

# CHOCTAW COMMUNITY NEWS

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CHOCTAW, MISSISSIPPI 39350

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◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ TRIBAL PUBLICATION OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

## Tribe, VA Signs MOU

The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians & the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) held a ceremonial signing on Thursday, November 30, of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will make the process of applying for a VA home loan easier for eligible Native American Veterans, active-duty military & their spouses on Federal trust land.

signing this agreement today,” said Tribal Chief Phyliss J. Anderson. “Many people have been working diligently for years to make this happen. This agreement between the Tribe & the VA will greatly benefit many Native Veterans, especially our Choctaw Veterans.”

The event, held at the Golden Moon Hotel & Casino VIP Room in

“I am excited to be .....see VETS, pg. 5



**ABOVE,** MBCI Tribal Chief Phyliss J. Anderson, left, & Jeffrey London, Director, VA Loan Guaranty Service, signed a MOU to begin an important partnership to offer low interest loans to tribal veterans, active-duty military & their spouses to build, purchase or refurbish a home on the reservation. This partnership marks a 10-year collaborative effort between the MBCI & the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to offer this important service to tribal veterans.

**BELOW,** The Southern Pine Singers performed an Honor Song & Veteran’s Song during the ceremony.



## Holiday Fun At Cookies & Cocoa

The holiday season was in full swing on the Choctaw Reservation as Tribal Chief Phyliss J. Anderson presented a Cookies & Cocoa event with Santa Claus and Choctaw Indian Princess Kassie Cox for children and their parents on Thursday, December 7 at the Pearl River Community Center.

The event included several hands-on activity stations for the children, storytelling, pictures with Santa Claus and Princess Kassie Cox, recognition of several Tribal organizations, door prizes, and of course, cookies and cocoa provided by the

Pearl River Resort.

“This is the start of our Christmas season and what is so great about tonight is that we’re sharing this with our precious children,” said Chief Anderson. “This time of season is always a great time for families, friends and loved ones to share.”

She added it is important to remember the holiday season is about caring and loving each other and the wonderful gift we received in the birth of Jesus Christ.

“I hope that everyone



Princess Kassie Cox & Santa Claus greeted children at the Cookies & Cocoa event.

leaves here blessed and reminded of the reason for Christmas. There are

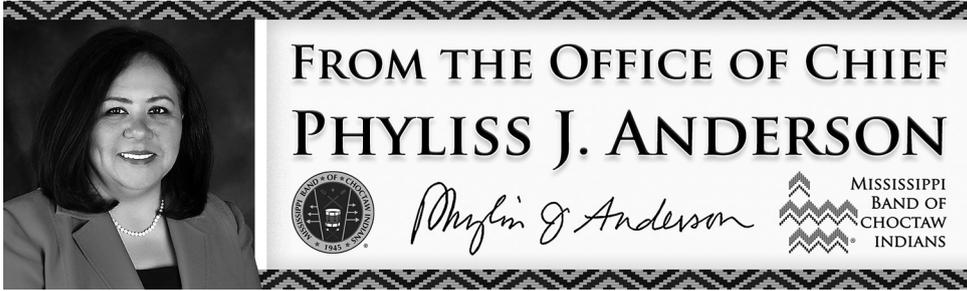
...see HOLIDAY, pg 6



## Snow in Choctaw

Over three inches of snow fell in the communities of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians during the early morning hours of Friday, December 8. The inclement weather prompted the Tribal government to shut down for the day. While many stayed home, some decided to have some sledding fun on the hills surrounding Lake Pushmataha in Choctaw.





Halito!  
The temperatures continue to fall, and it is truly beginning to feel very much like winter on the Reservation. As we end 2017, I am so pleased at the great progress we have made this year.

We have begun and completed many projects, but there are others that are in the planning stage or that will be completed in the coming months. 2018 looks to be another busy and successful year for the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians!

**NADL MOU Signing**

On November 30, I was honored to participate in the signing of the Native American Direct Loan Memorandum of Understanding between the Tribe and the U.S Department of Veterans Affairs.

This is an important partnership to offer low interest loans to Tribal veterans, active-duty military and their spouses to build, purchase or refurbish a home on the Reservation.

This partnership marks a 10-year collaborative effort between the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians and the VA to offer this important service to Tribal veterans.

I thank Jeffrey London, Director of the VA Loan Guaranty Service, as well as the many others who have worked tirelessly to make this partnership happen.

To see if you qualify for this loan, and to apply, please visit the Choctaw Loan Program located on the third floor of the three-story building at the Choctaw Town Center. You can also contact Daniel Tub-

by at (601) 656-0056 or at Daniel.S.Tubby@choctaw.org for any questions you have.

**VAWA/ TLOA Laws**

A very important effort is underway that will greatly help our Tribal law enforcement efforts against domestic violence-type crimes and put in place harsher penalties for certain types of crimes committed on the Reservation.

In the last few years, changes made in federal law now recognizes a tribe's right to improve laws in order to fight criminal activity on the Reservation.

In 2013, amendments were made to the federal Violence Against Wom-



*Chief Anderson visited Tribal elders on December 11, 2017, for fellowship, games of Bingo & door prizes at the Choctaw Elderly Activity Center in Choctaw. She presented each Tribal elder with a blanket embroidered with the tribal seal.*

en Act (VAWA), which recognizes tribes' power to exercise "special domestic violence criminal jurisdiction" over certain defendants, regardless of their Indian or non-Indian status, who commit acts of domestic or dating violence or violate certain protection orders in Indian country.

Another federal law, the Tribal Law and Order Act (TLOA), recognizes a tribe's right to amend its laws to impose harsher criminal penalties (jail time and/or fines) against crim-

inal defendants who commit certain types of crimes that warrant such penalties.

With the amendments to our Constitution and Bylaws approved by the Choctaw people in 2013, the Tribe is now able to improve the Criminal Code to provide for harsher penalties, when warranted, as recognized under TLOA.

The proposed changes to the Tribal Code were the work of a task force of several

**...continued next page**



*On December 13, 2017, Tribal Chief Phyliss J. Anderson hosted a Breakfast of Champions for members of Choctaw Central High School Lady Warriors Cross Country Team as they claimed the 2017 MHSAA Class 3A State Championship in Clinton on Nov. 6. It was their third state title in five years. In appreciation for their win, Chief Anderson presented team members & coaches commemorative championship jackets. Team members included (in no order) Jordan Bell, Teegan Clemmons, Kyannah Grant, Kyarra Grant, Elisah Jimmie, Lyleonia Johnson, Sierra Wallace, & Taylor York. Coaches are Gwen Grant & Brent Farmer. The event was held at the Bistro at Golden Moon Hotel & Casino in Choctaw.*

**CHOCTAW COMMUNITY NEWS**

The Choctaw Community News is available at no charge upon request. Donations to help cover the cost of printing, mailing are welcomed. Correspondence should be addressed to:

**COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM  
P.O. BOX 6010  
CHOCTAW, MS 39350  
TELEPHONE: 601-663-7736 FAX: 601-650-1565**

Brian C. Willis .....Communications Manager  
Darron Tubby .....Communications Writer  
Melford Farve .....Communications Writer

Items of interest to the local and Native American community are welcomed. Letters to the editor should be signed; we reserve the right to edit material.

representatives from various departments of the Tribal government, including: Tribal Criminal Court, Choctaw Supreme Court, Family Violence and Victim's Services, Tribal Court Services, Department of Public Safety, Policy Development Officer, and the Attorney General's office. This task force reviewed, drafted, and approved the recommended changes and I am thankful for their input and participation.

The Tribal Council is reviewing proposed changes to our criminal laws and procedure that, if passed, will permit the Tribe to implement the provisions of VAWA and TLOA.

I look forward to working with the Council to enact the will of our Tribal members and provide new laws to address domestic violence on the Reservation as well as put appropriate laws in place for those crimes.

**Toys For Chahta Alla Osi Tournament**

The 13th annual Toys for Chahta Alla Osi basketball tournament began on Tuesday, December 5 and continued on the 6th, 7th and 8th. Due to inclement wintry weather late that week, the rest of the tournament was postponed until December 22 and 23.

There was great participation by many of our Tribal and Pearl River Resort departments.

Congratulations to the Choctaw Tribal Schools-Wishork team

as they won the Open Division over Choctaw Recreation's Team "4" Rico. Once Were Warriors was the winner in the 40 and Over Division. Administration came in second place.

I commend the Department of Public Safety for hosting this annual event and for collecting toys and monetary donations to ensure that the children had a great Christmas.

I hope you came out to the tournament and cheered on your favorite team and helped support a good cause!

**Cookies And Cocoa With Santa**

I was so excited to host the Cookies and Cocoa with Santa event at the Pearl River Community Center on Thursday, December 7.

Normally, there is a tree lighting ceremony at the Tribal Headquarters, but due to the construction work taking place at the Tribal Council Hall site, we could not place the tree at its usual location. But I wanted to hold an event to get us all into the holiday spirit, and this event proved very successful in that goal.

It was so heartwarming to see the children with their joyful faces as they took pictures with our special North Pole guest Santa Claus, listened to Pam Smith with the Choctaw Bible Translation Committee as she read the nativity story in Choctaw, and as they made their very own tree ornament.

Thank you to Pearl River Resort for providing the delicious cookies and cocoa.

I was also pleased to present the Chahta Alla Youth Council, Choctaw Youth Conservation Corps, Choctaw Bible Translation Committee and the Choctaw Tribal Elders Oral History Project with monetary donations to assist them in the work that they each do for the Choctaw people. I commend each of these organizations for their dedication and efforts.

It was great to have our 2017-2018 Choctaw Indian Princess Kassie Lann Cox with us. Kassie has been doing a great job as Princess, and I love how she lights up any room she is in with her beautiful smile and friendly personality. The kids really enjoyed seeing her and taking pictures with their Princess.

I thank my staff, Prin-

cess Kassie, Pam Smith, Choctaw Video, Pearl River Resort, volunteers and other programs and individuals who helped us make this event a great one. I hope that the Cookies and Cocoa with Santa event really put you in the Christmas spirit!

**Fruit Bags At Distribution**

An annual tradition that is very popular is the picking up of fruit bags at the December Tribal Distribution Day, and I was proud to continue that tradition for our Tribal members.

I am grateful to all of the workers who helped get the bags ready for distribution. It takes several hours and a lot of work, but seeing the happy faces of everyone who receives a fruit bag makes it worth the effort. I hope you and your family enjoyed your fruit bags.

**Closing**

As I close this column, I would like to wish all of you a very delightful holiday season, and I offer you best wishes for a new year full of peace, joy and blessings. We have had a wonderful year full of great success, and I believe that next year will be no different.

It is always my hope that we not only take time to celebrate our progress, but that we continue to build upon that progress to ensure that we create an even better future for our Tribal members.

May God continue to bless the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians!

Happy New Year!

Many Blessings,

*Phyllis J. Anderson*

Phyllis J. Anderson,  
Tribal Chief



Several entries representing the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians placed in their respective divisions in the annual Philadelphia Christmas Parade on December 4, 2017. Congratulations to the following: YOUTH DIVISION - 1st place, Standing Pine Elementary School; 2nd place, Chahta Alla Youth Council; 3rd place, Pearl River Elementary School; CIVIC DIVISION - 1st place, Boys & Girls Club of the MBCI; COMMERCIAL DIVISION - 2nd place, MBCI Maintenance.



## CHOCTAW TRIBAL COUNCIL RESOLUTION REVIEW

The following ordinances & resolutions were submitted to the Choctaw Tribal Council for consideration. Listed is a brief summary & action taken. Individuals wishing to request a resolution and/or its attachment must have a DOCUMENT REQUEST FORM completed & submitted to the Policy & Legislative Office. For more information, call 601-650-7486.

### SPECIAL CALL MEETING - DEC. 14

**Resolution CHO 18-026,**

appointing Tribal Council Sergeants at Arms, was ADOPTED 14 YES (*L. Ahshapanek, R. Anderson, T. Anderson, C. Eaves, R. Isaac, S. Johnson, D. Martin, D. McClelland, B. McMillan, W. McMillan, R. Sockey, B. Steve, K. Wallace, & D. Wilson*); 1 NO (*R. Bell*); 0 ABSTAIN; 2 ABSENT (*H. Nickey & L. Parkerson*).

**Resolution CHO 18-027,** approving FY 2018 Budgets for Choctaw Residential Center Enterprise, was ADOPTED 15 YES (*L. Ahshapanek, R. An-*

*derson, T. Anderson, R. Bell, C. Eaves, R. Isaac, S. Johnson, D. Martin, D. McClelland, B. McMillan, W. McMillan, R. Sockey, B. Steve, K. Wallace, & D. Wilson*); 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 2 ABSENT (*H. Nickey & L. Parkerson*).

**Resolution CHO 18-028,** increasing the Budget & Scope of Pearl River Elementary School Expansion Project, was ADOPTED 15 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 2 ABSENT.

**Resolution CHO 18-029,** applying for a 2017 Energy & Mineral Development Program (EMDP) Grant from the U.S. Department of Interior, was ADOPTED 15 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 2 ABSENT.

**Resolution CHO 18-030,**

applying for an Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) allocated by Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) for the Tribal Emergency Management Program, was ADOPTED 15 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 2 ABSENT.

**Resolution CHO 18-031,** approving the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians Employment Background Check Policy, was ADOPTED 9 YES (*L. Ahshapanek, C. Eaves, R. Isaac, S. Johnson, D. Martin, D. McClelland, B. McMillan, R. Sockey, & B. Steve*); 6 NO (*R. Anderson, T. Anderson, R. Bell, W. McMillan, K. Wallace, & D. Wilson*); 0 ABSTAIN; 2 ABSENT.

## Bok Homa Casino Celebrates 7th Anniversary

Bok Homa hits Lucky Seven! On Wednesday, December 20, Bok Homa Casino celebrated its seven year anniversary with a slot tournament, anniversary cake, & t-shirt giveaway!

Beginning at 11:00 a.m., guests played for a chance to win up to \$500 in the Winners Wednesday Slot Tournament. The celebratory event kicked off at 6:00 p.m., as guests enjoyed anniversary cake, hors d'oeuvres, live entertainment, & received a free anniversary t-shirt, while supplies lasted.

Bok Homa Casino first opened its doors on December 20, 2010. The 27,000-square-foot facility offers over 700 slot machines with stunning graphics & video capabilities, retail items, & an all-American quick serve eatery appropriately named Lucky's.

Bok Homa Casino features 12 table games, which includes Blackjack, Mississippi Stud, Three Card Poker, Craps, & Roulette. Also featured is the Event Center which is utilized to host property promotions, bingo tournaments, & special events.

Guests must be 21 years of age or older to play or attend events. For more information on Bok Homa Casino, call 1.866.447.3275 or visit [www.bokhomacasino.com](http://www.bokhomacasino.com).

## Bok Homa Casino Helps Make Christmas Merrier

The holiday rush can be overwhelming, with all the shopping, traffic, parties, & gift giving.

And sometimes it is easy to forget about those not as fortunate.

The associates at Bok

Homa Casino heard of an organization in Laurel that has a broad mission:

Serve the community & world by loving God & people.

For the past two years, Glory House has been doing just that. They help by watching kids after school, sitting with people in the hospital, providing food, & anything else that will help.

Christmas time obviously ramps up the operation at Glory House, so Bok Homa Casino held a toy drive & donated 20 frozen turkeys.

Glory House Director, Hope Staples, gratefully welcomed the donation. She said it will help them assist 150 children by providing a hot meal & gifts this Christmas.



**ABOVE,** Bok Homa Casino Associates *Becky Wilson, left, & Talia Steve* with donations from a recent toy drive they held for Glory House of Laurel.

**RIGHT,** *Steve, left, & Wilson* present the toy donations to Glory House Director *Hope Sparks, center.*



# Tribe Hosts Christmas Luncheon For Employees

The Pearl River Community Gymnasium was full of holiday food, fellowship and appreciation as the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MBCI) hosted its annual Tribal Government Christmas Luncheon on Thursday, December 21.

Tribal Chief Phyllis J. Anderson offered her appreciation to all employees and credited them for the numerous accomplishments of the Tribe in 2017.

“We have a wonderful work force here and many of the things that we do, we do it together. There are so many things we have accomplished and those things could not be accom-

plished without you, the employees, so I thank you all for that.”

Heading into the Christmas season, Chief Anderson said it’s always great to gather, fellowship and reminiscence with family and friends, but we should always remember those who have lost a family member and look out for each other.

“Let’s continue to pray for one another, to lift each other up and give a helping hand to those who are in need. I think its fairly important that we, as a Tribe, do that because we are all family. That’s very important to me that we give a helping hand because we are in need. I ask that

during this holiday season you take time to do that.”

Winners of the 16th Annual Reservation-Wide Christmas Decoration Contest were recognized for their efforts as they received cash awards.

Out of 27 registered contestants representing eight communities, Delilah Gibson of Pearl River was named the overall winner and received a check for \$600. Randall Shane Shumake of Red Water placed second and received \$500. Judy Nickey of Conehatta placed third and received \$400.

Contestants named as honorable mentions and recipients of a \$150

check included: Karene Jefferson, Bogue Chitto; Beverly Murphy, Bogue Homa; Sarina Anderson, Conehatta; Savannah Galvan, Crystal Ridge; Lorena Alex, Pearl River; Randy Tangle, Red

Water; Juannina Mingo, Standing Pine; and Karen Chickaway, Tucker.

Kevin Payne of the MBCI Office of the Attorney General was honored as the 2017 **see LUNCHEON, pg. 8**



*Princess Kassie Cox & Chief Anderson presented cash awards to Judy Nickey of Conehatta (left) & Randall Shane Shumake of Red Water (right) as they finished third & second place respectively in the Reservation-Wide Christmas Decoration Contest. Not pictured is overall winner Delilah Gibson of Pearl River.*



*Contest honorable mentions from each community also received cash awards. From left is Princess Kassie Cox, Karen Chickaway of Tucker, Karene Jefferson of Bogue Chitto, Lorena Alex of Pearl River, & Chief Anderson. Not pictured are Beverly Murphy of Bogue Homa, Sarina Anderson of Conehatta, Savannah Galvan of Crystal Ridge, Randy Tangle of Red Water, & Juannina Mingo of Standing Pine.*



*The 2017 Employee of the Year award was presented by Princess Kassie Cox & Chief Anderson to Kevin Payne (pictured left) of the Office of the Attorney General. Wanda Davidson (pictured right), Acting Director of the Housing & Loan Program, was named honorable mention.*

## VETS ..... continued from page one

Choctaw, began with an hour-long information fair for veterans. The Department of Veterans Affairs Benefits Administration – Jackson Regional Office & the G.V. (Sonny) Montgomery Medical Center were both on hand to speak with veterans.

The ceremony included the signing of the MOU, posting of the colors by the Choctaw Veterans Color Guard, & a traditional pow-pow honor song & veteran’s song performed by the Southern Pine Singers.

The Choctaw Mortgage Program, located at the Choctaw Town Center, will serve as the local office to assist veterans with their VA home loan application process.

Daniel Tubby, Home Ownership Counselor, will be the point of contact & can be reached at 601-656-0056, ext. 2678, or Daniel.s.tubby@choctaw.org.

By statute, before the VA can make

a loan to a Native American Veteran desiring to build or renovate a home on tribal land, the veteran’s tribal sovereign governing body must enter into a MOU with VA.

Native American Veterans eligible for VA home loan benefits & whose sovereign governments have signed a MOU may then apply directly to VA for a 30-year fixed rate loan to purchase, build, or improve a home located on Federal trust land. They may also refinance a direct loan already made under this program to lower their interest rate.

If the property is not located on Federal trust land, the veteran can use the traditional VA-guaranteed Home Loan program.

Call toll free 1-800-827-1000 or visit [www.benefits.va.gov/home-loans](http://www.benefits.va.gov/home-loans) for more information about the Native American Direct Home Loan Program (NADL).

# Diabetes Prevention: Combating A Reservation-Wide Problem

By Melford Farve,  
Staff Writer

Diabetes is a term many members of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians are all too familiar with. Along with its debilitating effects, diabetes is a disease that can, without proper management, lead to a variety of complications such as heart disease, stroke, blindness, kidney disease, and amputations.

With nearly 11,000 Tribal members, approximately 1,837 have

been diagnosed with diabetes. The Choctaw Health Center's (CHC) Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) is seeking to slow down this escalating health problem.

The CHC Diabetes Department began its services in 1992 for Choctaws suffering from diabetes. In 1998, the DPP was added to the department.

The DPP conducts prevention and awareness activities in all the Choctaw communities and Tribal Schools. The program also conducts

lab testing to identify people who have a condition called Pre-Diabetes. Pre-Diabetes patients can prevent the onset of diabetes by participating in the program's prevention classes.

Brendon Williams, program case manager, said they host various events throughout the year not only to encourage Tribal members to exercise more but to unite them against the disease.

"This past October, we hosted the 21st Annu-

al Diabetes Awareness Walk in Pearl River, a Superhero Fun Run in Standing Pine and helping with the Glow Run/Walk with the Family Violence & Victims Services program. We implemented these activities to get the Choctaw community involved, not just because it's healthy, but most importantly, to get united as a community and get to know each other more."

The DPP also sponsors boot camp-type sessions that features exercises similar to that

of the Choctaw Indian Fair's Iron Warrior event competition.

For those who are into strength training, the Okla Fitness Center is located at the Choctaw Town Center.

Williams, along with his work in the fitness part of prevention, is also a nutrition educator as he graduated from Mississippi State University in May 2017 with a degree in Nutrition and Dietetics.

He has participated in ...continued next page

## HOLIDAY ..... continued from page one

so many opportunities that we have to serve our community and its very important that we do things to help each other cause that's what Christmas is all about, giving to each other."

Several organizations

were recognized for their service to Tribal members and were recipients of donations made on behalf of the Tribe.

The Choctaw Youth Conservation Corps received a \$10,000 dona-

tion as the program has proven to be beneficial as it promotes natural resources, conservation, teaches Tribal students confidence and responsible work ethic and encourages them to seek higher education in natural resources.

The Choctaw Bible Translation Committee received a \$15,000 donation to assist with projects as they are translating the Bible into the Choctaw language for Tribal members.

Committee members then presented Chief Anderson a beaded me-

dallion and a personal copy of the Bible translated in Choctaw in appreciation for donations to their project.

The Choctaw Elder Oral History Project received a \$7,500 donation as the main goal of the project is to capture and record the Choctaw cultural heritage from the perspective of our elders' preservation of Tribal traditions and for the development of educational resources for Tribal youth from the recordings.

The Chahta Alla Youth Council received

a \$7,500 donation to assist with expenses throughout the year. The council consists of Tribal youth that serve as ambassadors at local, state and national events. They embrace our culture and heritage through traditional Choctaw social dancing and activities and share them with others.

The highlight of the evening was the appearance of Santa Claus as he posed for pictures with all the children in attendance.



Princess Kassie Cox & Chief Anderson presented a \$15,000 donation to representatives of the Choctaw Bible Translation Committee.



Representatives of the Choctaw Elder Oral History Project received a \$7,500 donation.



Representatives of the Choctaw Youth Conservation Corps received \$10,000 (left) & the Chahta Alla Youth Council received \$7,500 (right).



healthy cooking demonstrations at the Choctaw Farmers Market and said eating healthier foods is an important aspect in preventing diabetes. Williams also provides recipes and information about the foods, its in-

redients and its importance. Diabetes is a life changing event. Management of blood sugar helps in coping with the disease, while non-management can cause a severity of complications.

Prevention is the only way to avoid this life-long illness. The staff at the Diabetes Prevention Program remains committed in helping the at-risk and healthy to live and enjoy a healthier life.

## Hello from the Wisdom Tooth

*Submitted by the Choctaw Dental Department Staff*

The Choctaw Dental Department would like to remind everyone that the Walk In/Emergency time is as follows:

Pearl River Dental, Monday-Friday at 7:30 a.m.;  
Red Water Dental, Monday & Wednesday at 7:30 a.m.;  
Conehatta Dental, Tuesday & Thursday at 7:30 a.m.;

Bogue Chitto Dental, Tuesday & Thursday at 7:30 a.m.  
We want to thank all our patients for their understanding and will continue to provide the best dental treatment possible in 2018.

## Eat Fruit, Don't Drink It

*By Trisha Koriath*

The label on the bottle promises five servings of fruit in just one glass, but offering your child juice might not be the sweetest idea. Kids should eat their fruit, not drink it, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).

Fruit juice is popular among children of all ages. Packaged in single serve boxes & pouches, it is a convenient drink to serve thirsty children. But parents should consider skipping it & look at the benefits of whole fruit instead.

Whole fruit offers fiber & other nutrients. Fruit juice, however, can lead to cavities &

weight gain or loss, the AAP says. Juice also can cause diarrhea when toddlers drink too much of it.

The AAP advises parents not to give babies under age 1 any juice unless their doctor recommends it. Juice should be limited for older children, too. See the chart (pictured right) for the maximum daily servings by age.

The AAP recommends the following:

- Mothers should breastfeed babies exclusively until 6 months of age & continue for a year or longer.
- Do not offer juice in a bottle or sippy cup. Toddlers & children should not carry cups or boxes of juice throughout the day.
- Buy products labeled as containing "100% juice." Drinks that are not 100% juice often include "drink," "bever-

## DIABETES CARE CLINIC

LOCATED ON THE 2ND FLOOR - CHOCTAW HEALTH CENTER

### DO YOU HAVE DIABETES?

THESE ARE THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS FOR A DIABETES PATIENT.

- FOOT EXAM
- EYE EXAM
- DENTAL EXAM
- FLU SHOT
- NUTRITION ASSESSMENT
- DIABETES MANAGEMENT EDUCATION
- BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SCREENING
- EXERCISE INSTRUCTIONS
- DIABETES CHECK UP BY PHYSICIAN OR FNP WITH LABS
- OTHER IMMUNIZATIONS MAY BE DUE

Here in the Diabetes Care clinic whether you have diabetes or not our staff members take care of you.

CLINICAL COMPONENT— PROVIDES ALL ASPECTS OF DIABETES CARE - MANAGEMENT, EDUCATION AND SUPPORT. WE ENCOURAGE DIABETES PATIENTS TO CALL US OR COME BY.

DIABETES PREVENTION PROGRAM— WE CONDUCT PREVENTION AND AWARENESS ACTIVITIES IN THE COMMUNITIES AND IN THE TRIBAL SCHOOLS. WE PROVIDE LAB TESTING FOR INDIVIDUALS FOR A CONDITION CALLED "PRE-DIABETES". PRE-DIABETES PATIENTS HAVE A CHANCE TO PREVENT THE ONSET OF DIABETES BY PARTICIPATING IN OUR PREVENTION CLASSES. WE ENCOURAGE THOSE WHO DO NOT HAVE DIABETES TO CONTACT US AND SCHEDULE A TIME FOR TESTING

### WE HAVE TWO PROVIDERS!

CLINIC DAYS ARE MONDAY—FRIDAY

### Our helpful staff members are:

- Dr. Joshi—Director
- Teresa Cumberland, FNP
- Barbara Bell—Secretary Receptionist
- Tiah York—Registered Nurse
- Paulette Fairchild—Certified Diabetes Educator
- Ethel Thomas—Diabetic supplies
- Darlene Willis—DPP Director
- Sharon Thompson—DPP Coordinator
- Brendon Williams—FT/Case Manager
- Lefus Tubby, Jr.—Best Practice Case Manager
- Willie Solomon, Jr.—Case Manager/JVN Tech
- Bandon Tubby, Fitness Center Attendant

APPOINTMENTS: 601.389.4370  
COORDINATOR: 601.389.4383  
DIABETES EDU: 601.389.4375  
SUPPLIES: 601.389.4389  
SDPI TESTING: 601.389.4390  
FAX: 601.389.4372

## AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS DAILY JUICE RECOMMENDATIONS



Fruit juice offers no nutritional benefits over whole fruits. Whole fruits also provide fiber and other nutrients.

Age:	Recommendation:
Younger than 12 months	Do not routinely give fruit juice to infants younger than 12 months since it offers no nutrition benefit at this age.*
1 to 3 years	Limit fruit juice to a maximum of 4 ounces per day (1/2 cup). Do not allow your child to carry a cup or box of juice throughout the day.
4 to 6 years	Limit fruit juice to a maximum of 4 to 6 ounces per day (1/2 cup to 3/4 cup). Do not allow your child to carry a cup or box of juice throughout the day.
7 to 18 years	Limit juice to 8 ounces per day (1 cup).

\*The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends breastfeeding as the sole source of nutrition for your baby for about 6 months. When you add solid foods to your baby's diet, continue breastfeeding until at least 12 months. You can continue to breastfeed after 12 months if you and your baby desire. Check with your child's doctor about the recommendations for vitamin D and iron supplements during the first year.

Policy Statement: Heyman MB, Abrams SA, and the AAP Section on Gastroenterology, Hepatology, and Nutrition and Committee on Nutrition. Fruit Juice in Infants, Children, and Adolescents: Current Recommendations. Pediatrics 2017; 139(5):e20170629

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DEPARTMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

We take applications year round for Head Start, Early Head Start, and Child Care.

SLOTS ARE AVAILABLE AT CONEHATTA HEAD START RED WATER HEAD START PEARL RIVER HEAD START AND PEARL RIVER DAY CARE

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PHONE: 601-389-4300  
FOR ALL EMERGENCIES DIAL 911

*Saturday Clinic*  
**OPENS ON THE 4TH SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH**  
**HOURS 8:00 AM-12:00 PM**  
**LAST SIGN IN AT 11:30 AM**

*Upcoming Dates*  
**January 27, 2018**  
**February 24, 2018**  
**March 24, 2018**

# Parent Board Has A New Name

The Choctaw Tribal School's Parent Board voted during their December working lunch to officially change the name to Parent and Family Engagement (PFE) Board.

This change was mandated under Section 1010 Parent and Family Engagement Federal Policy.

Ray Willis, PFE Chair, recognized Thomas Waiter as the December

Outstanding Choctaw Educator award recipient.

Waiter has been employed by the Tribe since August 1990. He has worked with the following programs: Pearl River Elementary Cafeteria,

Choctaw Adult Education Program, Choctaw Residential Center, and Choctaw Health Center

Waiter has served as Choctaw Central's Cafeteria Manager for 10 years. He attended Pearl River Elementary School, Choctaw Central High School and

graduated from East Central Community College.

Waiter and his wife, Janet, are the parents of five children and three grandchildren. They are always faithful to attend most parent involvement activities at Bogue Chitto Elementary School.



ABOVE, Parent & Family Engagement Board Members include, front row from left, Scottie Wallace, Ann York, Andrea Smith, Deanna McMillan; middle row, Shaundreak Thomas, Darlene Willis, Roseanna Thompson, Pandora Sockey, Willa Thomas; back row, Jenny Deon, Joy Alex, & Cheryl Willis. RIGHT, Thomas Waiter, December Outstanding Choctaw Educator.



# Growing Crops, Growing Interest

By Melford Farve, Staff Writer

In the years before the 1830 Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek removed the Mississippi Choctaws to lands in the west, the Choctaws were widely known for their exemplary agricultural skills. Corn, squash, beans, & other vegetables were staples in their diet, as well as items to barter with European traders.

Choctaw families continued tending to their gardens throughout the years, but the last decade has seen the number of home gardens dwindling.

With this in mind, the Choctaw Agricultural Professionals Program for Students (CAPPS) & Choctaw Fresh Produce hope to bring back an interest in gardening & show students various professions available in agriculture & natural resources.

Jim McAdory, Mississippi State University (MSU) Extension Service Agent for the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, explains how the CAPPS



CAPPS members from Choctaw Central High School assisted Choctaw Fresh Produce with their recent harvest sales at the Pearl River Pavilion.



Program originated.

"I was working at Choctaw Central High School (CCHS) on a High Tunnel, which was built at the school through a grant. A teacher mentioned the 20+Plus Club, which includes kids who made 20 & above on their ACT. I asked if I could come & talk to them about agriculture & natural resources. They expressed an interest in it, then I asked if they wanted to form an agricultural group. That's how it got started."

Now in its third year,

CAPPS is a program at CCHS that has offered students educational field trips to places like the Noxubee Natural Resource Refuge, Choctaw Fresh Produce High Tunnels, Natchez Trace Green House in Kosciusko, & a tour of MSU's Entomology Museum, Equine, & Agriculture Centers.

A part of McAdory's work with the Tribe has him assisting the Choctaw Fresh Produce program. When he mentioned to officials of

.....see CAPPS, pg 13

## LUNCHEON ..... continued from page five

MBCI Employee of the Year. He was presented a plaque in recognition of his outstanding excellence, superior performance and accomplishment to the Tribal government of the MBCI.

Wanda Davidson, Acting Director of the Housing and Loan Program, was named recipient of the Employee of the Year honorable mention.

At the conclusion of the luncheon, all in attendance sang "Silent Night" to celebrate and reflect on the true meaning of the Christmas season, the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Christmas music was provided by Doug Hurd of Madison and a video of holiday greetings from various Tribal programs was presented by the Office of Public Information-Choctaw Video. MBCI Chief of Staff Rae Nell Vaughn served as emcee and Rev. Daniel Tubby offered the blessing of the food.

# Happy Holidays

From The Department & Programs of The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians



Tribal Chief Phylliss J. Anderson



Tribal Administration



Switchboard



Finance



Tribal Office  
Janitorial Aide



Pearl River Community Center  
Janitorial Aide



Office of Public Information  
Receptionist



"Facebook"  
Fred



Department of Employment and Training



Pearl River Recreation



Choctaw Transit



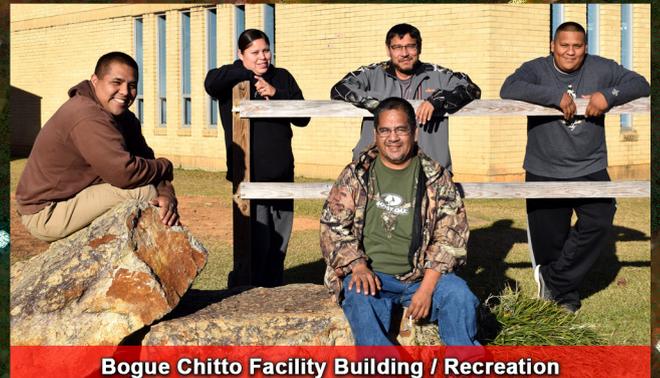
Department of Chahta Immi



Department of Early Childhood Education



Department of Schools



Bogue Chitto Facility Building / Recreation



Bogue Chitto Field Clinic



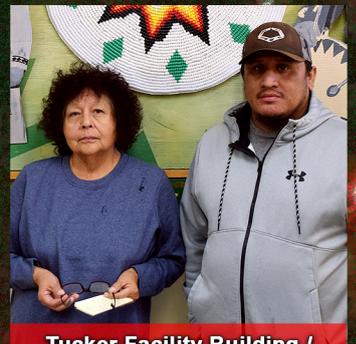
Choctaw Fire Department



Boys & Girls Club - Bok Cito Unit



Boys & Girls Club - Tucker Unit



Tucker Facility Building / Recreation



Choctaw Health Center (CHC) Administration



CHC Public Health Services



CHC Medical Imaging



CHC Dental Department



CHC Procurement



CHC Diabetes Department



CHC Women's Wellness Department



CHC Health Information Management



CHC Emergency Room



CHC Inpatient Department



CHC Coding



CHC Dietary Department



CHC Eye Clinic



CHC Managed Care



CHC EMS



CHC Information Technology



CHC Billing



CHC EVS



CHC Physical Therapy



CHC Lab



CHC Pharmacy



CHC WIC Department



CHC Maintenance



Santa gets a last minute check-up before delivering gifts for Christmas morning!



# CCHS Solar Car Team Places 2nd in World Solar Challenge

The Choctaw Central High School (CCHS) Solar Car Team placed second place in their division at the Bridge-stone World Solar Challenge in Australia October 8-15.

For the past 30 years, the World Solar Challenge has welcomed teams from around the world to Australia to travel the outback in a solar powered vehicle.

The team, driving their vehicle *Tushka Hashi III* (translated Sun Warrior) in the Adventure Class, traveled 1,800 miles across Australia starting from Darwin & finishing at Adelaide.

Out of nearly 40 entries comprised of colleges & universities from over 30 countries, Choctaw Central (the only Native American team) was one of only two high schools participating & one of four teams

representing the U.S. Team members held fundraising efforts to help pay for travel costs with additional donations from numerous individuals & organizations, including the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, Tribal Chief Phylliss J. Anderson & members of the Choctaw Tribal Council.

Liddia Hughes, OTC Administrator, said school administrators envisioned a program to focus students towards a science, technology, engineering & mathematics (STEM) curriculum.

“It was started to introduce students to electrical & mechanical engineering. This was an extra-curricular activity STEM program because at that time we did not have any students here at Choctaw Central  
 ....see **CHALLENGE**, pg 20



## CCMS Warriors Has Successful Season

*Congratulations to the Choctaw Central Middle School Warriors on a successful 2017 season. ABOVE, Team members are, kneeling from left to right, Trenton Reed, Caleb Mingo, Kashton Grisham, Zander Sockey, Derek Reynolds, Michael Briscoe; second row, Bryce Chapman, Andreas Jim; third row, Cameron Farmer, Braynon Jim, Jace Dixon, Armando Ben, Quinten Dixon, Ivan Thomas, Damion Vaughn, Coach Anthony Thames; back row, Coach Alaric Keams, Jordan Isaac, Darion Young, Javonta Willis, JaWarrick Hickman, Eli Joe, Notah Tubby, Gannon Vaughn, & Cameron Dixon.*

**BELOW,** Pictured from left, Taterrian Anderson, Watee Farmer, Sebastian Anderson, Javion Comby, & Dimonte Williams. Not pictured are Tiak Willis, Dillon Stephens, Samuel Tubby, Logan Comby, & Anakin York.



### CAAPS ..... continued from page eight

how CAPPS is gearing students towards careers in agriculture, an association was soon formed.

An ongoing project for Choctaw Fresh Produce is the Mobile Market as they sell vegetables grown from High Tunnels in the Choctaw communities to Tribal members & the general public.

MBCI Economic Development Specialist Jason Grisham, who assists Choctaw Fresh Produce on their Mobile Market, tells of how CAPPS is utilized with their sales event.

“Whenever we have a sale, they’re the first ones we call. Our objective is to use them as ambassadors, to help sell & educate the public,” said Grisham.

“We want the youth to become more social. Being out here, we allow them to sell, bag the foods & interact with the customers.”

Only time will tell if CAPPS & Choctaw Fresh Produce can influence the next generation on the importance of growing food & seeing the growth of gardens in all Tribal communities once again.



## Creative Christmas A Success

*By Melford Farve,  
 Staff Writer*

Christmas shopping can be an exhaustive, and at times, nerve-racking occasion for those seeking the right gift for their loved ones. The excessive crowds and end-

less traffic of cars can cause a lot of anxiety and grief for the weary shopper.

The 18th Annual Creative Christmas, held December 5-6, 2017, in the Pearl River Community Gymnasium, helped alleviate those Christ-

mas shopping blues.

Creative Christmas was an event that showcased the creative talents of tribal jewelry makers, seamstresses and bakers. Event coordinator Virginia Willis, 4-H Home  
 see **CREATIVE**, pg 14

**CREATIVE ..... continued from page thirteen**

Extension Coordinator, explains how this yearly event began.

“Around 1998, we had a homemakers club through Natural Resources Home Extension Program, and I was interested in getting all those homemakers together and selling the items they made.”

Although she had a hand in getting it started, business travel forced her to turn over the first Creative Christmas event to then-Curriculum Specialist Jennifer Dorris. Willis, along with the Department of Natural Resources staff, has coordinated the festive affair since then and has seen its growth.

“We started with crafts from home-



*This year’s Creative Christmas staffers include, from left, Ronald Gibson, 4-H Program Assistant; Candy Jimmie, Department of Natural Resources Administrative Assistant; & Virginia Willis, 4-H Home Extension Coordinator.*

makers and then, other entities. Non-tribal vendors wanted to participate also, and it has grown to what it is today,” said Willis.

This year’s Creative Christmas gave Christmas shoppers an array of items to choose from.

“We usually average from 65 to 70 vendors, a few from out of state, selling handmade beaded jewelry, turquoise jewelry, native blankets, to name a few.”

Delicious baked goods were also sold, as well as breakfast and lunch items for organizational fundraisers. Since its humble inception to the successful affair it is today, its growth is evident.

“It’s getting bigger every year,” said Willis. “People are always asking about it, even right after the Choctaw Fair.”

**YOUTH OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM'S**  
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**NEWS**  
**&**  
**NOTES**

**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**  
**OF MISSISSIPPI**  
**BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS**

**CONEHATTA UNIT**

**Happy New Year!**

From the staff & members

**Upcoming Events**

On Jan. 2, the club will open for the first day of spring session. Hours are from 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

On Jan. 2, members ages 6-7 will travel to Pearl to watch “Ferdinand.”

On Jan. 3, Choctaw Tribal Schools start for the spring term.

On Jan. 8, the second 9-Weeks Community Relations Day will be held at Conehatta Elementary School (CES).

On Jan. 15, the club will close for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Holiday.

On Jan. 15, the TORCH Club’s annual Community Clean Up activity will be held on Tushka Drive.

On Feb. 1, members ages 7-8 will travel to Meridian to attend the Garden Brothers Circus.

On Feb. 19, the club will close for President’s Day Holiday.

On March 12-16, Choctaw Tribal Schools will close for spring break. The club will open from 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

**Youth of the Month Honors**

Hailey Johnson was

selected Youth of the Month for November 2017 & Amilia Sebastian was selected for December 2017.

Hailey is the 11 year old daughter of Jamison Johnson & Elena Denison of Conehatta. Hailey attends CES & is in the 6th grade. She has a brother & sister who attend the club with her. Hailey & her siblings are honor students for the club.

Amilia is the 12 year old daughter of Amanda Cotton of Forest. She is in the 6th grade at CES. She has a sister who attends the club with her & are honor students for the club.

**Special Thanks / Recognition**

The club members & staff thank Cheryl Isaac, Melissa Martinez & Kendall Steve for helping out with programs at the club. We also thank Cindy Willis & Reno King, our 90-day employees, for keeping our club clean, serving snacks, decorating, & friendly interactions with members.

Thank you to Jazzlynn Ben, Choctaw Health Center (CHC) Behavioral Health Prevention Specialist, for facilitating the Too Smart For Drugs program during the fall session with the

...continued next page

**Prevent Elder Abuse**



**Identify It!**  
**Report It!**  
**Stop It!**



**Warning Signs**

- Fear, withdrawal, depression
- Shame, anxiety, embarrassment
- Unexplained bruises or injuries
- Hesitation to talk openly
- Isolation by caregiver
- Unkempt appearance
- Loss of self-esteem
- Unexplained disappearance of funds or valuable possessions

**Recognizing the warning signs is the key to identifying and stopping an occurrence of elder abuse.**

For more information on elder abuse, contact  
 Family Violence and Victim’s Services  
 at 601-650-1774



**REPORT CRIMES ANONYMOUSLY**



**Call 1-855-4-THE REZ (1-855-484-3739)**  
 or visit [www.wetip.com](http://www.wetip.com)

**CALL IF YOU HAVE INFORMATION ABOUT:**

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- **Child Abuse**
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- **Illegal Drugs**
- **Bullying**
- **Assault**
- **Or any other illegal activity**

You can call 24 hours a day & report your concern to us. No one will ask your name, you will remain anonymous. Your tip may lead to a **REWARD, up to \$1,000!**

8-10 age group.

We appreciate all the knowledge you shared with the members about developing positive adolescent behaviors, preventing alcohol, tobacco & drug use, dropping out, & other topics of importance.

Thank you also to Brandon Williams with the CHC Diabetes Prevention Program for facilitating a program specifically targeting healthy nutrition, exercise & other ways to prevent diabetes.

Members ages 8-10 participated in the program once a month during the fall session with Brandon. We appreciate his time & knowledge!

These members will be treated with a pizza party for participating in the programs.

**Mentoring**

Staff members from the Conehatta Facility Building & Conehatta Recreation recently played a friendly game of basketball in a mentors vs. members contest.

Volunteer mentors included Gurdy Farmer, Jeris Shoemake, Brandon Chickaway, Veltina Shumake, & Kieara Bell.

Club members included Montraz Billy, Shane Thomas, Jr., Kadriann Farmer, Jaliah Jefferson, Kaiden King, Jacob Vaughn, Zahaylia Bell, & Milee Thomas.



*Jazzlynn Ben, Choctaw Health Center Behavioral Health Prevention Specialist, recently facilitated the Too Smart For Drugs program during the fall session with the 8-10 age group.*



*Club members enjoyed a game of basketball as the members played against volunteer mentors.*

The older club members defeated the mentors in a fun contest. Thank you to Gurdy Farmer for coordinating this activity for the enjoyment of the members & the mentors.

**Honor Roll**

Club members recognized on the second 9-weeks Honor Roll are listed below:

Conner Anderson, Haygen Anderson, Konley Anderson, Mikal Anderson, Dominic Bell, Zayce Bell, Montraz Billy, Antonio Flores, Carson Jimmie, Drasen Jimmie, Kenyon Johnson, Zarius Johnson, Anthony King, Jayden McKinney, Braylon McMillan, Tyrein McMillan, Dantzler Stephens, Timothy Thomas, Jr., Tayden Wesley, Cedric Williams, Jessias Williams, Sabien Williams,

Dathian Williamson, DeRyan Williamson, & Elliot Wishork.

Ryleigh Anderson, Zahaylia Bell, Kadriann Farmer, Danica Ferris, Dana Ferris, Milee Flores, Lillian Hickman, Toriann Jefferson, Hailey Johnson, Kadence Johnson, Kayliona Kessinger, Tajjah Kessinger, Tiarri Kessinger, Chesley McMillan, Kaydison Nickey, Nevaeh Nickey, Remini Nickey, Taelyn Nickey, Alissia Sebastian, Amelia Sebastian, Alexis Smith, Tailyn Tubby, Trinity Tubby, Anayah Wesley, Ayslie Wesley, Tailyn Wesley, Malice Williams, & Eliana Wishork.

These members will be treated with a pizza party for their academic achievement. Congratulations! We are PROUD of each of you.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4  
 Water Protection Division  
 NPDES Permitting and Enforcement Branch  
 Atlanta Federal Center  
 61 Forsyth Street, S.W.  
 Atlanta, Georgia 30303  
 (404) 562-8609

Public Notice No. MS1800001 Date: December 1, 2017

**NOTICE OF PROPOSED ISSUANCE OF NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM PERMIT**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency intends to reissue a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit to the Choctaw Public Works Department, Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, P. O. Box 6366, Choctaw, MS 39350. The applicant has a request for reissuance of NPDES No. MS0043478 for its Bogue Chitto Wastewater Treatment Facility, located at BIA Road 0232, Philadelphia, MS 39350. The draft permit authorizes one existing discharge of treated sanitary wastewater (SIC Code 4952) through Outfall 001 to Unnamed Tributary to Owl Creek to Bogue Chitto Creek.

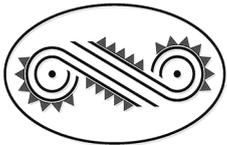
Persons wishing to comment upon or object to any aspects of the permit issuance or wishing to request a public hearing, are invited to submit the same in writing within thirty (30) days of this notice to the NPDES Permitting Section, Water Protection Division, Environmental Protection Agency, 61 Forsyth Street, S.W., Atlanta, GA 30303-8960, ATTENTION: Ms. Angela Athey. Comments may also be sent via email to: [athey.angela@epa.gov](mailto:athey.angela@epa.gov). Pursuant to 40 CFR § 124.13, any person who believes that any proposed permit condition is inappropriate must raise all reasonably ascertainable issues and submit all reasonably available arguments in full, supporting his/her position, by the close of the comment period. The public notice number and NPDES number should be included on the first page of comments.

All comments received within the 30-day period will be considered in the formulation of a final determination regarding the permit issuance. Also, within the 30-day period, any interested person may request a public hearing. Where there is a significant degree of public interest in a proposed permit issuance, the EPA Regional Administrator will schedule and hold a public hearing which would be formally announced in accordance with 40 CFR §§ 124.10 and 124.12.

After consideration of all written comments and the requirements and policies in the Clean Water Act and appropriate regulations, the EPA Regional Administrator will make a determination regarding the permit issuance. If the determination is substantially unchanged from that announced by this notice, the EPA Regional Administrator will so notify all persons submitting written comments. If the determination is substantially changed, the EPA Regional Administrator will issue a public notice indicating the revised determination. Appeal of NPDES permits may be filed after the Regional Administrator makes the above-described determination. Additional information regarding appeal of NPDES permits is available in 40 CFR § 124.19, or by contacting Paul Schwartz of the Environmental Accountability Division at (404) 562-9576.

The administrative record, including the draft permit, fact sheet, a sketch showing the exact location of the permit area, comments received and additional information on hearing procedures is available at cost by writing to the EPA at the address above between the hours of 8:15 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday (copies will be provided at a minimal cost per page), or by downloading these documents from <https://www.epa.gov/aboutepa/about-epa-region-4-southeast>.

Please bring the foregoing to the attention of persons whom you know will be interested in this matter. If you would like to be added to our public notice mailing list, submit your name and mailing address to the EPA, at the address given above.



**CHAHTA IMMI  
CULTURAL CENTER**

featuring

**CHOCTAW EXPRESSIONS**  
Lifeways of the Choctaw People



The Chahta Immi Cultural Center serves as the hub for showcasing and educating the general public about the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians' rich cultural and historical legacy. We are very proud to give you a glimpse into the life ways of the Choctaw People.

The story of the Choctaws is one of courage, perseverance and survival against seemingly overwhelming odds. Items featured at the Center gallery serve as mementos of that story. The Center also showcases cultural art forms still practiced by the Choctaws and also provides visitors a chance to experience Choctaw Culture through "Choctaw Expressions" - cultural events and activities that feature live exhibitions and presentations that allows guests to take in the rich heritage of the Choctaw People.

Visitors are welcome to stop by the gift shop and check out the beautiful and unique Choctaw arts and crafts. Every item that you will see has been handcrafted by our gifted Choctaw artisans. These items can be great gifts for loved ones or wonderful keepsakes.

Be sure to contact the Cultural Center at 601-650-1685 for upcoming cultural events.

CHAHTA IMMI  
CULTURAL CENTER  
Choctaw Shopping Center  
Highway 16 West  
Choctaw, MS 39350  
601-650-1687  
www.choctaw.org

**HOURS OF OPERATION**  
TUESDAY - SATURDAY  
10 A.M. - 5 P.M.

**ADMISSION**  
GENERAL ADMISSION \$5  
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TRIBAL MEMBERS WITH TRIBAL ID \$2  
SENIORS (57 AND ABOVE) FREE  
CHILDREN (UNDER 5) FREE

## DEPARTMENT OF CHAHTA IMMI NEWS

### Jena Choctaw Expo 2017

Several staff members of the Department of Chahta Immi (DCI) traveled to Louisiana in late November to participate in the Jena Band of Choctaw Indians annual expo as they displayed Choctaw culture including beadwork, dance, language, and more.

The expo, held at the Jena tribal center, featured demonstrations of traditional Choctaw dress, sewing, and sports.

Students from schools across LaSalle Parish and 3 year-olds from the Baby Feathers Learning Center were in attendance, as well as the general public.

DCI staff members who attended the 3-day expo included Casey Bigpond, Wendy Thompson, Rian Willis, May McGeisey, Meritza Henry, Teara Phillips, Ken Frazier, Garrison Joe, and Everett Sam.

The presentations would not have been made possible with-

out support from Tribal Chief Cheryl Smith of the Jena Band of Choctaw Indians and Tribal Chief Phyliss J. Anderson of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MBCI). Our gratitude go to these two incredible leaders.

### Mission Accomplished!

It took months of arduous tasks to bead ornaments and decorations for the 10-foot Christmas tree representing the MBCI as part of Merrehope's 49th Annual Trees of Christmas from Nov. 19-Dec. 30, 2017, in Meridian.

When the MBCI cultural Christmas tree was set up, it was indeed a

breathhtaking beauty! All the ornaments and snowflakes were beaded in an array of colors representing all eight Choctaw communities.

The Christmas tree truly exemplified the Choctaw culture as it featured displays of river cane baskets, Choctaw dolls on the bottom of the tree and Choctaw clothing and beadwork on each side. The display was set up by the staff of the Chahta Immi Cultural Center.

Merrehope, a historic antebellum landmark in Meridian, hosted the holiday exhibit as it included over 25 decorated trees and displays and was showcased as part of the diverse cultures of Mississippi.

The tours also include historical, educational and cultural facts telling the story of the theme: *Mississippi's 200 Years: Remembering and Celebrating.*

Beading the ornaments and decorations were students from the Choctaw Tribal Schools' Talented and Gifted (TAG) program, 90-day employees from the Day Training Program, Raetina Hannig, Alanna John and Arylynn John, and the staff of the Cultural Affairs Program (CAP).

Special thanks to TAG Teacher Maria Hartness and her students as they did an exemplary job for taking on such a humongous project.

The arts and crafts of the CAP were very well promoted! The MBCI Christmas tree was

**LEFT, Ken Frazier (far right) & Garrison Joe (second from right) gave a presentation on Choctaw stickball. RIGHT, Everett Sam sews diamonds on a Choctaw shirt at the Jena Tribal Expo.**



(Photos courtesy of Morgan Tarpley Smith, Reporter/Photographer, The Jena Times; Information courtesy of Sammy J. Franklin, Editor/Publisher, The Jena Times)



DCI staff members pose with Jena Band of Choctaw Indians Tribal Chief Cheryl Smith & several dancers after the exposition.

...continued next page

PRICELESS!

**Visit To University of Alabama**

DCI staff members Phyllis McMillan and May McGeisey traveled to the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa on Wednesday, Nov. 29, to participate in an event coordinated by the Women and Gender Resource Center and organized by Arielle Lipan.

McGeisey presented on the topic of Native American Women's Perspective to students at the Gorgas Library as part of Native American Heritage Month activities.

Future cultural activity classes will be posted on social media. For more information on Choctaw culture, call (601) 663-7506.



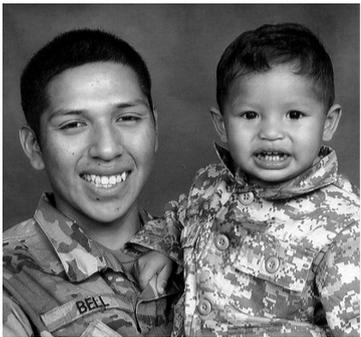
*Pictured above is the Christmas tree displayed at Merrehope Mansion.*



**LEFT,** *Pictured from left are Phyllis McMillan, Arielle Lipan, Brennan Fitzgerald, & May McGeisey at the Gorgas Library on the campus of the University of Alabama.*

**Bell Graduates From BCT, AIT**

*We are blessed to announce the graduation of PVT Jay-dre Nita Osi Bell from Basic Combat*



*Training (BCT) in September 2017 at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. He then*

*graduated from Advanced Individual Training (AIT) at Fort Lee, Virginia before*



*returning home. He was a Top 10 graduate of Choctaw Central High School in May 2017. We love & respect you, soldier! Thank you to the churches, family members, friends & the Tribe that supported us. From your family in S.P. - your son, mom, sissy, & grandparents.*

**ATTENTION STICKBALL COACHES**

**1st WSS Coaches Meeting**  
**Monday, February 5**  
**6:00 p.m.**  
**Pearl River Community Center**  
 • Adult Coaches Only

**IN MEMORIAM**

**HARRY ALLEN VAUGHN**

**PAUL TUBBY**

Funeral service for Harry Allen Vaughn, 66, was held on Monday, November 27, 2017, from the Bogue Chitto Baptist Church. Deacon Kendall Wallace & Rev. Charles Doby Henry officiated.

Burial was in the Bogue Chitto Community Cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements. Mr. Vaughn passed away on Nov. 24 at Rush Hospital in Meridian.

He loved playing sports & visiting with family. He was a stickball champion in the late 70's & was a member of the Mississippi State Guard. He was a landscaper & groundskeeper.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Clifton & Rene Bell Vaughn; sisters, Judy Thompson & Betty Phillips; brothers, Jerry Vaughn & an infant brother; 2 aunts; & 2 uncles.

Survivors include daughters, Alicia R. Vaughn & Daphne G. Willis; son, Marcus Vaughn; sisters, Earline Hickman, Rosalie Bell, Lorena Alex, Nancy Vaughn, & Pauline Vaughn; brothers, Jimmy Vaughn, Sr., Harley Vaughn, Thomas Vaughn, & Roger Vaughn; 7 grandchildren; 2 aunts; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

Graveside service for Paul Tubby was held on Thursday, November 30, 2017, at the Old Canaan Indian Baptist Church Cemetery. Rev. Kendall Wallace & Rev. Carl Wilson officiated.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Edmond & Elsenia John Tubby; a sister, Annie Kate Sam; & a brother, John Tubby, Sr.

Survivors include his brothers, Edwin Tubby, Edmond Tubby, Sr. & Willie Tubby; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

**RUTH ANN WILLIS**

Funeral service for Ruth Ann Willis, 76, was held on Monday, December 4, 2017, from the Red Water Facility Building. Rev. Robert Patrick officiated.

Burial was in the Old Mt. Zion Cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.

Mrs. Willis passed away on Dec. 1 at her residence.

She enjoyed spending time with family, beading, sewing, & cooking. She was an assistant teacher & librarian at Red Water Elementary School.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Ike & Jennie Billy; sisters, Katie Willis, Lilly Billy, Rose Wilson, & Nannie

.....see OBITS, pg. 18

OBITS ..... continued from page seventeen

Mitch; brothers, Cephus Billy, John Billy, Lewis Billy, & Larry Billy.

Survivors include her husband, Kirby Willis; daughters, Dianne Hickman, Dava Meely, Darlene Willis, & Dorcas Willis; sons, Dewayne Billy & Kimball Willis; sisters, Clarice Billy & Nancy Sockey; brothers, Herman Billie, Sampson Billy & Carson Billy; 3 foster children, Karry Amos, Lee Earl Amos & Terry Jim; 14 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

**WILLIE "NINO" WAYNE STARR**

Funeral service for Willie "Nino" Wayne Starr, 70, was held on Thursday, December 7, 2017, at 127 Pine Ridge Road in the Pearl River

Community. Rev. Carl Wilson officiated.

Burial was in the Starr Cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.

Ms. Starr passed away on Dec. 4 at the University Medical Center in Jackson.

She enjoyed listening to music, gardening, being artistic, & taking care of her family.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Summer & Maggie Billy-Starr; sisters, Norma Jean Starr, Warner Starr-Wishork & Dorothy Starr-Wishork; brothers, Regis C. Starr, Arnold Starr & Ruben Starr; 3 nieces; & 3 nephews.

Survivors include a brother, John E. Starr; 7 nieces; a nephew; & a host of relatives & friends.

**ANNIE MAE COTTON JIM**

Funeral service for Annie Mae Cotton Jim, 57, was held on Saturday, December 16, 2017, from the Bogue Chitto Facility Building. Deacon Kendall Wallace & Rev. Charles Doby Henry officiated.

Burial was in the Isleep Cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.

Ms. Jim passed away on Dec. 12 at University Medical Center in Jackson.

She was a Choctaw Transit dispatcher & was previously employed at Chahta Enterprise. She enjoyed being with family, playing & coaching softball, traveling, socializing, listening to music, & cheering the Bok Cito stickball teams & Miami Hurricanes.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Eugene & Willie Dean Cotton; husband, Darrell Jim; brother, James Wendell Cotton; & six aunts.

Survivors include a daughter, Vanessa Cotton; sons, Devon Jim & Dudley Cotton, Sr.; four aunts; an uncle; 16 grandchildren; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

**DAMIAN CODY JIMMIE**

Funeral service for Damian Cody Jimmie, 36, was held on Saturday, December 16, 2017, from the Pearl River

Community Center. Deacon Ricky Thompson, Sr. & Rev. Travis Willis officiated.

Burial was in Phillips Cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.

Mr. Jimmie passed away on Dec. 12 at the Choctaw Health Center in Choctaw.

He was a barber & enjoyed spending time with family & friends, playing stickball for Pearl River, & cheering for the Florida State Seminoles & Cleveland Cavaliers.

He was preceded in death by grandparents, Charlotte Jimmie, Bessie Hickman & Nephus Willis.

Survivors include his parents, Randy L. Jimmie & Dina H. Jimmie; daughters, Melanian Jimmie & Kodi Jimmie; sister, Dyranda Jimmie; brother, Shaun Jimmie; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

**MATTIE ANN ANDERSON THOMPSON**

Funeral service for Mattie Ann Anderson Thompson, 75, was held on Sunday, December 17, 2017, at the Macedonia Baptist Church in the Conehatta Community. Deacon Billy Smith & Rev. Robert Patrick officiated.

Burial was in the Conehatta Community Cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.

Ms. Thompson passed away on Dec. 14 at her residence.

She was an intern with American Indian Arts & Crafts then became a social worker. She attended Corinth Baptist Church & was a Women's Missionary Union director.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Irvin & Thelma Benn Anderson; husband, Jerry Thompson; sisters, Gladys Anderson & Rosaline Bell; & a brother, Marvin Anderson.

Survivors include her son, Lloyd Eric Thompson; foster daughter, DeeDee Garcia; sister, Meriva Williamson; brother, Floyd Anderson, Sr.; 2 foster grandchildren; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

**MARY ELIZABETH WILLIS**

Funeral service for Mary Elizabeth Willis, 55, was held on Friday, December 22, 2017, at Bogue Chitto Baptist Church. Deacon Kendall Wallace & Rev. Charles Doby Henry officiated.

Burial was in the Bogue Chitto Community Cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.

Ms. Willis passed away on Dec. 17 at Anderson Regional Medical Center in Meridian.

She enjoyed being with family & friends, listening to music,

...continued next page

*Come and Worship with us*



**Macedonia Baptist Church**  
130 Campus Drive  
Conehatta, MS 39057

*Sunday*

10:00 a.m. - Sunday School  
11:00 a.m. - Worship Service  
5:00 p.m. - Evening Service  
1st Sunday Service 4:00 p.m.  
Pastor: Rev. Samuel Dixon

*Wednesday*

6:00 p.m. - Pray Meeting  
6:30 p.m. - Discipleship/  
Family Ministry Class

*To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."  
- John 8:31-32*

*Come Join Us...*



**Spirit of Life Christian Center**

Sunday 10:00 a.m.      Wednesday 6:30 p.m.

**278 Black Jack Road  
Choctaw, MS 39350  
601-389-5446  
Pastor Thomas Ben**

**Welcome To**



**NANIH WAIYA  
INDIAN  
Mennonite Church**

**Preaching Every  
Sunday - 10:00 am**

10341 Road 789  
Philadelphia, MS 39350

beading, dancing, fishing, cooking outdoors, & watching stickball games.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Willie "Ervin" Willis; parents, Lallie & Ellis Hickman; daughter, Laykemya Willis; sons, Erie Willis & Sean Perkins; children twins; a baby sister; 2 baby brothers; a granddaughter; & a niece.

Survivors include her daughters, Pam Frazier & Staci Bell; sons, Kevin Willis & Sergio Willis; a stepson, Rome Jefferson; sisters, Darlene Tubby, Louise Lewis & Tammy Shoemaker; brothers, Patrick Hickman, Ricky Willis, Crawford Willis, Richard Cotton, & Robert Cotton; 2 aunts; 3 uncles; 23 grandchildren; 1 great-grandchild; & a host of relatives & friends.

**AGEN JOE**

Funeral service for Agen Joe, 64, was held on Friday, December 22, 2017, at Bogue Chitto Baptist Church. Deacon Kendall Wallace & Rev. Charles Doby Henry officiated.

Burial was in the Bogue Chitto Baptist Church Cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.

Mr. Joe passed away on Dec. 19 at the Choctaw Residential Center in Choctaw.

He loved to read his Bible & enjoyed fishing, gardening, weaving Choctaw baskets, & watching sports.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Claude & Nancy Joe; sister, Louise Amos; & a half-brother, Alan Willis.

Survivors include his daughters, Valetta Joe & Marlana Sanches; son, Myron Joe; sisters, Janice McDuffie, Mary Eckrote, Mae English, & Deradha Fortenberry; 7 grandchildren; & a host of relatives & friends.

**FAITH SHAE ISOM**

Funeral service for Faith Shae Isom, 3-day old infant, was held on Tuesday, December 26, 2017, at Greenhill Methodist Church. Rev. Daniel Tubby officiated.

Burial was in the Greenhill Cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.

Infant Isom passed away on Dec. 22 at Anderson Regional Medical Center in Meridian.

She was preceded in death by her great-grandfather, Benford Tubby; great-great grandparents, Elizabeth & Irvin Jefferson; & an aunt.

Survivors include her parents, Jenna Tubby & Deanrick Isom, Sr.; sisters, Trinity Isom, Dawnanna Tubby, Macy Clemons, Emma Isom, & Mila Isom; brothers, twin Deanrick Isom, Jr., Deandra Clemons, Riley Clemons, Avery Isom, & LaDianian Isom; grandparents, Tammie Williams & Ronnie Reed, Sr., Judy Isom, Mack Anderson; great-great grandmothers, Mamie Tubby & Alleen Hick-

man; & numerous aunts, uncles, & relatives.

**WARREN GEORGE CLEGG, SR.**

Funeral service for Warren George Clegg, Sr., 52, was held on Tuesday, December 26, 2017, at the Pearl River Community Center. Deacon Ben Farve & Rev. Shelly Peoples officiated.

Burial was in the New Canaan Baptist Church Cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.

Mr. Clegg passed away on Dec. 22 at the Choctaw Health Center in Choctaw.

He was a member of New Canaan Baptist Church & was a plant operations mechanic at the Choctaw Health Center. He enlisted with the U.S. Coast Guard & enjoyed being a truck driver.

He enjoyed being with family, fishing, playing washers, listening to music, attending ball games, wood working, & being with his dog. He was a member of Tucker's stickball championship team in 1988.

He was preceded in death by his father, George Wallace Clegg; & grandparents, Harry Clegg & Geraldine Clegg, Byrd Isaac & Pauline Isaac.

Survivors include his wife, Wendy Gail Clegg; daughters, Whitney Wesley & Kirstin Clegg; sons, Warren Clegg, Jr. & Dalton Clegg; his mother, Virgie Solomon; sisters, Elsie Farve

& Sharon Williams; 5 grandchildren; & a host of aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

**DALLIS JOHN STEVE, JR.**

Funeral service for Dallis John Steve, Jr., 47, was held on Friday, December 29, 2017, at the Hope Indian Baptist Church in Pearl River. Rev. Henderson Williams officiated.

Burial was in the Old Mt. Zion Cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.

Mr. Steve passed away on Dec. 25 at his residence.

He enjoyed watching the Dallas Cowboys,

YouTube videos, playing video games, & board games.

He was preceded in death by his father, Dallis Steve, Sr.; step-mother, Lucille Steve; daughter, Alethra Wilson; & sister, Kristian Steve.

Survivors include his mother, Janice McDuffie; sons, Dallis Steve, III & Tristen Steve; sisters, Loretta Steve, Sandy Steve Richard, Patty Steve, & Shannon Ben; brothers, Shane Steve & Kelsie Steve; an aunt; & a host of relatives & friends.

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Applications & guidelines can be picked up at the Office of Economic Development, or if you have any questions call Deesandra Ben at 601-650-1612.

**D's NATIVE EDGE Barber Shop**

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Closed Wednesday & Sunday

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SR 22  
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**Heating & Air Conditioning Service**



**A&B Mechanical, Inc.**  
**P.O. Box 6003**  
**Choctaw, MS 39350**

(Office) 601-656-4818  
(Fax) 601-656-4418

Allen Peoples, President/Owner,  
Chahta Owned & Operated

Happy Birthdays to Amber Tubby on Jan. 8, Hayward Bell



on Jan. 16, Mylyndie on Jan. 20, Eric & Derrick on Jan. 21, Durnene on Jan. 22, Everly Evans who turns 1 on Jan. 26, & Annie Bell on Jan. 29, from all who loves you!

Happy Belated Birthdays to Trinity Willis on Dec. 2, Jesse Thomas on Dec. 2, Malahta Henry on Dec. 4, Latricia Johnson on Dec. 7, Brian LaBatte, Jr. on Dec. 19, Jody Solomon on Dec. 23, & Jayna Ben on Dec. 24, from all who loves you!



Happy Belated 8th Birthday to Elora Ben on Dec. 29, from your family & friends. We love you!

Happy Belated Birthdays to Justin Bryce Laben Cotton on Dec. 23 & Jalena Lewis on Dec. 20, from your families. We love you guys!

To all our family & friends - Hope yall had a Merry Christmas & have a blessed new year! Lots of hugs & kisses from Riley, Lynn-Lynn, Pay-Pay, & Kathie.

**CHALLENGE ..... continued from page thirteen**

High School in any type of engineering program & they wanted to get them involved,” said Hughes.



Pictured above is Tushka Hashi III as it makes it way through Australia.

In the fall of 2004, the solar car team was formed as they designed & built their first solar-powered vehicle, *Tushka Hashi I*, which weighed around 1,800 lbs., with speeds averaging 12-15 mph. In their first solar car challenge in 2005, they placed fourth in their division.

& carbon fibers as they claimed national championships in 2010, 2012, 2014, & 2015.

With over 20 members on the solar car team, students traveling to Australia included Antonia Bell, Jayna Ben, Kravon Willis, Taelor Sockey, Braden Peters, Mahali Henry, & college intern Breanna Isaac. Team sponsors also attending were Liddia Hughes, David Sanders, Adam Lewis, & Susan Strickline.

The following fall, the team redesigned the car & made it more efficient & lighter (down to 800 lbs., with speeds of 30-50 mph), as *Tushka Hashi II* placed second in 2006. They also placed third in 2007, fifth in 2008 & fourth in 2009.

In summer 2018, the next solar car competition will be a trek from Texas to California. The CCHS team will begin meeting this spring in preparation for the challenge.

In 2010, the team built a new, more efficient vehicle (*Tushka Hashi III*) utilizing the latest in solar cell technology & composite materials such as kevlar

**CHOCTAW  
COMMUNITY  
NEWS**

**DECEMBER 2017**

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**West Tennessee Dancers Place 1st**

The West Tennessee Choctaw Social Dancers Youth Group placed first in the float category of the Henning (TN) Christmas Parade on December 1, 2017. The theme was “Old Fashion Christmas.” The float displayed a recreation of a traditional Choctaw cooking over a fire using a “shoti” followed by members of the West Tennessee Choctaw Social Dancers on foot. The outer edges of the float was dressed with traditional red diamond trim on a white skirt ruffle. A drummer beat the drum throughout the parade & once they were in front of the judges, the chanter & dancers performed the War Dance. There were about 18 youths who participated in creating the float & being in the parade.