her family tent camping.

Whether you are a veteran Labor Day Festival tent camper or want to try it for the first time, be sure to mark your calendars for the 2024 Tent Scramble on Saturday, August 24, at 10:00 a.m.

A full Labor Day festival schedule and a map with specific tent camping locations can be found online at laborday.choctawnation.com.

You can also contact Jeffreys at jjeffreys@choctawnation.com if you have any questions about tent camping.



Photos by Krislan Garside

Weekend Schedule of Events

Friday:

- Corn Husk Dolls Make and Take, 10:00 a.m.
- Beaded Corn Make and Take at 11:00 a.m.
- Beaded Collar, 12:00 p.m.
- Stickball Making, 1:30 p.m.

Saturday:

- Chahta Children's Games, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
- Choctaw Dancing, 10:00 a.m.
- Choctaw Hymns, 10:30 a.m.
- Storytelling, 11:00 a.m.

- Rabbit Stick Throw, 11:30 a.m.
- Stickball, 1:00 p.m.
- Language Activity, 1:30 p.m.
- Choctaw Dancing, 2:15 p.m.

Sunday:

- Rabbit Stick Throw, 1:00 p.m.
- Storytelling, 1:30 p.m.
- Corn Game, 2:00 p.m.
- Social Dancing on Capitol Lawn, 2:00 p.m.
- Stickball Exhibition Game immediately following Social Dancing.

For more information and to stay up-to-date on what's happening in the Choctaw Village, visit https://laborday.choctawnation.com/event_location/choctaw-village/.

Check out the new Tribal Council House this Labor Day

TUSKAHOMA, Okla. — A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held on June 20 to mark the grand opening of Okla Chukka, "The People's House," in Tuskahoma. This new tribal council house, designed to foster tribal member engagement in the democratic process, stands as a testament to the rich heritage and promising future of the Choctaw Nation.

Funded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) with a budget of \$7.8 million, the state-of-the-art facility spans 7,000 square feet. Okla Chukka contains cutting-edge technology, allowing tribal members to view council sessions in person or by streaming at home.

The building faces East, honoring the Choctaw Nation's ancestors and their journey across the Trail of Tears. The exterior of the council house features 48 pilasters, representing the original number of



Photo by Christian Toews

The new council house was officially opened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on June 20.

council members, while 12 larger columns symbolize the current number of Council Members. These architectural elements serve as a reminder of the Choctaw Nation's history and its ongoing commitment to its people and sovereignty.

"The People's House is more than just a new building; it's part of our Nation's capital, it's a symbol of strength and it's where we exercise our sovereignty," said Chief Gary Batton.

For more information about the Choctaw Nation, visit www.choctawnation.com.

LEARNING COMMUNITIES
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The High School Student Services Learning Communities program offers interdisciplinary learning, mentorship, industry-specific certificates and career development opportunities. Students can participate in specialized communities, monthly seminars and receive recognition for their achievements!

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT CHOCTAWNATION.COM/SERVICES/HIGH-SCHOOL-STUDENT-SERVICES

Scan to learn more about the program.

Choctaw Nation High School Student Services

JONES ACADEMY SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

Did you know Jones Academy partners with Hartschorn Public Schools to provide quality education to students? Students who are residents at Jones Academy attend Hartschorn Middle School and High School for grades 7 through 12. At Hartschorn Public Schools, Jones Academy students receive an education based on academic standards for Oklahoma Public Schools. Additionally, Jones Academy students participate in various extracurricular activities, including athletics, band, choir, 4H and student leadership organizations.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT JONES ACADEMY, PLEASE VISIT: JONESACADEMY.ORG

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

WARRIOR WELLNESS CHARITY WINE RUN

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2024 10:00 AM

Join us for the Annual WW Charity Run! Come experience hand-crafted wine while you relax and enjoy the scenic Blue River Valley Winery. Whether you want to run, walk or just enjoy the wine, this race promises to be a great time and an incredible experience.

SCAN THE QR CODE FOR MORE INFORMATION

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Virginia Lee Anderson Glynn



Virginia Lee Anderson Glynn, 75, passed away June 2, 2024. Virginia was born Jan. 23, 1949, in Wilburton, Okla., to James and Margaret Anderson. She was preceded in death by her parents; husband James Impson Sr.; and brothers Jimmy and Pete Anderson. Virginia is survived by her children Warren and spouse Laurie, Renee and spouse Scott, Janine and spouse Omar, Rhonda and spouse Ivan, and Brandi and spouse Paul; grandchildren Kaylynn, Selena, Eva, Ivan, Melody, Oliver, Eduardo, Sophina, Dean, and Mika; great-grandchildren Andrea, Eli, Elias, Aamirah, Malia, River, and Aaydin; and siblings Patricia, Vivian, Billy, Mary and Johnny. For the full obituary, please visit [Biskinik](#).

Victor Colbert Eyachabbe



Victor Colbert Eyachabbe, 83, passed away June 15, 2024. Victor was born Dec. 8, 1940, in Finley, Okla., to Rufus Eyachabbe Sr. and Mary (Wilkins) Eyachabbe. He is survived by his wife Clara Battice-Eyachabbe; daughters Victoria Holder and spouse Mitch, Nasha Tucker, Carolyn Windham and spouse Andrew, and Chloe Eyachabbe; stepchildren Curtis Battice, Jr. (Karla), Leslie Battice, and Sterling Battice (Tiffany); seven grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren; 12 step-grandchildren; and 10 step-great-grandchildren; brothers Curtis Eyachabbe and spouse Patsy, Rufus Eyachabbe Jr. and spouse Ramona; sisters Paula Sue Willis, and Rhoda Scott and spouse Roger; and numerous nieces and nephews. For the full obituary, please visit [Serenity Funeral Service](#).

LaVera Hansen



LaVera W. Hansen, 92, passed away June 9, 2024. LaVera was born in 1932, in Pauls Valley, Okla. She was preceded in death by her husband Vance L. Hansen; son Samuel Hansen; five brothers; and one sister. LaVera is survived by son Randy Hansen; daughter-in-law Kimberly; daughter Barbara Hansen Niksch; son-in-law Robert Ott; daughter-in-law Kathy Murray; grandchildren Jessica, Justin, Travis, Ashley, Mayleea, Eliana, and Chloe; great-grandchildren Rosaline, Sammie, TJ, Ava, Silas, Madisen, Zayne, and Samuel; and her 15-year-old Pomeranians Sierra and Piper. For the full obituary, please visit [Brusie Funeral Home](#).

Nicholas McDaniel



Nicholas Cooper Kekoa McDaniel, 36, passed away Oct. 22, 2023. Nicholas was born Dec. 7, 1986, in Hilo, Hawaii, to Heather and Danny McDaniel. He is survived by his fiance Paige; two sons; his parents; and many extended family members across the United States. For the full obituary, please visit [Bell Tower Funeral Home](#).

Jimmie Earl Roberts



Jimmie “Jim” Earl Roberts, 83, passed away June 17, 2024. Jim was born June 16, 1941, in Wilburton, Okla., to Earl Roberts and Edna (York) Roberts. He was preceded in death by his parents; sister Shirley Ann Roberts; and brother Lum Roberts. Jim is survived by his wife Dorothy “Sue” Roberts; son Jimmy Vance Roberts and spouse Alene; grandchildren Zane Roberts and Christie, Shelbi Caudle and spouse Matt, Selene Dedmon and spouse Codee, and Zack Roberts; great-grandchildren Pheonix, Winter, and Lydia; brother Bob Roberts and spouse Lori; and sister-in-law Kay Roberts; along with other family and friends including Robert Gray, Joe Bill Aaron, and Councilperson Jennifer Woods. For the full obituary, please visit [Jones Harkins Funeral Home](#).

Jason Lynn Choate



Jason Lynn Choate, 39, passed away June 21, 2024. Jason was born Sept. 9, 1984, in Claremore, Okla., to Leon and Doris Doreen Noah Choate. He was preceded in death by grandparents Everidge and Edna Choate, and Culbertson and Ora Noah; and uncles Culbertson Noah Jr., Johnson Noah, and Donald Noah. Jason is survived by his parents; brothers Jonathan Choate and spouse Rebecca, and Montana Noah; sister Krystal Hill and spouse Joseph; nieces and nephew Khyler, Kynley, and Jaxton Hill; uncles and aunts Floyd and Patricia Choate, Marietta Battiest, Levi Choate, Darlene Estrada, Diantha Noah, Angela Noah, and Arnold Noah; along with a host of other family and friends. For the full obituary, please visit [Bowser Family Funeral Home](#).

Michael Ray Harris



Michael “Mike” Ray Harris, 82, passed away May 2, 2024. Mike was born Dec. 24, 1941, in Sentinel, Okla., to Aubrey Ray and Dixie Mills Harris. He is survived by his wife Pat; sister Mary Thompson; niece Sylvia Hacker (Bill); nephew Mike Thompson (Jayleen); and great-nieces, Sarah, Jenise, and Serena. For the full obituary, please visit [Allen Family Funeral Options](#).

Mark Lewis



Mark Lewis, 69, passed away July 6, 2024. Mark was born Aug. 27, 1954, in Talihina, Okla., to Aaron Sr. and Naomi Cornelius Lewis. He was preceded in death by his parents; and sister Carol Lewis. Mark is survived by daughter and son-in-law Taylor and Jaques Jacob; daughters Tracy Wesley, Theresa Wesley, and Sherri Wesley; brothers and sister-in-law Robert Lewis, and Aaron Jr. and Viney Lewis; sister Linda Farley; best friend Sharon Wesley; special friends Nolan and Natasha Wesley, and Thomas Williston; grandchildren Evangeline Lewis, Sean Lewis, Blaine Lewis, Mark Jacob, Jalaya Littlejohn, Jayla Littlejohn, Rodrick Watson, Taryn Watson, Mariela Bustamante, Jathan Bustamante, Lariah Wesley; and a host of other relatives and friends. For the full obituary, please visit [Bowser Family Funeral Home](#).

Walter Lee Gooding



Walter “Spooky” Lee Gooding, 84, passed away June 26, 2024. Walter was born Oct. 31, 1939, in Grant, Okla., to Jesse B. Gooding and Harrie Marie (Wilkins) Gooding. He was preceded in death by his parents; and siblings William Dean Gooding, Vera (Gooding) Hutchison, Jesse Fred Gooding, Hal LeFlore Gooding, and Walter J. Leonard. Walter is survived by his wife Judy; children Timothy Gooding, Stephanie Shaffer, and Andrew Gooding; grandchildren Reynolds Shaffer, Ethan Shaffer, Jameson Shaffer and spouse Madison, Garrett Shaffer, and Kelsey Shaffer; great-grandchildren Harper and Parker; and numerous nieces and nephews. For the full obituary, please visit [Affordable Burial and Cremation Service](#).

Anna Belle Millsap



Anna Belle Millsap, 87, passed away June 30, 2024. Anna Belle was born Nov. 20, 1936, in Ardmore, Okla., to William Harvey and Effie M McKinney Stidham. She was preceded in death by her parents; husband C.L. Millsap Sr.; brother John William Stidham; sisters Violet Wright, Alice Scott, and Margaret Muncrief; and granddaughter Tara Brown. Anna Belle is survived by her children Sandra Brown, Glenda Millsap, Cheryl Millsap, C.L. Millsap Jr., and William Millsap; siblings David Stidham, Ella Parrott, Larry Stidham and Lois Scott; grandchildren Tracy Hess, Christie Brown, Joyce McFtridge, Angela Sharp, Tommy Millsap, Charlie Millsap, Austin Millsap, Jordan Millsap, and Bethany Millsap; 23 great-grandchildren; and 16 great-great-grandchildren. For the full obituary, please visit [Harvey Douglas Funeral Home](#).

Dennis Warren Burdick



Dennis Warren Burdick, 66, passed away April 24, 2024. Dennis was born Sept. 14, 1957, in Poteau, Okla., to Bessie (Walker) Burdick and Warren G. Burdick. He was preceded in death by his parents; and brother Donnie Barlow. Dennis is survived by his children Kendra Orick and spouse Jeremy, and Denissa Burdick; grandchildren Lynden Barlow and Kambrie Burdick; sisters Cindy Lovell and Connie Harris; numerous nieces, nephews, cousins; and other loved ones and friends. For the full obituary, please visit [Evans and Miller Funeral Home](#).

Thomas Francis Bailey



Thomas Francis Bailey, 82, passed away March 23, 2024. Thomas was born Jan. 19, 1942, in Idabel, Okla., to Thomas Jefferson Bailey and Lillie Frances Bailey. He was preceded in death by his parents. Thomas is survived by his wife Linda Kathryn Bailey; daughters Karen Watson and April Bailey; sons Michael Bailey and David L. Bailey and spouse Sonia; grandchildren Cameron S. Bailey and spouse Sarah, Tyler K. Watson, Kelsey N. Tompkins and spouse Charles, Ethan J. Bailey, Emilee R. Bailey, and Colby T. Watson; great-granddaughters Kinsley M. Tomkins and Darlene J. Bailey, sister Theresa A. Stevens and spouse Elray; brother Donald R. Bailey and spouse Jeannette Bailey; brothers-in-law James Johnston and spouse Cynthia, Jerry L. Johnston, and Larry A. Johnston and spouse; and many other nieces, nephews, cousins, and special friends. For the full obituary, please visit [Porter Loring Mortuary](#).

Thomas Jerry Braswell



Thomas Jerry Braswell, 90, passed away June 22, 2024. Tommy was born Oct. 20, 1933, in McAlester, Okla., to Thomas Haywood and Clara Mae (Raydon) Braswell. He was preceded in death by his parents; and brothers Albert R. Braswell Sr. and Robert Raydon Braswell. Tommy is survived by his wife Shirley Mae Braswell; son and daughter-in-law Ryan Thomas and Christina Braswell; grandsons Layne Thomas Braswell and Connor Ryan Braswell; sister-in-law and brother-in-law Linda and Tom Reeder; brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law Leon and Shirley Cloud, and Gary and Barbara Cloud; sister-in-law Carol Cloud; and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins. For the full obituary, please visit [Brumley-Mills Funeral Home](#).

Christopher Shane Sellers



Christopher Shane Sellers, 51, passed away June 14, 2024. Christopher was born Aug. 9, 1972, in Talihina, Okla. He is survived by his son Shane; brothers Charles Sellers and Ricky Sellers; sisters Margaret Flores, Jonell Hernandez, and Flora Sellers; and numerous friends and loved ones. For the full obituary, please visit [Holmes-Coffey-Murray Funeral Home](#).

Nancy Smith



Nancy Smith, 83, passed away Feb. 16, 2024. Nancy was born in 1940, to Harvey and Carrie Bullard. She is survived by her husband Bob Smith; children Ryan, and Ragan and spouse Christen; granddaughter Jillian; sisters Jodie Atwell, and Mary Felkins and spouse Dale; and many nieces and nephews. For the full obituary, please visit [Biskinik](#).

Clifton P. Wagenseller



Clifton P. Wagenseller, 72, passed away May 14, 2024. Clifton was born Sept. 19, 1951, in Irving, Texas, to David and Doris Wagenseller. For the full obituary, please visit [Biskinik](#).

Planning ahead can ease the family burden at time of death

By Chris Jennings



The death of a family member is a trying time for many. Several things can be done beforehand that can ease the process, though. Knowing what’s involved and what needs to happen before death can take some stress away from family members so they can grieve properly.

If paying for a funeral is burdening your family, then the Choctaw Nation may be able to help. The following guidelines must be met to be eligible for funeral services through the Nations Burial Program:

- Applicants must notify our office at the time of death.
- Applications must be received in our office within 30 days of passing.
- Choctaw Tribal membership and CDIB card (will be verified through our membership office) for the deceased.
- Valid Social Security Card for deceased.
- Final funeral home itemized statement with an unpaid balance.
- Certified copy of death certificate.

If you would like to have some Choctaw culture during your funeral, the Tribal Burial program has links to recorded hymns in Choctaw for tribal members to use.

The Burial Program can also assist with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Burial Assistance Program. The Nation is authorized to use this funding when applicable. The BIA program is intended for families with no resources available. Funeral homes are obligated to accept these funds as payment in full for service rendered. Services are limited and can’t be altered in any way.

Certain guidelines must be followed for the BIA program:

- Must reside within the Choctaw service area.
- Must be a member of any federally recognized tribe, verified by a tribal membership card and have a valid CDIB card.
- Be indigent, with no other resources available (insurance, veteran’s benefits, cash over \$1,000 saving accounts, IIM account monies, victim assistance program or other state and federal assistance programs, etc.)
- Residential verification that the deceased had lived within the Choctaw Nation service area for six months before death. Must supply a utility bill or mail with the physical location listed address as proof of residency.
- Proof of income for the deceased.

Go to Choctaw Burial Services for complete details on what is required; visit [www.choctawnation.com/services/burial/](#).

Information for Choctaw Veterans and the services available to them can be found at [www.choctawnation.com/services/veteran-advocacy/](#).

Obituary Policy

Obituary submissions are for Choctaw Nation tribal members only and are free of charge. The Biskinik will only accept obituary notices from funeral homes.

Family members/individuals may submit funeral notices as long as the notice is from the funeral home or printed in their local newspaper 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. The online issue of the Biskinik will contain links to the full obituaries.

Send official obituary notices to:
Biskinik
PO Box 1210
Durant OK 74702
or email: biskinik@choctawnation.com

ITI FABVSSA

Minutes from the Treaty of Fort Adams (Part 2)

This month, Iti Fabvssa is continuing to examine the conversations between representatives of the United States and the Choctaw Nation by reviewing the minutes from the 1801 Treaty of Fort Adams. In last month's Part 1, we followed the speech by U.S. Commissioner General Wilkinson to Choctaw Leaders. This speech communicated that the U.S. wanted to affirm peace and friendship with the Choctaw Nation, allow Choctaw leaders to share any issues that they may be having, make improvements to the Natchez Trace, or Natchez Trace, so it would be suitable for wagon traffic from Natchez to (old) Cumberland, gain right-of-way access for the US government alongside the newly improved wagon road, establish another wagon road between Natchez and Mobile, and survey the boundary between the United States and the Choctaw Nation. The Commission also requested that Choctaw Nation express thanks for the gifts that the President of the United States gave to the Choctaw Leaders despite the position that the US did not feel Choctaw Nation deserved the gifts.

Below, are the speeches made by the Choctaw Chiefs in response to General Wilkinson. Following the excerpts (italicized), we provide additional context. This transcript has been copied from the American State Papers Indian Affairs volumes.

“Tuskonahopia, a chief of the Lower towns, informed the commissioners that were seven chiefs from different towns, and requested, in their behalf, that they might be heard separately, that each might speak for this own town; and that, after they had spoken, the young warriors might be heard, and the same attention paid to their talks that would be to those of the old chiefs.”

The Choctaw Nation of the ancestral homelands was divided into three districts: the Okla Falaia, or the Long People (referred to here as the Lower Towns); the Ahepvt Okla or the Spread-out Potatoes People (referred to as the Upper Towns); and the Okla Hannali, the Six Towns People. Each of these districts were made up of several towns and many villages. During diplomatic negotiations, the villages would send a Chief to represent the town or a collection of towns.

Choctaw men followed a social hierarchy: Chiefs > Beloved Men > Warriors > Young Men. During talks, this social hierarchy dictated who spoke first. Tuskonahopia illustrated this by stating that the Chiefs would be given the opportunity to speak first while the warriors in attendance would be given the opportunity to speak afterwards. Among the Chiefs, Tuskonahopia was given the honor of speaking first because he was the most respected Chief attending the negotiations.

Tuskonahopia then spoke: *To-day I meet the commissioners here, who have delivered to us the talks from the President, and I am well pleased with his talks, that I have received from my beloved brothers the commissioners, for the welfare of my nation. I take you three beloved men by the hand, and hold you fast. You three commissioners, who have visited the Cherokees and Chickasaws, one request which you ask of my nation, the cutting of a road, I grant. I grant it as a white road, as a path of peace, and not as a path of war; one which is never to be stained. I understood yesterday, that my father the President allowed me an annual present, and it never should be taken from me. It must have been a mistake of his officers, as I never have received any annual allowances. He must have given it to some other of my red brethren, I deny having received any annual gift. It has been told the chiefs of the nation, through the interpreters, that their father allowed them an annual present for their nation.*

I forgot something when I spoke of present, which I will now mention. We have received presents from our father the President; part at the Walnut Hills, and part at Natchez. I, myself, and a few other chiefs, and a few warriors, went to the Walnut Hills, and the presents were but very small. I do not know whether these presents were concealed from us or not; but I know we got but a few, not worth going after. A company of the war chiefs and warriors received, the last spring past, a few presents at the Bluffs that is all; if there have been any other given, it must have been to idle Indians, who are straggling about, and do not attend to the talks of the chiefs of the nation.

There is an old boundary line between the white people and my nation, which was run before I was a chief of the nation. This line was run by the permission of the chiefs of the nation, who were chiefs at that time; they understood, when that line was run, that they were to receive pay for those lands; but they never have received pay for those lands. These chiefs, here present, acknowledge the lands to be the white people's land; they hold no claim on it, although they never received any pay for it; they wish the lands to be marked anew, and that it be done by some of both parties, as both should be present; (meaning read and white people).

Miko Tuskonahopai was from the Okla Falaia District. To summarize his speech, he, granted the Americans permission to make improvements to the trade road. In Choctaw Culture, white was the color of peace and red the color of war. He stated that the road was to be white, meaning to

be utilized in peace and friendship with the U.S. and should never be used as a pathway for the Choctaw Nation or the U.S. to war with each other.

In Part 1, we discussed that the U.S. Commissioners told Choctaw Leaders that the President had delivered annual gifts to them as a token of friendship and that the Choctaw were not deserving of these gifts, and that they should thank the President for his generosity. However, from the perspectives of the Choctaw Leaders, the gifts were rent paid by the United States for utilizing Choctaw Lands. In earlier negotiations with the British and Spanish, Choctaw leaders orally stated that lands would be shared. However, the British and Spanish wrote into their treaties that the lands were ceded by the Choctaw. This deceit resulted in the U.S. believing that it now owned these lands and that it needed to make no payments to the Choctaw Nation.

Tuskonahopai tactfully approached the topic of gifts. He first feigns that he had never received gifts from the President. He then pivoted and stated that he had received gifts from the president at Natchez or Walnut Hills (old name for Vicksburg), however the gifts were so insufficient that they were not worth his time to travel to collect them. He stated that if the gifts from the President were so great, then they must have been hidden from him or accidentally given away to others.

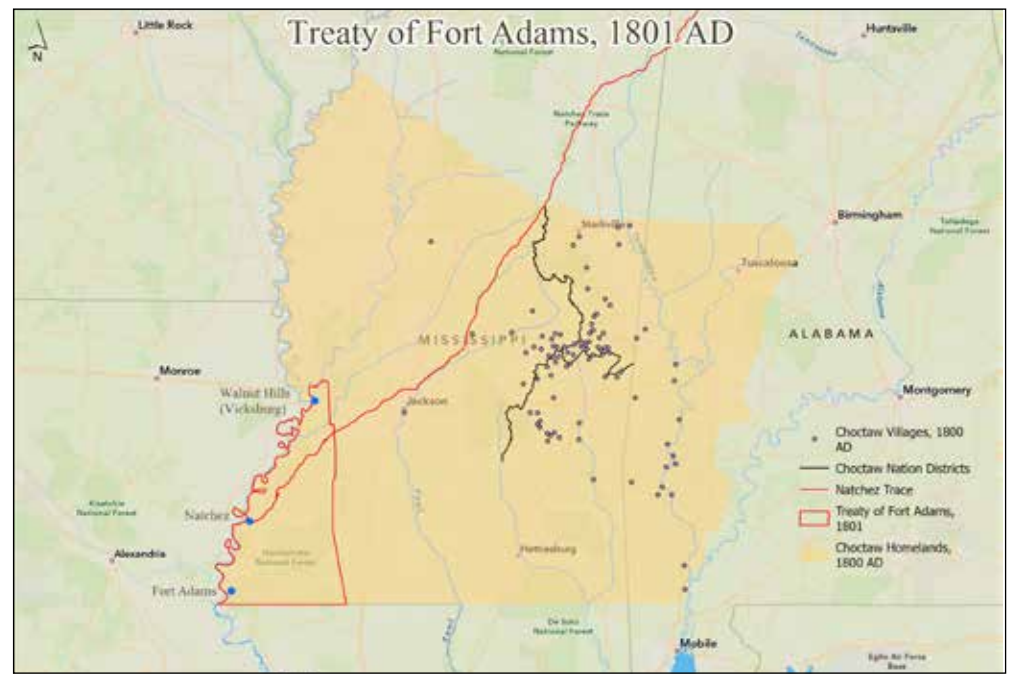
In 1786, the Choctaw Nation met with the U.S. at the Treaty of Hopewell. There, the United States established peace, friendship, and trade with the Choctaw Nation. This treaty, and others, recognize the Choctaw Nation as a sovereign nation and still contributes to our federal recognition today. The Boundary of the Choctaw Nation was also defined, based off the Treaty of Mobile with the British in 1768. Instead of being ungrateful for the presents from President Jefferson, the Choctaw leaders are being generous and powerful by not requiring compensation from European powers that rightfully belong to Choctaw Nation. According to Tuskonahopai, the Choctaw Nation never received compensation for Choctaw lands that were being occupied to the Americans. Using these facts, he negates the U.S. attempt to make the Choctaw Nation look small and petty. He then states that the new boundary line must surveyed by both the Choctaw and U.S. representatives.

Too-te-hoo-muh from the same district, then spoke: *I thank the President, my father, for sending you three beloved men here, to speak to me. I take you by the hand, hold you fast, and am going to speak to you. I grant this road to be cut, which the chief who spoke before me granted. I grant the road only; you may make it as firm, as good, and as strong, as you will; there are no big water courses on it, and there is no occasion for canoes or ferries. I speak now concerning an old line, which was run when I was a boy; I wish for this line to be traced and marked anew; I do not know where the line is; I have been informed, by some of the young men of my nation, that there are white people and stock over it. We, chiefs of the nation, wish, if any are over our lines, that they may be moved back again by our brothers, the officers of the United States, and that they would move them back, with their stock.*

Miko Tootehoomuh, from the Okla Falaia District, also granted the trade road to be improved upon, however he did not grant the U.S. the right-of-way alongside the road. The United States wished access to the right-of-way alongside the road to build stage stations and ferries. The U.S. attempted to entice the Choctaw Leaders by allowing them to rent these businesses and retain the profit. Tootehoomuh stated that there are no major river crossings for ferries along the road, so he therefore denies the U.S. right-of-way. He then spoke about the boundary line and how Americans are illegally squatting on Choctaw lands. He requests that the U.S. to move their settlers off Choctaw lands once the boundary is marked. At this time, American livestock were quite detrimental to the carefully tended ecosystem that Choctaw people stewarded. Choctaw lands suffered from the effects of cattle brought by illegal American immigrants and he asked that these be removed.

Mingo-poos-coos of the Chickasaw half town: *I am an old acquaintance here; I came here with other chiefs of the nation, not to differ with them, but to join them in whatever they do. I understand this business plainly; you three, sitting here, were sent by our father, the President, to speak to our nation. My talks are not long. I am here before three beloved men. I am a man of but few words in my town; it is the lowest but one in my nation. My talks are not long; I hope this will be considered as if I had said a great deal. The first time I ever saw my friend, the General, (Wilkinson) he appeared as if he wished to say a great deal; I objected, I was but one; I am a well wisher; the day will come when we head men will see each other. The road through our land to Tombeckbe, is not in my power to grant, there are other chiefs who hold claims on those lands; my claim is but short. The white people travel the line of limits; they are free to use that, and any of the small paths.*

Miko Pooscoos is possibly from the town on Kushak, meaning Reed Brake. Kushak was part of a small group of villages in the northeastern part of the Okla Hannali District. The Okla Hannali District was a con-



Fort Adams lies in the bottom left corner of the Choctaw homelands. In this second part of studying the minutes from the Treaty of Fort Adams, more conversations are presented.

federation of different Choctaw speaking people who moved into the Choctaw Nation in the 1600s and early 1700's. Pooscoos notes that his village was the "lowest" meaning that it was not strong politically. He did not have the authority to grant the Americans access to the southern trade path because those lands were controlled by the other Six Towns District groups that were farther south. Pooscoos stated that the trade paths the Americans are already using south of Choctaw lands are sufficient.

Oak-chume, of the Upper town, spoke thus: *I see you to day, in the shade of your own house. I am a poor distressed red man; I know not how to make any thing; I am in the place here from the Upper towns; my uncle was the great chief of the nation; he kept all paths clean and swept out; long poles of peace, a number of officers and chiefs in his arms; he is gone; he is dead, he has left us behind. You three beloved men in my presence, I am glad to see you; you may be my father for what I know; the Great Spirit above is over us all. I hold my five fingers, and, with them, I hold yours; mine are black, but I Whiten them for the occasion. I understood your great father, Washington, was dead, and that the great council got together and appointed another in his stead, who has not forgot us, and who love us as our father Washington did; and I am glad to hear our father, the President, wishes that the sun may shine bright over his red children. The Chickasaws are my old brothers; you visited them, and talked to them, before I saw you here. I understood you asked them for a big path to be cut, a white path, a path of peace, and that they granted it to you, as far their claims extend. I grant it likewise. There are no big water-courses, there are no big rivers, nor creeks, and therefore, no occasion for canoes, nor is there any occasion for horse boats. It is not our wish that there should be any houses built; the reason I give is, that there is a number of warriors who might spoil something belonging to the occupiers of those houses, and the complaints would become troublesome to me, and to the chiefs on my nation. I speak next of our old line; I wish it to be traced up, and marked over again; I claim part in it; those people who are over it, I wish back again, for fear they may destroy the line, and it be lost. I have done.*

Miko Oakchume, of the Okla Falaia District, began by humbling himself to the U.S. commissioners. He mentioned that his uncle was a great chief, perhaps a reference to Chief Franchimastubbe who recently passed away. He states that his fingers "... are black, but I Whiten them for the occasion" which indicates that he is a War Chief, but was not acting in that role for these negotiations. Oakchume, like Tootehoomuh, granted the improvement of the road, to be used for peace, but not for the United States to access the roads' right-of-way. He then cautioned that having American people so close may entice the younger warriors to raid the homes along the wagon road and that would cause many issues. He wished the boundary line to be surveyed so that it is not lost again.

Puck-shem-ubbee, from the Upper towns, then spoke: *The old line that the other chiefs repeated, as far as I understood from my forefathers, I will name its course, and the water-courses it crosses, beginning at the Homochitto, running thence nearly a northwest course, until it strikes the Standing-pines creek; thence, crosses the Bayou Pierre, high up, and Big Black; from thence, strikes the Mississippi at the mount of Tallauhatche. (Yawzoo.) That line I wish may be renewed, that both parties may know their own. There are people over; or on the line; it is my wish they may be removed immediately. Where the line runs, along the Bayou Pierre, some whites are settled on this line, and some over it; those over; I wish may be removed; if there are none over, there is nothing spoiled. From the information I have received from my forefathers, this Natchez country belonged to red people; the whole of it, which is not settled by white people. But you Americans were not the first people who got this country from the red people. We sold our lands, but never got any value for it; this I speak from the information of old men. We did not sell them to you, and, as we never received anything for it, I wish*

you, our friends, to think of it, and make us some compensation for it. We are red people, and you are white people; we did not come here to beg; we brought no property with us to purchase any thing; we came to do the business of our nation and return.

The other chiefs have granted you this road. We do not wish the white people to go alone to make the road; we wish a few of the red people, and an interpreter, to go with them. We, of the Upper towns district, a large district, I speak for them now: there is but one interpreter in our nation; he is a long distance from us; when we have business to do, we wish to have our interpreter near. It is the wish to have, for the Upper towns, an interpreter from among the white people who live with us, that we may do our business with more satisfaction with the chiefs of the district. I have another request to ask of you, for the distresses of our nation; a blacksmith, who can do our work well, for the Upper towns district. Another thing I have to request, for our young women, and half breeds; we want spinning wheels, and somebody to be sent among them to teach them to spin. I have nothing more to say; I have complied with the request of the commissioners; I have done. Further I have to ask, concerning the blacksmith and tools; if the man leaves us, let him leave his tools, and that they may remain with us, as property of the Upper towns district.

Miko Puskshemubbee of the Oklahoma Falaia District stated the boundary line was told to him by his elders. He also wished for the line to be surveyed because there may be American squatters living across it in the Choctaw Nation; if so, they must be removed. He then reminded that the Natchez District was never sold to the U.S. and if they wished to have it, they must pay for it. He stated that the Choctaw Nation did not come to the negotiations to beg or purchase anything, but to do business and go home.

E-lau-tau-lau-hoo-muh spoke thus: *I am a stranger; this is the first time I ever saw the Americans. I came here, I am sorry that it appeared cloudy, but it has cleared off, (alluding to the cloudy weather; which cleared off just as he began to speak.) I understood; by what I have heard, that you are authorized by our father to come and talk to us. I am glad to take you by the hand, which I do kindly, and am glad our father, the President, thinks of his red children. It is my wish, with the rest of the old chiefs, that the line may be marked anew. There is a number of water courses in our land, and I wish the white people to keep no stock on them, or to build houses. I am done; my talk is short, and I will shake hands with you.*

Miko Elautaulaouhoomuh began by apologizing for the cloudy weather. In Choctaw culture, all political negotiations would be done under full sunlight. At this time, Choctaw people believed that the sun was the eye of God and that no one would speak a lie in front of God. Like the other chiefs, he reiterated that he wished for the boundary line to be surveyed and did not give permission for a right-of-way to the wagon road.

The interpreter then stated, that the chiefs directed him to inform the commissioners, the young warriors wished to be indulged with making their talks on paper, at their encampment, if that would do, and to be supplied, for that purpose, with paper. It was ordered accordingly, and the commissioners adjourned.

The Choctaw Chiefs, after their speeches, wished to give the warriors the opportunity to speak. Since the time for negotiations was over, the Chiefs asked that the warriors be allowed to record their speeches on paper and they be provided to the Commissioners. Next month, in Part 3, we will get to read speeches.

When we study the situations and decisions of our ancestors, we can see the future they wished for us to have. As we read their words, we can see how Choctaw culture informed their thoughts, feelings, and perspectives. Next month Iti Fabvssa will continue sharing the meeting minutes from the Treaty of Fort Adams (Part 3). If you would like to jump ahead, we encourage you to look at the American State Papers. Class II Indian Affairs. Volume 1. Pages 658-663: <https://tinyurl.com/29crb4z2>

Labor Day Healthy Living Tent to offer screenings and information at Labor Day

By Chris Jennings

The Healthy Living tent has been a staple at the Choctaw Nation Labor Day festival for many years, and it's returning this year to make certain programs and services easily available to tribal members at the festival.

Many programs will perform screenings and offer services in the air-conditioned tent.

The Diabetic Wellness Center will provide A1C tests. The test involves drawing a small blood sample from your finger or arm. You don't need to fast before the test, which usually takes less than five minutes.

While at the tent, you can check your body mass index (BMI). The BMI test measures body fat based on height and weight. It involves removing your socks and shoes and standing on a Tanita weight scale. It will also test your body fat percentage, fat-free mass (muscle, bone, tissue and water) and basal metabolic rate. The Tanita scale looks at overall health and energy balance. Please note that people with a pacemaker should not use the scale.

The Choctaw Nation Dental program will allow children from ages six months to 16 years to get fluoride coating on their teeth.

The application is simple, taking less than five minutes. The community health nurses use the varnish application. The fluoride is applied to all surfaces of the teeth with a small brush that looks similar to a small paintbrush. Parents will be required to sign a consent form.

Blood pressure checks will also be available. High blood pressure, also known as hypertension, can increase the risk of serious health problems like heart attack, stroke, heart failure, and kidney disease. High blood pressure often has no symptoms, so it's sometimes called a "silent killer."

Other programs and services that will be available in the Healthy Living tent are:

• Optometry

Choctaw Nation Eye Clinics are staffed with licensed optometrists and fully trained optometry technicians.

• Revenue Management

• Bicycle Safety/Don't Text & Drive

The number of preventable deaths from bicycle transportation incidents decreased by 2.5% in 2021 but has increased by 37% in the last ten years. In 2022, 1,105 bike riders were killed in traffic crashes.

• Medication Safety

• Public Health

Works to ensure the optimal health and well-being of all people by preventing disease, injury and disability, promoting phys-

ical and mental health and protecting from health hazards. Accomplishing this by identifying community health needs, assuring the availability of quality health services and providing effective leadership in developing public health policies. The department is committed to working with communities to eliminate health disparities.

• WIC

The Choctaw Nation WIC Program is a federally funded supplemental nutrition program designed to provide low-income pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women, as well as infants and children, with a combination of nutrition education, supplemental foods, breastfeeding promotion, support, and healthcare referrals.

WIC has been proven effective in preventing and improving nutrition-related health problems within its population. The foods provided are high in iron, protein, calcium, vitamin A and C. The program serves participants within the Choctaw Nation's reservation boundaries.

• Breastfeeding Peer Counseling

Breastfeeding counseling and support are provided through the Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Program. The Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Program aims to improve breastfeeding initiation and duration rates, improve long-term health benefits to women, infants and children, and reduce the incidence of obesity in childhood and later life. The program provides specialized breastfeeding education, encouragement, and support to pregnant and breastfeeding women. Breastfeeding Peer Counselors do on-site counseling and education, home visits, telephone/texting consultations and contacts, and hospital visits. Breastfeeding classes are offered through this program at any location in the Choctaw Nation's service area.

• Farmer's Market

The USDA funded a program for low-income seniors in partnership with the Choctaw Nation Health Service Program. The program serves eligible seniors in the Choctaw Nation service area with \$50 in benefits that can be exchanged for fresh fruits and vegetables from authorized area farmers from May through October. The Non-Native SFMNP is funded by an ARPA grant and administered through the Choctaw Nation. The Choctaw Nation does not fund the Non-Native SFMNP.

• Beef & Pecan's/ Elder Food Security

Provides eligible Choctaw Nation tribal members the opportunity to receive ground beef and cracked pecans.

• Adult and Child Nutrition



Choctaw Nation Photos

Many different Choctaw Nation programs and services will be in the Healthy Living Tent at the Labor Day festival.

Help navigate healthy eating practices to improve overall health and help in fighting disease.

• Hepatitis C

Hepatitis means inflammation of the liver. The liver is a vital organ that processes nutrients, filters the blood and fights infections. When the liver is inflamed or damaged, its function can be affected. Heavy alcohol use, toxins, some medications, and certain medical conditions can cause hepatitis. However, hepatitis is often caused by a virus. In the United States, the most common types of viral hepatitis are Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, and Hepatitis C (HCV).

• Behavioral Health

CNO Behavioral Health provides various mental health services for adults, adolescents, and children.

• MMIW/DVP

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), murder is the 3rd leading cause of death for Indigenous Women.

• Healthy Aging

Provides wellness, social services, behavioral health services, case management and providers in geriatric-specific care to assist elders achieve a higher quality of life or maintain optimal functioning and wellness.

• My CNHSA App

Easily refill a prescription or schedule an appointment within one easy-to-use mobile app. Be sure to sign up for text message notifications, too.

• Community Health Nursing

Provides services for tribal members in our rural communities to keep them healthy.

• Annual Senior Wellness Visit

• Diabetic Wellness Center

This program is designed to treat diabetic patients for symptoms arising from their disease in a safe, comfortable environment with certified diabetes educators throughout the reservation.

• Breast Health/BCA

• Podiatry

CNO Podiatry provides all aspects of foot and ankle care, including wound care, corrective therapy, appliances, nail care and surgical intervention.

Podiatry clinics are staffed with licensed podiatrists and specially trained nursing personnel to care for podiatry needs.

• Masali

The Masali Program was created by Wellness Center, doctors and clinic administrators to help lead patients to a healthy, more productive life. This program is designed to promote mobility, improved glucose levels, improved weight management, improved flexibility, improved fitness levels, and improved diet and lifestyle.

• Chi Hullo Li

A residential treatment facility in Tali-hina that offers a long-term, comprehensive and culturally sensitive program for Native American women with or without children.

• Recovery Center

A 60-day residential substance use disorder treatment facility for men with licensed and certified staff dedicated to providing quality substance use disorder treatment services.



OKCIC empowers Native youth through heritage and health

OKLAHOMA CITY- Oklahoma City Indian Clinic (OKCIC) is dedicated to fostering physical activity and cultural awareness among Native American youth. Through various seasonal programs, such as its TURTLE Camps, Kids in the Kitchen, Mixed Martial Arts camps, and Clinic Culture Nights, OKCIC is committed to bridging the gap by utilizing its resources to nurture cultural connections and promote healthy lifestyles.

During the American Indian Boarding School era, the U.S. government enacted legislation that forcibly removed Native children from their homes, placing them in boarding schools. These children suffered severe and traumatic abuse, facing punishment for speaking their languages or practicing their traditions. The mistreatment in these schools led to malnutrition and diseases, impacting Native populations for generations. OKCIC is dedicated to healing this generational trauma by investing in programs that teach today's generation the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle while preserving their heritage.

"There's power in reclaiming your history," said Rochelle Plummer, OKCIC's Health Promotion and



Photo Provided

The Oklahoma City Indian Clinic offers Native youth with opportunities to foster physical activity and cultural awareness.

Diabetes Prevention Manager. "The clinic strives to teach kids that they can lead healthy and happy lives that embrace their personal and cultural identities."

OKCIC hosts events year-round, providing Native youth with opportunities to engage with their culture and understand the importance of living healthy. These initiatives are designed to empower the next generation to preserve their cultural heritage while fostering a brighter, healthier and happier future. To learn more about the programs offered by OKCIC, visit www.okcic.com.

WIC OFFICE LOCATIONS		
LOCATION	DAYS	HOURS
Antlers 580.916.5609	Tuesday	8:30 am – 4:00 pm
Atoka 539.316.2050	Daily Monday – Friday	8:00 am – 4:30 pm
Battiest 580.241.5458	1st Tuesday of every month	8:30 am – 4:00 pm
Broken Bow 539.316.3011	Daily Monday – Friday (Except the 1st Tuesday & 2nd Thursday of the Month)	8:00 am – 4:30 pm
Durant 539.316.3517	Daily Monday – Friday	8:00 am – 4:30 pm
Heavener 539.316.4784	Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday	8:00 am – 4:30 pm
Hugo 539.316.5089	Monday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday	8:00 am – 4:00 pm
Idabel 539.316.4313	Daily Monday – Friday	8:00 am – 4:30 pm
McAlester 539.316.2431 539.316.2430	Daily Monday – Friday	8:00 am – 4:30 pm
Poteau 539.316.4606	Daily Monday – Friday	8:00 am – 4:30 pm
Smithville 580.244.3289	1st Thursday of every month	8:30 am – 4:00 pm
Spiro 918.962.5134	Wednesday, Thursday & Friday	8:00 am – 4:30 pm
Stigler 918.967.4211	Monday & Tuesday	8:30 am – 4:00 pm
Talihina 539.316.6792	Daily Monday - Friday	8:00 am – 4:30 pm
Wilburton 580.642.7588	Wednesday	8:30 am – 4:00 pm
Mobile Van 580.380.8193	1st Tuesday – Boswell 3rd Tuesday – Coalgate 4th Tuesday - Clayton	9:00 am – 3:00 pm

CHOCTAW NATION FOOD DISTRIBUTION	
MARKET HOURS	
Open 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday	
Thursday: 9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.	
<i>Markets will be closed the last two days of each month for inventory.</i>	
August 2024	
All markets open weekdays, August 1-28	
Closed: August 29-30	
Nutrition Ed & Food Programs subject to cancellation	
Participants can request a calendar at their location.	
ANTLERS 400 S.W. "O" ST., 580-298-6443	FOOD DEMO AUGUST 13
BROKEN BOW 109 Chahta Rd., 580-584-2842	FOOD DEMO AUGUST 14
DURANT 2352 Big Lots Pkwy., 580-924-7773	FOOD DEMO AUGUST 15
MCALESTER 3244 Afullotha Hina, 918-420-5716	FOOD DEMO AUGUST 20
POTEAU 106 B St., 918-649-0431	FOOD DEMO AUGUST 22
<i>This institution is an equal opportunity provider.</i>	

Choctaw Nation Vocational Rehabilitation		
August 2	Atoka	8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
August 2	Coalgate	12:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.
August 5	Wright City	10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
August 6	Talihina	10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
August 7	Antlers	10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
August 12	Broken Bow	10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
August 13	Poteau	11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
August 14	McAlester	10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
August 16	Atoka	8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
August 16	Coalgate	12:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
August 19	Idabel	10:00 am. - 1:00 p.m.
August 20	Wilburton	10:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
August 23	Crowder	By Appointment
August 26	Stigler	By Appointment
Durant: Monday, Wednesday and Friday		
Call 580-326-8304 for an Appointment		

Little brother of war 'ishtaboli' lives on with new generation of warriors on the field

Check out the 2024 Labor Day Stickball Tournament

By Chris Jennings

For over 1,000 years, Native Americans have been playing a game involving one or two sticks and a small ball. The sport has many different names among many different tribes. For the Choctaw, that sport is ishtaboli, or stickball.

On the surface, the game itself seems simple. You're trying to hit a 12-foot tall, 4-inch diameter goalpost with a ball. That's where the simplicities stop.

Players can't touch the ball with their hands. Instead, they have two sticks. One stick, the male stick, is slightly larger and used to catch the ball or towa. The other, the female stick, is used to throw the towa. Each team has its own goalpost or fabvssa at either end of the roughly 100-yard field that players are trying to hit with the ball.

Currently, ishtaboli is played with 30-person teams, but there were no limits to team size in the past, sometimes reaching into the hundreds of players with fields over a mile long.

Ishtaboli, also called the little brother war, was often



In the past, there was no limit on team size in stickball. Photo courtesy of Smithsonian American Art Museum George Catlin, Ball-play of the Choctaw-Ball Up, oil on canvas, 1846-1850.

used as just that, an alternative to war. Communities and tribes would come together to settle disputes and disagreements with games of ishtaboli.

There was no padding, no groomed field and very few rules. In the late 1800s, American Anthropologist James Mooney said, "Almost everything short of murder is allowable."

Ishtaboli was common in Oklahoma until the early 1900s when a semi-annual game between the Choctaw and Chickasaw got a little out of hand and had to be broken up by U.S. Marshalls and Choctaw Lighthorsemen. After that, games between the two tribes were abolished.

Today, the game has been modernized, largely for the safety of the players. Jared Tom, a cultural educator with the Choctaw Nation, said, "We're not playing in

that war mindset or that disagreement format. We're playing pretty much for bragging rights, whether it's tribe versus tribe or community versus community."

Some current rules include no slamming or clothes-lining, no swinging sticks at other players, no hitting below the knees, and tackling is only allowed against the person with the ball. Being able to walk away from your weekend sport is important. "A lot of us playing now have families to go to; we have to work Monday through Friday," said Tom with a laugh.

For something with such a long history of being rooted in the Choctaw culture, it's not surprising that it has a deeper meaning for many beyond being just a game. "The game itself is an extension of us, our family, our loved ones that played before us. And the generations and generations of players that put their heart and soul into it back when it was a little brother of war," said Beckah Boykin, a player on the Tvshkahomma Ohoyo team.

Tvshkahomma Ohoyo is a women's stickball team that started in 2017. In 2021, the women got their first win and advanced to the semi-finals, where they played against the Bok Chito women's team. Since then, the team has advanced to the Semi-Finals of the World Series of Stickball four years in a row and played in the championship game against Koni Hata Ohoyo in 2023. Koni Hata Ohoyo would go on to win that game, but Tvshkahomma Ohoyo held them to only two points.

After their successes at the World Series, the women's team is getting some much-deserved respect. Boykin said it's humbling to be seen as serious competitors when they go to the World Series and play teams with many more years of experience playing together. "There's nothing that feels more like we've earned our spot and our place than seeing them believe in us like that," said Boykin.

Choctaw Stickball continues to flourish in many communities throughout the reservation. There are regular local games and yearly tournaments like the Choctaw Labor Day Festival Stickball Tournament, the Kullihomma Stickball Tournament, hosted by the Chickasaw Nation and the Mississippi World Series of Stickball.

There are also several exhibition games across the country to educate audiences about the game's history and Youth Summer Stickball Camp to try and keep that



Photo by Christian Toews

Ishtaboli can be a rough sport. Despite that, recruiting for the women's team is not all that hard, according to Beckah Boykin. Many find it a good way to release energy and enjoy the opportunity to play a full-contact sport.

history alive.

While the exhibition games are a good way to put ishtaboli in front of a large audience, a recent episode of Marvel's Echo on Disney+ also put Choctaw ishtaboli in thousands of living rooms across the world. Echo is the story of Maya Lopez, a Choctaw character played by Alaqua Cox of the Menominee and Mohican nation who must reconnect with her culture and embrace the meaning of family and community.

With the role that ishtaboli has served, not just as a sport but also as a way of teaching traditional social structure and family values, using it to illustrate family and community is fitting. Boykin was impressed with how the game and tribe were represented on the screen. "It was incredible to see something of that scale take our culture, values and traditions and come to a common place to where it would be okay to share with the public," said Boykin.

Tom also liked the way the tribe and ishtaboli were represented. "I thought it was pretty neat...It hits all that we kind of expected it to look like when we imagined it, and I think they brought that creation to life," Tom said.

If you're attending the Choctaw Nation Labor Day festival, there will be plenty of opportunities to watch and learn about ishtaboli. The tournament will kick off on Friday, August 30, with games on Friday and Saturday nights starting at 5:00 p.m. The championship games on Sunday will begin with the women's game at 6:30 p.m., followed by the men's game at 7:45 p.m.

You can learn more about the sport and see how sticks are made in the Choctaw Village at 1:30 p.m. Friday, August 30 and 1:00 p.m. Saturday, August 31 at 1:00 p.m. There will also be an exhibition game on Sunday, September 1, at 2:00 p.m. on the Capitol Lawn.



At the Choctaw Nation Labor Day Festival, there are many opportunities to learn more about Ishtaboli. Tournament play, Exhibition games and stick-making demonstrations in the Choctaw Village all highlight different aspects of the sport. Check the full Labor Day schedule on Page 14 for more information.



Photos by Christian Toews



War Hoops Labor Day crowd pleaser

By Shelia Kirven

The Choctaw Labor Day Festival would not be complete without its sports competitions. One of the most popular is the War Hoops basketball tournament.

The tournament was started around 25 years ago by Kevin and Tammye Gwin and Councilman James Dry. The idea for the tournament began when the three noticed children attending the festival playing pick-up basketball between softball tournaments.

"Back then, there was a charge for teams to enter an event at the Labor Day Festival, so we weren't sure if it would be a success or not, but the tournament filled up on Saturday morning the first year, and it was a huge success," said Kevin Gwin.

The tournament, now free to enter, is still a favorite, drawing players from all over the country. It is an excellent means to unite current and past teammates, families, and friends.

With designated age divisions for children up to the "old timers," there's a chance for everyone who pre-registers to play in the all-day tournament.

This year's tournament check-in begins Saturday, August 31, at 8:30 a.m. at Red Warrior Park on the festival grounds at Tvshka Homma. The tournament starts at 10:00 a.m.

To register, visit <https://laborday.choctawnation.com/registrations/war-hoops/>.



Photo by Christian Chaney

Softball remains a crowd favorite at Labor Day

By Christian Toews

Softball is the longest-running sport at the Labor Day festival. Teams from all over have been coming to Tvshka Homma to compete in the tournament for decades.

Larry Wade has organized the annual tournament since 1986 and recently handed the reins to Hoss Ward.

Ward been around the sport since he was two weeks old, when his mom took him to a game.

Ward used to help Wade upkeep the fields just because he loved the sport.

Both men said that each softball tournament is similar to a family reunion, and this is the only time for some teams and players to see each other.

According to Ward, the softball games are a popular Labor Day event for players and fans. He encourages everyone to come to watch the 28 men's teams and 20 women's teams compete this year.

To sign up, visit <https://laborday.choctawnation.com/registrations/>.



Photo by Mallory Jackson

Elders chair volleyball championship

By Shelia Kirven

If you want to witness some great fun and competition between Choctaw seniors, make plans to watch the Elder Chair Volleyball Championship Tournament at Tvshka Homma during this year's Labor Day Festival.

Chair volleyball has been a big event in the Choctaw Nation for over 15 years. Participants are 55 and older and active at their local Choctaw Community Center or Wellness Center. Teams practice throughout the week and in games with other elder groups.

A regional qualifier tournament held in Durant determines who plays at Tvshka Homma.



Photo by Mekayla McClure

Typically, the regional qualifier consists of 28-30 teams throughout the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Teams compete in one pool play game and then go into a double elimination bracket. The top four teams at the end of the tournament compete in the Choctaw Nation Labor Day Festival Finals and vie for the championship trophy and bragging rights. Each team competing also receives medals.

If you would like more information on how to participate in chair volleyball, contact your community center's Wellness Leader or visit any Choctaw Nation Wellness Center.

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Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

VISIT CHAHTA CONNECT

Make Chahtha Connect your go-to resource for finding Internet Service Providers (ISPs) on the Choctaw reservation in Southeast Oklahoma. Whether you're looking to get connected or upgrade your service, Chahtha Connect has you covered. Features of the Chahtha Connect website include:

- ISP Locator: Easily find ISPs in your area.
- Submit Your Location: If you don't have a qualifying service, let us know by submitting your location.
- How-To Video: With a step-by-step video guide on how to look up your location using your address.
- Free Wi-Fi Locations: Discover free Wi-Fi spots near you. More locations will be added as they are verified.

HELP US IMPROVE
We are continually gathering data and requesting carriers to submit their coverage details. This means the website will keep getting better with your help and contributions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT, CHAHTACONNECT.COM

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

WAKAYA PROGRAM

ARE YOU READY TO RISE UP FOR YOUR HEALTH?

Wakaya is a study project that seeks to promote healthy decision making and leadership through an outdoor program that encourages and educates Choctaw youth.

- Weekly/monthly group classes on Choctaw cultural arts, leadership, storytelling, environmental restoration, and traditional health practices.
- Fun cultural outdoor activities.
- 2 overnight outdoor camps with other teens (Culture Camp & Trail of Tears Camp)
- Lead a community service project & more...

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT WAKAYARISINGUP.ORG
833.265.4289

A partnership with EWRI, University of Washington and Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Funded by the National Institute of Drug Abuse - R01DA414-01A1

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Contestants to vie for Choctaw Royalty titles

The Choctaw Nation Princess Pageant will kick off the annual Labor Day Festival in Tvshka Homma with 30 young ladies taking the stage to vie for the title of Little Miss, Junior Miss, or Miss Choctaw Nation 2024-2025. The event will be held Aug. 30 at 6 p.m. in the Tvshka Homma amphitheatre.

2024-2025 Little Miss Contestants

District 1 Little Miss Choctaw Nation **Oakley Mitchell** of Valliant is the 10-year-old daughter of Colby and Cayla Mitchell. Oakley enjoys dance, spending time with family, reading graphic novels, swimming, learning the Choctaw language, attending church, drawing, and painting.

District 2 Little Miss Choctaw Nation **Quinn Willis** of Broken Bow is the 8-year-old daughter of Brad and Amber Willis. Quinn enjoys stitch, soccer, basketball, stickball, food, and math. In her leisure time she enjoys coloring, painting, playing outside, making bracelets and crafts.

District 3 Little Miss Choctaw Nation, **Addyson York** of Talihina, is the 9-year-old daughter of Samantha York. Addyson enjoys skating, riding her bike, reading, and drawing. She also attends church on Sundays, attends Choctaw classes at the community center in Talihina, and practices stickball with the Tvshka Waya team.

District 4 Little Miss Choctaw Nation **Nevaeh Jimenez** of Poteau is the 9-year-old daughter of Gerardo Jimenez and Delia James. Nevaeh enjoys playing stickball and practicing at home with her mom. She also enjoys dancing, reading, coloring and writing in her books.

District 5 Little Miss Choctaw Nation **Raleigh Watts** of Stigler is the 11-year-old daughter of Kara Wright and Rodney Watts. Raleigh enjoys playing softball and basketball. She also enjoys gardening, shopping, spending time with her siblings, and making people happy.

District 6 Little Miss Choctaw Nation **Omba Ramsey** of Wilburton is the 10-year-old daughter of Jimmy Battiest and Heather Ramsey. Omba enjoys stickball, softball, and basketball. She also enjoys singing Choctaw hymns with her mom and grandma.

District 7 Little Miss Choctaw Nation, **Trinity Jaramillo** of Antlers, is the 11-year-old daughter of Josef and Rachelle Jaramillo. Trinity enjoys traveling to Choctaw Nation events for social dancing, ceremonies, book club, Jeep off-road events, parades, and culture camps. She is also a halftime performer for Tulsa Hurricanes on Native American nights and a Choctaw drummer for stickball.

District 8 Little Miss Choctaw Nation **Sophie Crow** of Hugo is the 10-year-old daughter of Silas and Shelbie Crow. Sophie enjoys rodeoing and being a pitcher in softball. She also enjoys beading and art.

District 9 Little Miss Choctaw Nation **Ava Davenport** of Durant is the 8-year-old daughter of Sean and Crystal Davenport. She is a member of the Union Okla United Methodist Church, where she enjoys learning Choctaw hymns. She also enjoys soccer, gymnastics, competitive cheerleading and topline tumble and cheer.

District 10 Little Miss Choctaw Nation **Ariana Camp** of Atoka is the 10-year-old daughter of Chiefton Camp Jr. and Tamara Camp. Ariana enjoys playing soccer and spending time with her friends and family.

District 11 Little Miss **Leigha Scott** of McAlester is the 8-year-old daughter of Jeremy Scott and Honni Bear. Leigha enjoys playing basketball, soccer, and softball with the local Boys and Girls Club and on the Eufaula 8U team. She also likes making rainbow loom bracelets for her friends. Her favorite subject is math, and she likes playing Soft Seven online. She also enjoys watching YouTube and playing on Roblox.

2024-2025 Junior Miss Contestants

District 1 Junior Miss Choctaw Nation **Kristin Jefferson** of Idabel is the 14-year-old daughter of Paul and Whitney Jefferson. Kristin enjoys playing softball, attending church, spending time with family and friends, working at the skating rink, doing archery competitions, and attending FFA speech contests.

District 2 Junior Miss Choctaw Nation **Kayedence Young** of Broken Bow is the 12-year-old daughter of Erik and Cynthia Young. Kayedence enjoys listening to music, singing, playing video games, and spending time with her friends and family.

District 3 Junior Miss Choctaw Nation **Emma Battiest** of Talihina is the 16-year-old daughter of Jimmy and Tracy Battiest, and Heather Ramsey. Emma enjoys spending time and going to church with her grandma, Janet. She also enjoys spending time with her little sisters.

District 4 Junior Miss Choctaw Nation **Shelby Reece** of Poteau is the 16-year-old daughter of Brandon and Patti Reece and the 4th generation granddaughter of the late Choctaw Chief Gilbert Wesley Dukes. Shelby enjoys cooking, beading, reading, and making a to-do list. She loves walking her dogs with her mom and sister. Shelby is involved in stickball, cheerleading, FCCLA, and the Choctaw Youth Advisory Board. She is also very active in volunteer work at school events, Choctaw YAB events, and luncheons held at the District 4 Community Center.

District 6 Junior Miss Choctaw Nation **Bella Muncy** of Red Oak is the 15-year-old daughter of Megan Muncy. Bella enjoys public speaking, writing, reading, singing, horticulture, livestock showing, welding, Ag mechanics, photography, academic tournaments, studying history, golfing, gardening and FFA.

District 7 Junior Miss Choctaw Nation **Akeiley Willis** of Wright City is the 16-year-old daughter of Kerry Willis and the late Christina Willis. Akeiley enjoys YAB, playing softball, and Choctaw stickball. She also likes to paint and draw. Akeiley also enjoys Choctaw summer camps, Choctaw social dancing, and sharing Choctaw culture. She plays the Choctaw drum for the adult stickball teams in Mississippi. She also enjoys beading and spending time with family and friends.

District 8 Junior Miss Choctaw Nation **Acelee Ellis** of Hugo is the 12-year-old daughter of Jerren and Heather Ellis. She enjoys playing basketball, softball, and the piano. She also enjoys cheerleading, spending time with her church group, and learning about Choctaw culture.

District 9 Junior Miss Choctaw Nation **Daryan Eubanks** of Durant is the 16-year-old daughter of Wendi Eubanks. Daryan enjoys playing softball, basketball, soccer, and stickball. She has also grown an interest in powerlifting. She loves to help younger girls learn about softball and basketball by coaching local youth sports teams. She fills her leisure time with bowling, going to the movies with friends, listening to music, or reading a good book.

District 10 Junior Miss Choctaw Nation **Alyssiah Camp** of Atoka is the 13-year-old daughter of Chiefton Camp Jr. and Tamara Camp. Alyssiah enjoys playing sports she is passionate about. When she is not busy practicing or competing, she likes to hang out with friends and family. She even helps her little sister with homework, sports, and reading. Something she loves the most, however, is spending time with her grandparents and great-grandmother.

District 11 Junior Miss Choctaw Nation **Jordyn Washington** of McAlester, is the 15-year-old daughter of Jacqueline Taylor. Jordyn enjoys softball, tennis, band, 4-H, Girl Scouts and Choctaw Language. She is also involved in the Oklahoma Council for Indian Education Challenge Bowl as the Team Captain of the MHS Native American club and Academic Team. She also enjoys creating art and winning!

2024-2025 Senior Miss Contestants

District 1 Senior Miss Choctaw Nation **Leandra LeForce** of Idabel is the 21-year-old daughter of Jeff and Donette LeForce. Leandra finds immense joy in cooking, creating crafts, and practicing yoga, which allows her to express her creativity and cultivate inner peace. As a proud member of the Choctaw Nation, she dedicates time to learning about and embracing her heritage and volunteering at her local community center. Sharing priceless moments with her sorority sisters brings her great happiness, as does participating in her Native American interest sorority, as they support and uplift each other. Leandra also enjoys participating in OU's American Indian Student Association. Lastly, she treasures the moments she spends talking with her mom on the phone; she is not only Leandra's best friend but also her biggest blessing. Their conversations are endless sources of love, support and inspiration.

LITTLE MISS CHOCTAW NATION CONTESTANTS



Oakley Mitchell



Quinn Willis



Addyson York



Nevaeh Jimenez



Raleigh Watts



Omba Ramsey



Trinity Jaramillo



Sophie Crow



Ava Davenport



Ariana Camp

LITTLE MISS

JUNIOR MISS CHOCTAW NATION CONTESTANTS



Leigha Scott



Kristin Jefferson



Kaydence Young



Emma Battiest



Shelby Reece



Bella Muncy



Akeiley Willis



Adele Ellis



Daryan Eubanks



Alyssiah Camp

JUNIOR MISS

SENIOR MISS CHOCTAW NATION CONTESTANTS



Jordyn Washington



Leandra LeForce



Melea Jefferson



Diamond Henry



Aiana Holman



Kiara Noah



Kalin Beller



Kamryn Baker



Alexis Futschka



Candis Battice

District 2 Senior Miss Choctaw Nation **Melea Jefferson** of Broken Bow, is the 19-year-old daughter of Annette Jefferson and the late David Jefferson. Melea enjoys teaching the Lord's Prayer to the AILYC members. She also enjoys spending time with family and beading jewelry. Melea also plays stickball with the Tushkahoma Ohoyos.

District 3 Senior Miss Choctaw Nation **Diamond Henry** of Watson is the 19-year-old daughter of Teresa Ann Watson. Diamond enjoys spending time with her cousins and family. She listens to various types of music, but her main interest is Jason Crabb and K-Pop. Diamond enjoys participating in stickball with her brothers and friends and watching them play in tournaments. She also enjoys beading and attending church and church outings with her teen class. When Diamond feels down, she thinks about the life lessons her grandma taught her, and she feels like she can tackle anything.

District 6 Senior Miss Choctaw Nation **Aiana Holman** of Wilburton is the 18-year-old daughter of Crystal Holman. Aiana enjoys fishing, swimming, hanging out with friends, spending time with family, playing with her nephew and walking her dogs.

District 7 Senior Miss Choctaw Nation **Kiara Noah** of Finley is the 21-year-old daughter of Stephanie Whitfield. Kiara enjoys spending time with family, doing things outdoors, working, and engaging with others. She also enjoys anything that helps others who need it or ask. She also enjoys watching basketball and softball games. Her interests are being active in the gym and helping her younger siblings.

District 9 Senior Miss **Kalin Beller** of Durant is the 20-year-old daughter of Brandon and Crystal Beller. Kalin is a student at ASU pursuing a degree in mass communications and media studies, which aligns with her interests in reading, writing, and watching movies. In addition to those interests, she also volunteers at the Cultural Center and Community Center.

District 10 Senior Miss **Kamryn Baker** of Atoka is the 21-year-old daughter of Wayne Baker and Michelle Holt. Kamryn enjoys attending and participating in singings and spending time with family and friends. She loves to attend church and help with Sunday School for the children and for VBS. She is always willing to help with Carl Alberts Choctaw Nation College FYI during Native American Heritage Month.

District 11 Senior Miss **Alexis Futschka** of McAlester is the 21-year-old daughter of Jacqueline Taylor. When not working three jobs, Alexis enjoys spending time with her sister and engaging in cultural activities. She also attends the District 11 Community Choctaw language class.

District 12 Senior Miss **Candis Battice** of Coalgate is the 17-year-old daughter of Jolee Louis. Candis enjoys singing in church, social dancing, playing stickball, helping girls with their songs and Lord's Prayer. She also spends time with her family eating and doing Bible studies with them.



Photo by Chris Jennings



FOR FULL SCHEDULE VISIT:
LABORDAY.CHOCTAWNATION.COM

Friday, August 30, 2024

7:00 am - 8:00 pm ~ Cafeteria Hours
7:00 am - 3:30 pm ~ Greenhouse Tours
8:00 am - 9:00 am ~ Corn Hole Beginners Check In, Red Warrior Park
9:00 am - 10:00 am ~ Corn Hole Advanced Check In, Red Warrior Park
8:00 am - 10:00 pm ~ Icehouse hours
9:00 am - 9:00 pm ~ RV/Tent Gate hours
9:00 am - 11:00 am ~ Elder Chair Volleyball Tournament, Healthy Living Tent
9:00 am - 3:00 pm ~ Youth Crafts & Mobile Library, Playground
9:00 am - 4:00 pm ~ Corn Hole Tournament, Red Warrior Park
9:00 am - 5:00 pm ~ Education Tent hours
10:00 am - 4:00 pm ~ Going Green Tent hours
10:00 am - 6:00 pm ~ Information Tent hours
10:00 am - 8:00 pm ~ Arts and Crafts Building hours
10:00 am - 10:00 pm ~ General Store
10:00 am - 4:00 pm ~ Chahta Cab
Noon - 5:00 pm ~ Quilt entries
Noon - 6:00 pm ~ CDIB/Membership & Voter Registration
1:00 pm - 1:10 pm ~ Wristband Drawing, Lost Child Station
1:00 pm ~ Eternal Heart Unveiling, Near Council House
1:00 pm - 5:00 pm ~ 5K Early Check-In
1:00 pm - 7:00 pm ~ Gourd Dancing, Capitol Lawn
Noon - Midnight ~ Carnival hours
4:00 pm - 8:00 pm ~ Judicial & Criminal Justice Services Information
4:00 pm ~ Youth Physical Fitness Challenge Registration, Red Warrior Park
4:00 pm Welcome /State of the Nation Preview, Amphitheater
5:00 pm ~ Stickball Tournament, Stickball Field
5:00 pm ~ Youth Physical Fitness Challenge, Red Warrior Park
6:00pm ~ Princess Pageant, Amphitheater
7:00pm ~ Fast-Pitch Softball Tournament, Red Warrior Park

Saturday, August 31, 2024

7:00 am ~ 5k Race begins and ends in front of Council House
7:00 am - 8:00 pm ~ Cafeteria hours
8:00 am ~ Fittest Warrior Registration, Red Warrior Park
8:00 am ~ Fast-Pitch Tournament continues
8:00 am ~ Bow Shoot (Youth) Registration, Choctaw Village
8:00 am - 8:30 am ~ Co-Ed Volleyball Check-In
8:00 am - 10:00 pm ~ Icehouse hours
8:00 am - 4:00 pm ~ Greenhouse Tours
8:30 am - 9:30 am ~ War Hoops Check-In
9:00 am - 9:00 pm ~ RV/Tent Gate hours
9:00 am ~ Co-Ed Volleyball Tournament
9:00 am ~ Horseshoe Tournament
9:00 am ~ Fittest Warrior, Red Warrior Park
9:00 am ~ Bow Shoot (Youth), Choctaw Village

9:00 am - Noon ~ Buffalo Tours, load bus at Capitol Museum
9:00 am - 3:00 pm ~ Mobile Library, Playground
9:00 am - 5:00 pm ~ Quilt Show
9:00 am - 5:00 pm ~ Education Tent hours
9:45 am ~ Terrapin Race Registration, Playground
10:00 am ~ War Hoops, 3-on-3 Tournament
10:00 am - 4:00 pm ~ Chahta Cab
10:00 am - 8:00 pm ~ Judicial & Criminal Justice Services Information
10:00 am - 4:00 pm ~ Going Green Tent hours
10:00 am - 6:00 pm ~ Information Tent hours
10:00 am - 6:00 pm ~ CDIB/Membership & Voter Registration
10:00 am - 7:00 pm ~ Healthy Living Expo, Council Lawn
10:00 am - 10:00 pm ~ Arts and Crafts Building hours
10:00 am - 10:00 pm ~ General Store hours
10:30 am ~ Terrapin Races, Playground
10:00 am - 4:00 pm ~ Chahta Cab
Noon - Midnight ~ Carnival
1:00 pm - 1:10 pm ~ Wristband Drawing, Lost Child Station
3:00 pm ~ Tough Tough Registration, Red Warrior Park
4:00 pm ~ Tough Tough Contest, Red Warrior Park
5:00 pm ~ Stickball Tournament, Stickball Field
6:00 pm ~ The Close, Amphitheater
6:45 pm ~ Joey Green, Amphitheater
7:30 pm ~ Rhett Atkins, Amphitheater
9:00 pm ~ Rodney Atkins, Amphitheater

Sunday, September 1, 2024

7:00 am - 8:00 pm ~ Cafeteria hours
8:00 am ~ Bow Shoot Registration (Adult), Choctaw Village
8:00 am ~ Fast-Pitch Tournament continues
8:00 am - 10:00 pm ~ Icehouse hours
9:00 am ~ Bow Shoot (Adult), Choctaw Village
9:00 am - 3:00 pm ~ Mobile Library, Playground
9:00 am - 5:00 pm ~ Quilt Show (Pick up quilts following show)
9:00 am - 9:00 pm ~ RV/Tent Gate hours
10:00 am - 4:00 pm ~ Going Green Tent hours
10:00 am - 8:00 pm ~ Arts and Crafts Building hours
10:00 am - 10:00 pm ~ General Store hours
10:00 am ~ Children's Church (Parent/Guardian must accompany)
11:00 am - 12:00 pm Worship Service, Chapel
11:00 am - 12:00 pm ~ Domino/Checker Tournament Registration, Healthy Living Tent
Noon - 8:00 pm ~ Judicial & Criminal Justice Services Information (located in Council House building)
Noon ~ Gospel Singing begins at Amphitheater
Noon - 4:00 pm ~ Greenhouse Tours
Noon - 4:00 pm ~ CDIB/Membership & Voter Registration
Noon - 6:00 pm ~ Information Tent hours
Noon - 10:30 pm ~ Carnival
1:00 pm ~ Domino/Checker Tournament, Healthy Living Tent

1:00 pm ~ School Supply Pick-up, Education Tent (while supplies last)
1:00 pm - 1:10 pm ~ Wristband Drawing, Lost Child Station
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm ~ Buffalo Tours, load bus at Capitol Museum
1:30 pm - 3:00 pm ~ Choctaw Code Talker Association Board Meeting, Capitol Museum Courtroom
2:00 pm ~ Choctaw Dancers, Capitol Lawn
2:00 pm ~ Stickball Exhibition, Capitol Lawn
6:00 pm ~ Gold City, Amphitheater
6:30 pm Women's Championship Stickball Game, Stickball Field
7:00 pm ~ Jason Crabb, Amphitheater
7:00 pm ~ Traditional Choctaw Hymn Singing, Chapel
7:45 pm ~ Men's Championship Stickball Game, Stickball Field
9:00 pm ~ Casting Crowns, Amphitheater

Choctaw Village Activities

Friday
10:00 am ~ Corn Husk Dolls Make and Take
11:00 am ~ Beaded Corn Make and Take
12:00 pm ~ Beaded Collar
1:30 pm ~ Stickball Making
2:00 pm ~ Village Closes
Saturday
10:00 am ~ Choctaw Dancing
10:30 am ~ Choctaw Hymns
11:00 am ~ Storytelling
11:30 am ~ Rabbit Stick Throw
1:00 pm ~ Stickball
1:30 pm ~ Language
2:15 pm ~ Choctaw Dancing
4:00 pm ~ Village Closes
Sunday
1:00 pm ~ Rabbit Stick Throw
1:30 pm ~ Storytelling
2:00 pm ~ Corn Game
3:00 pm ~ Village Closes

Capitol Museum Hours

Friday 8:00 am - 4:30 pm
Saturday 10:00 am - 4:30 pm
Sunday Noon - 5:00 pm

RV/Tent Gate Hours:

Wednesday - Sunday 9:00 am - 9:00 pm
Check-in for both RVs and tents are at the same gate. (Gate opens for tents Saturday, August 24 at 10:00 am)

Lost Child Station:

Daily 8:00 am - 12:00 pm

Child Safety Wristband Stations:

Daily 12:00 pm - 6:00 pm

TIMES AND EVENTS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Stay up-to-date by visiting https://laborday.choctawnation.com/.

- Alcohol, drugs (to include medical marijuana), guns, and weapons are NOT permitted on the Festival grounds.
Due to limited space, only ONE vehicle will be permitted per campsite.
Additional vehicles must be parked in the General Parking area.
All roadways must remain clear for emergency vehicles.
Do not park in: NO PARKING Zones, VENDOR Parking Zones or Reserved RV/Trailer Parking Zones
Vehicles blocking roadways, RV/Trailers, or other vehicles subject to tow at the owner's expense.
Pavilions are for PUBLIC use only.
Tent campers are permitted one plug per tent.
Campers may not use SPLITTERS in electrical outlets.
All extension cords must be 12-gauge, less than 100', and not installed across roadways.
UNAUTHORIZED GOLF CARTS and ATV'S ARE NOT ALLOWED IN FESTIVAL AREA.
All personal Golf Carts/ATV's must remain in camping areas.
ALL drivers must have a valid driving license.
Please use extreme caution and watch out for pedestrians.
NO BOATS are allowed in the camping area
NO PETS are allowed in the Festival area.
Please be courteous and pick up after your pets.
Tvshka Homma Capitol Grounds is a No Drone Zone.
Any use of a Drone (UAS) must be requested and authorized by the Choctaw Nation Public Safety Department.



Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma TOGETHER WE'RE MORE

Akvs (August) 2024

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Choctaw Nation prepares for crowd pleasing labor Day Festival.



Page 12:

Little Brother of War 'ishtaboli' lives on with new generation of warriors on the field.



Page 13:

Contestants to vie for Choctaw royalty titles.

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.

INFORMATION UPDATES

Schedule Announcement - We hope you will join us on the Choctaw Nation Capitol Grounds at Tvshka Homma August 30 - September 1 for a weekend of family, fellowship, and traditions.

For more information, visit laborday.choctawnation.com.

To stay update to on all Labor Day information, text LABORDAY to 888777.



Quilt Show - Quilts can be dropped off on Friday, August 30, from 12:00 to 5:00 p.m. Quilt judging will take place on Friday evening with ribbons awarded on Saturday in three categories. People's Choice will be voted on Saturday, August 31, with ribbons awarded on Sunday.

Tent Scramble - Beginning Saturday, August 24 at 10:00 a.m., the gates at Tvshka Homma Capitol Grounds will open for in-person tent campsite marking to begin. The festival begins Friday, August 30 and ends Sunday, September 1. RV gates will open at 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday, August 28.

Entertainment- We're thrilled to announce the official entertainment lineup for the 2024 Choctaw Labor Day Festival! Join us for live music on Saturday and Sunday evenings during the festival. Saturday: The Close at 6:00 p.m. | Joey Green Band at 6:45 p.m. | Rhett Atkins at 7:30 p.m. | Rodney Atkins at 9:00 p.m. Sunday: Gold City at 6:00 p.m. | Jason Crabb at 7:00 p.m. | Casting Crowns at 8:30 p.m.

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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