

# CHOCTAW COMMUNITY NEWS

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CHOCTAW, MISSISSIPPI 39350

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

## MBCI Holds Ribbon Cutting For CVLC

The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MBCI) held a ribbon cutting for the Choctaw Virtual Learning Center (CVLC) on Thursday, January 25, in the Pearl River Community, Neshoba County.

The CVLC, located in the CHI Building on Industrial Road, is for students 19-24 who have dropped out of high school and never earned a diploma or GED. The



*Pictured are Tribal Council members Richard Sockey (Standing Pine), Berdie Steve (Bogue Homa), Vice-Chief Hilda Nickey (Conehatta), Sharon Johnson (Red Water), Tribal Chief Phyliss J. Anderson, 2017-2018 Choctaw Indian Princess Kassie Lann Cox, Tribal*

*Council members Deborah Martin (Pearl River) & Kendall Wallace (Bogue Chitto), along with CVLC Administrator Gene Cliburn, CVLC staff & students, as well as Choctaw Tribal Schools staff.*

Center, which currently has 30 students, allows them to “drop back-in” and work with an in-house instructor and virtual instruction services Grade Results to earn

their high school diploma at their own pace.

In attendance to celebrate this wonderful occasion included Tribal Chief Phyliss J. Anderson, several members of the Choctaw Tribal Council and 2017-2018 Choctaw Indian Princess Kassie Lann Cox.

“This center is a wonderful asset to our community and young people,” said Chief Anderson. “I have great hopes in the success of

the center and the opportunities it will provide to our tribal youth.”

CVLC Administrator Gene Cliburn, along with current CVLC students, faculty, staff, and supporters were also on hand to celebrate the ribbon cutting.

“Through our partnership with the Bureau of Indian Education, Division of Education, Choctaw Central High School, the Boys & Girls Club of the MBCI,

and Grade Results, we can provide educational services, professional guidance counseling and technology-based instruction in a supportive academic environment,” said Cliburn.

“Our goal is to remove any barriers to their high school completion and graduation goals. The CVLC will prepare the students to succeed as they enter college or .....see CVLC, pg 5

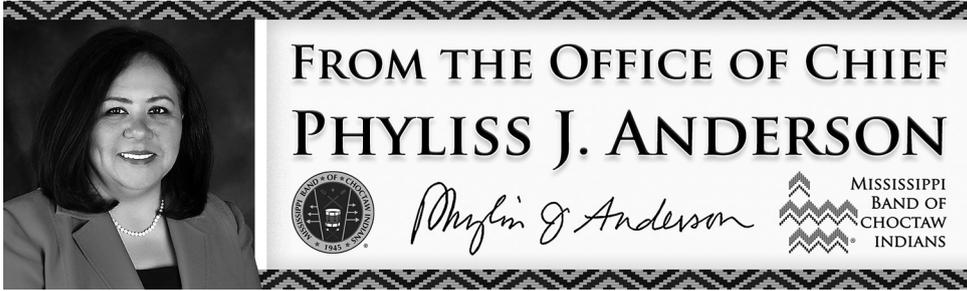


## Tribe Participates In Dr. King Parade

The 2017-2018 Choctaw Indian Princess Kassie Lann Cox & members of the Boys & Girls Club of the MBCI represented the Tribe as they participated in the annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Parade in downtown Philadelphia on Saturday, Jan. 13.



*Chief Anderson (pictured left) & Choctaw Indian Princess Kassie Lann Cox (pictured right) interacted with several students as they heard how the CVLC program is benefiting their continued educational outlook.*



Halito!  
It is my pleasure to wish all of you a Happy New Year and hope that 2018 brings you much success and joy.

We have a lot of wonderful things to look forward in the coming months, and I am confident that this year will be one of the most successful we've had in recent years.

**NEW YEAR, NEW ME CHALLENGE**

For those of you who have made a resolution to lose weight, the Diabetes Prevention Program can help you to meet your goals.

The program is hosting the New Year, New Me Weight Loss Challenge. This challenge will be held all year long in 2018 on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

Every month there will be a different exercise program. Some of the programs include fitness and conditioning, strength training and P90X. The mission is to "Make healthy living a lifestyle."

The purpose is to turn a new year's resolution into a lifestyle of physical fitness. The hope is that this challenge will encourage people to keep their new year's resolution, get fit, and prevent diabetes and/or prevent the onset of complications of the disease.

If you would like more information or are interested in participating in this challenge, please contact Lefus Tubby at (601) 389-4385 or lefus.tubby@choctaw.org; Brendon Williams at (601) 389-4387 or brendon.williams@choctaw.org; or Willie Solomon

at (601) 389-4388 or willie.solomon@choctaw.org.

I encourage those interested in healthy lifestyle changes to learn more and even participate in the New Year, New Me Weight Loss Challenge.

**PEARL RIVER RESORT UPDATE**

Since 2012, our Pearl River Resort has seen great growth and experienced financial success. The Resort underwent a major renovation in 2014 and 2015 and we reopened the Golden Moon. Our profits continued to increase through good leadership and financial management.

While these are great successes to celebrate over the years, we have

been looking to the future because we know our competition is expanding in Alabama. That's why we made these important updates to our properties and proposed gaming expansion.

We must continue to offer a high-end product and new experiences to keep customers, draw in new gamers and compete with a growing marketplace. And now, as predicted, we are seeing the impacts of competition.

Independent audit results, presented to the Choctaw Resort Development Board, in January show the Resort remained profitable in FY17, but it did not fully meet the profit goal that was set.

With that in mind we look to the future again. As we enter one of the resort's busiest times of year with tax-return season, there are a number of upcoming gaming promotions, events and happenings to draw in customers and bring players to the gaming

floor.

**BOK HOMA CASINO BINGO ROOM OPENING**

I am excited to announce the opening of a new Bingo Room at Bok Homa Casino on Thursday, January 25th. The new Bingo Room is located at the Events Center adjacent to the main casino.

Players have the opportunity to play in live time with players at the Pearl River Resort bingo room. There are video screens, board displays, electronic bingo machines, as well as paper bingo cards available to customers.

The bingo game will simulcast with the bingo room in Pearl River while a communication and verification system will be in place for players as they hit bingo. The bingo room will be able to seat a maximum of 250 players.

A formal opening event will be held in

**...continued next page**

**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.



*Tribal officials & members of the Tribal Administration, along with Bogue Chitto Facility Building & Recreation personnel, gathered at the Bogue Chitto Recreation Field on Thursday, January 25, to preview improvements made to the softball field. Bogue Chitto Council representatives requested for improvements as part of the Tribal Council's Community Improvement Fund. Improvements included repairing or replacing the dugouts and press box, putting in an all dirt infield, new wood and paint on the bleachers, and new fencing surrounding the field.*

early spring to include a special opening session with bigger prizes and more fanfare!

Next time you visit the Bok Homa Casino check out the latest addition to our resort.

**PEARL RIVER RESORT CONCERT SERIES**

The resort also recently announced dates for upcoming concerts that include highly popular national acts for guests.

Mark your calendar for these events:

- Rascal Flatts – Saturday, March 17th;
- GAPX-The Band – Saturday, April 14th.

**GEYSER FALLS LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE**

As we start preparations for another busy summer season, I am happy to share that Geysers Falls Water Theme Park recently launched a new website. The new site offers guests a new and easier way to interact with our waterpark

online.

Now guests can skip the lines by purchasing day and season passes online as well as buddy passes. Reservations and bookings for group sales, cabana rentals and birthday parties are also available.

The website showcases the many food and dining options available at the park, as well as the numerous exciting rides and attractions offered during the season. Directions and hours are listed as well as any special promotions.

I look forward to an active summer and I know this new website will be beneficial to our valued guests. Visit the new website online at [www.geyserfalls.com](http://www.geyserfalls.com)

**CHOCTAW VIRTUAL LEARNING CENTER**

On Thursday, January 25th, we officially celebrated the opening of the Choctaw Virtual Learning Center (CVLC). This center is a wonderful asset to our



*A ribbon cutting was held at the Tushka Housing Subdivision in the Conehatta Community on Thursday, January 25. Fourteen new single-family homes will be managed by the Choctaw Land, Housing & Mortgage Program. Chief Anderson stated construction of these homes were an important investment & was excited about new homes being built for Tribal members. To date, Chief Anderson's administration has provided \$14 million for the Community Housing Project to purchase land, set-up important infrastructure like water, electricity & roads, & build 100 new homes.*

community and young people.

I have great hopes in the success of the center and the opportunities it will provide to our tribal youth.

The center offers Choctaw students ages 16-23 many educational paths. For those students that have dropped-out of high school and never earned a diploma or GED, the center is a place for them to “drop back-in” and work with an in-house instructor

and virtual instructional services to earn their high school diploma at their own pace.

Online classes and tutoring are available to students at the center and beyond. Students also may pursue college courses and career-readiness certifications.

The center is 20% classroom-based and 80% online-based with live, real-time student/teacher interaction and intensive instructional support provided by licensed teachers in Math and English, along with additional certified teachers serving as one-on-one tutors, as provided by the Boys and Girls Clubs of MBCI grant.

Students at the center also receive breakfast and lunch just like a traditional school setting.

The center is located in the CHI Building on Industrial Road. Currently, the center has 30 students with 3 already graduating and earning their diploma to walk in this year's CCHS Com-

mencement Ceremony. Congratulations to those students and we are so proud of your accomplishments!

To learn more about the Choctaw Virtual Learning Center, call (601) 663-7926 or email [caylin.nickey@choctaw.org](mailto:caylin.nickey@choctaw.org).

**CCHS WINTER SPORTS UPDATE**

Our soccer teams concluded their seasons with division titles and berths in the state playoffs. The Lady Warriors and Warriors concluded with overall 13-2 and 11-4 records respectively.

The basketball teams are angling for shots at state championships. They concluded the regular season as division champions and claimed number one seeds in the division tournament hosted by CCHS. As they head into the state playoffs,

....see LETTER, pg. 4



*A ribbon cutting was held at the Wetlands Discovery Zone located in the Conehatta Community adjacent to the recreation field on Thursday, January 25. The wetlands learning center will be used as a wildlife & cultural educational tool to local school-aged children. Improvements made to this location include new signage, installed pumps to ensure water levels & rebuilt old & additional new boardwalks. This project was part of the Tribal Council's Community Improvement Fund.*

LETTER ..... continued from page three

we hope you will show your support and cheer on our student-athletes! GO WARRIORS AND LADY WARRIORS!!!

**CCHS SOFTBALL FIELD UPDATE**

The CCHS softball field project has been completed, and I am eagerly looking forward

to cutting the ribbon for this new venue on the Choctaw Central campus.

I am so excited that we were able to set aside funding to build this new field for our outstanding softball players. I look forward to seeing our Lady Warriors softball team showcasing their skills on the field during

this upcoming fast pitch season.

Our fans and visitors will get to enjoy the great new amenities, such as the new stadium bleachers and concession stand.

The first home game is scheduled for Thursday, March 22 against Newton County. We hope you will join us and experience the new state-of-the-art softball field.

**TUSHKA SUBDIVISION IN CONEHATTA**

As part of my Housing Plan introduced in 2015, I am pleased to share that my administration has provided \$15.5 Million to the housing project fund to purchase land, set-up important infrastructure like water, electricity and roads and build 100 new homes on the reservation managed

by the Choctaw Land, Housing and Mortgage Program.

On Thursday, January 25th, a ribbon cutting was held for a new neighborhood in the Conehatta Community called Tushka. The neighborhood features 14 new family homes - all 4 bedrooms, 2 baths.

If you are in the market for a new home or interested in learning more, I encourage you to call the Choctaw Land, Housing and Mortgage Program at 601-656-0056.

**BOGUE CHITTO SOFTBALL FIELD**

Another recent update we have made in our communities is in Bogue Chitto at the community softball field.

We have used budgeted community improvement funds requested by

former council representative Ronnie Henry and current council members Davita McClelland and Kendall Wallace to provide new fences around the current fields, new dirt for the infield and replacement dugouts and press box.

I know these updates will be well received in the community.

**WETLANDS DISCOVERY ZONE IN CONEHATTA**

Also in Conehatta, we are happy to celebrate a ribbon cutting for the Wetlands Discovery Zone.

The Discovery Zone features boardwalks over wetlands and nature trails to highlight our environment and to teach school age children the cultural connections between our people, the forest and the wetlands.

With community improvement funds requested by former Conehatta council representative Troy Chick-away and our current Vice-Chief Hilda Nick-ey, we were able to provide new pumps to

...continued next page

**From the CHC Business Office**



**Did you know that if you are eligible for Purchased/ Referred Care (PRC Referrals), you are required to notify the PRC program for emergency room visits at other hospitals/clinics?**

The PRC program must be notified of emergent care to other hospitals/clinics within 72 hours (3 days) of the emergency room visit or admission. The patient, provider, hospital, or someone on behalf of the patient must contact the PRC. The notification is extended to 30 days for the elderly (age 65+) and the disabled.

**Business Office Hours/Phone Number:  
Monday-Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM  
601-389-4060**

**When the Business Office is closed (after 5:00 p.m., weekends & holidays), please leave a message on the Business Office voicemail. We ask that you leave a clear message that include:**

- Patient's full name
- Date of birth
- Name of emergency room facility
- Date of service or admission
- Reason for emergency
- Working phone number

The Business Office will call you the next business day following your notification. It is extremely important to leave a working phone number to contact you to get additional information.

Please note the 72-hour notification does not guarantee approval of payment. Case Management and/or the PRC Committee will review on a case-by-case basis and determine approval of payment, based on factors such as a life-threatening emergency room visit or if services were not available at Choctaw Health Center. Any services that could have been provided at Choctaw Health Center, such as a common cold or flu, will not be approved for payment.

If you have more questions regarding the PRC 72-Hour notification requirement, do not hesitate to contact the Business Office.

**Choctaw Transportation Guidelines for Health Center Clients and General Public**

CHOCTAW TRANSPORTATION IS PROUD TO OFFER TRANSPORTATION SERVICES FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC AND TRIBAL MEMBERS. FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

**601-650-7430**

FOR NON-EMERGENCY/MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION, YOU MUST CALL 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE BEFORE 3:30 P.M. TRANSPORTATION REQUESTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AFTER

**3:30 P.M.**

FOR TRANSPORTATION REQUESTS ON MONDAYS, YOU MUST CALL THE FRIDAY BEFORE.

**601-650-7430**

**YOU MUST GIVE YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, TIME, AND DATE OF APPOINTMENT, PHONE NUMBER WHERE YOU CAN BE CONTACTED.**



**PRIMARY CARE**  
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*  
**February 24, 2018**  
**March 24, 2018**

maintain water levels, new signage, rebuild boardwalks, clean up trails and add a new boardwalk to a beaver dam.

I know school children and teachers will enjoy this facility as a place of learning and wonder. Thank you to those that supported this project for the benefit of the Conehatta community and our tribal members.

**NASA TOURNAMENT**

The annual NASA basketball tournament was held on January 19 and 20, 2018, in Irving, NY, hosted by the Seneca Nation of Indians.

There were Adults (18 years and older) and Legends (40 years and older) in men's and women's categories. As usual, our Tribe was well-represented, with several teams participat-

ing. I congratulate all of the winners and commend the recreation staffs from the various tribes who work hard to organize and host these NASA and NAYO tournaments throughout the year.

**CLOSING**

I am looking forward to seeing you at upcoming ribbon cuttings and groundbreaking as we celebrate new beginnings throughout the year.

I also will host Community Field Days in each community, and I am excited to share with you the great progress that is taking place on the Reservation.

Be on the lookout for the field days schedule on our Tribal website and Facebook page and in the next issue of the *Choctaw Community News*.

Also, we will distribute flyers house-to-house in each community a few days before each event.

Thank you for all of the prayers and encouragement you have offered to me in years past, and I hope you will continue to do the same in 2018.

I am proud and honored to serve as your Tribal Chief, and I hope we will continue to stand together and make every effort to create a brighter future for our Choctaw people.

Many Blessings,



Phylliss J. Anderson,  
Tribal Chief

**PRES Hosts 16th FLL Tournament**

The Choctaw Tribal Schools held the 16th annual FIRST LEGO® League (FLL) Tournament on Saturday, January 27 at the Pearl River Elementary School Gymnasium in Choctaw. Over a hundred students participated in this year's event.

(FLL) is a hands-on, interactive engineering program that captivates students' interest in science and technology as they learn problem solving and team building skills.

The basis of FLL is a

.....see FLL, pg. 6



*Bogue Chitto Water Workers of Bogue Chitto Elementary School were recipients of the FLL Core Values Award. Team members include Amari Amos, Chesney Amos, Jocelyn Bell, Naliyah Jim, Malaki Morris, Jayden Rush, & Koie Williams. Coaches are Linda Jackson & Michelle Whittle.*

**DOECE News**

Halito from the Early Childhood Program. The children all enjoyed the wonder & joys of Christmas this past December!

Each center held Christmas programs where children sang Christmas songs & had lunch with their parents. Christmas activities are always a thrill for the children.

If you have a child ages 8 weeks to 5 years, please consider enrolling in our program. Each center has different programs for different ages. Head Start & Early Head Start offers their services for free. The Child Care programs charge a fee on a sliding scale based on family income.

Even if a center does not have vacancies, please fill out an application to be placed on the wait list for when a vacancy does occur. We welcome



the opportunity to serve your child & family in our program. Children with disabilities & homeless children are given priority.

The Head Start Program provides free transportation to & from the center every day. Please consider us for your child care needs. We consider our program to be the first step on the road to success in school!

For more information, visit your local center, or contact the main office at 601-650-1680. Office hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

**CVLC ..... continued from page one**

technical education programs of their choice.”

Students are allowed to pursue college courses and/or career-readiness certification. The Center is 20 percent classroom-based and 80 percent online-based. Instructional support, such as licensed teachers in Math and English, as well as one-on-one tutors through the MBCI Boys and Girls Club, are provided to the students.

Since opening its doors to students in October 2017, three students have graduated and will receive their diploma at the 2018 Choctaw Central High School Commencement Ceremony this May.

“I commend the students who have already taken advantage of this opportunity. More students are poised to complete their coursework within the next few weeks. These students have taken the first vital step toward making better lives for themselves,” added Cliburn.

FLL ..... continued from page five

robotics tournament competition where teams - consisting of students ages 9-16, coaches & mentors - solve a given mission with the help of an autonomous robot while experiencing real product development process, solving a problem under time pressure with insufficient resources & unknown competitors.

Teams research, build, and program the robot to score points on a themed playing field while developing a solution to a problem they have identified, all guided by the FLL Core Values.

Every fall, FLL releases a challenge based on real-world scientific topics. This year's challenge was Hydro Dynamics as teams learn about water and how we find, transport, use, or dispose of it.

Nine teams participated in

this year's competition. They included: Conehatta's Dynamic Team of Conehatta Elementary School; Team H2O of Pearl River Elementary School; Oka Bahlilih of Tucker Elementary School; LEGO Warriors of Pearl River Elementary School; Young Warriors of Pearl River Elementary School; Tushka Oka of Choctaw Central Middle School; Bogue Chitto Water Workers of Bogue Chitto Elementary School; Standing Pine Water Savers of Standing Pine Elementary School; and Water Raptors of Red Water Elementary School.

Local 2018 tournament awards were presented at the conclusion of the three robot performance rounds.

The FLL Core Values Award was presented to the Bogue Chitto Water Workers of Bogue Chitto Elementary. This award

celebrates a team that is empowered by their FLL experience and displays extraordinary enthusiasm and spirit. They are able to accomplish more together than they could as individuals through shared goals, strong communication, effective problem solving, and excellent time management. This team's members show each other and other teams respect at all times. They recognize that both friendly competition and mutual gain are possible, on and off the playing field.

The Project Presentation Award was presented to the LEGO Warriors of Pearl River Elementary. This award is presented to the team that utilizes diverse resources to formulate an in depth and comprehensive understanding of the problem they identified. The team's solution is exceptionally well considered and creative, with good potential to

solve the problem researched. This award recognizes a team that effectively communicated the problem and their proposed solution to both judges and other potential supporters.

The Robot Design Award was presented to the Young Warriors of Pearl River Elementary. This award recognizes a team that designs a mechanically sound robot that is durable, efficient and highly capable of performing challenge missions. The team utilizes outstanding programming principles, including clear, concise and reusable code that allows their robot to perform challenge missions autonomously and consistently. Solid engineering principles and a well-developed strategy is used to design and build an innovative, high performing robot.

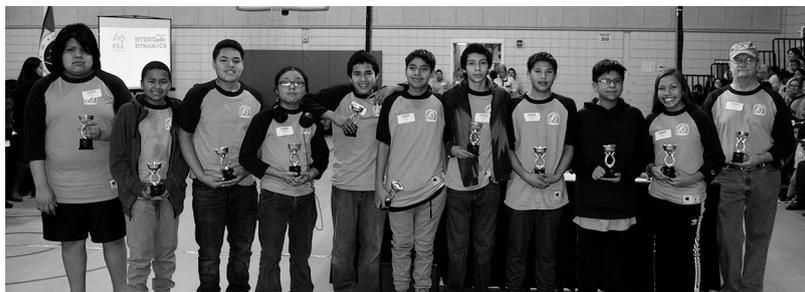
The Robot Performance .....continued next page



Young Warriors of Pearl River Elementary School were recipients of the Robot Design Award. Team members include Silas Billy, Keydren Thompson, Seth Lewis, Alexandria Amos, Alessondra Jefferson, Dichelle Jim, Dailynn Willis, Peyton Willis, Zoe Bell, Xhaiden Dixon, Shastyn Lewis, & Hayden Willis. Coach is Gloria Seward.



LEGO Warriors of Pearl River Elementary School were recipients of the Project Presentation Award. Team members include Delaiah Billy, Peyton Mingo, Andrew Cotton, Manny York, Justice Joe, Jayce Sam, Autumn Chickaway, Aubree Cotton, Kaegan Henry, Ajay Lewis, Lauren Henry, & Memphis Wilson. Coach is Gloria Seward.



Tushka Oka of Choctaw Central Middle School were recipients of the Robert Performance Award. Team members include Amzie Anderson, Armando Ben, Andre'as Jim, Crystal Routh, Zander Sockey, Seth Thomas, Memorie Willis, Thomas Ben, Tyra Billy, Aleyandro Clemons, Kaisen Dixon, Bishop Reed, James Steve, Demidrea Stokes, Taiton Stokes, Brydon Wesley, Phoenix Wilson, & Charlita Gibson. Coach is Bobby Smith.



Water Raptors of Red Water Elementary School were recipients of the Champion's Award. Team members include Buford Billie, Nicholas Barragan, DeShaylee Tubby, Dayanara Lopez, Fichik Willis, Jaeden Wesley, Carmelo Dixon, Ansley Wallace, Tayleona Day, & Karidee Willis. Coaches are Charles Meely & Dylan Dixon.

Award was presented to Tushka Oka of Choctaw Central Middle School. This award recognizes a team that scores the most points during the Robot Game. Teams have a chance to compete in at least three 2.5 minute matches and their highest score counts.

The Champion's Award was presented to the Water Raptors of Red Water Elementary. This award recognizes a team that embodies the FIRST LEGO League experience, by fully embracing the CORE Values while achieving excellence and innovation

in both the Robot Game and Project.

The Water Raptors and LEGO Warriors represented the Choctaw Tribal Schools at the Mississippi FIRST LEGO League Championship on February 10 at Mississippi College's A.E. Wood Coliseum in Clinton.

Cambree York served as tournament emcee. Wes Wallace and Matthew Bell served as tournament referees.

Serving as judges were Scottie Wallace and Ty Keams (Project Presentation), Bernita Reynolds and Autumn

McMillan (Core Values), and Elray King and Pat O'Neil (Robot Design).

Special thanks to volunteers for donating their time, energies and talents to the Choctaw Tribal Schools' FLL Tournament, and to all coaches and technical mentors for their countless hours spent on teaching, facilitating and encouraging students in this program. Their contributions will have a lasting impact on the "Engineers of Tomorrow."



### Tutors Helping Students Prepare for Assessments At RWES

Tutors at Red Water Elementary School (RWES) are having a great year working with students to help them achieve success in the classroom. Through the Ready & iReady programs, tutors are preparing students for their end-of-the-year assessments. We are extremely proud of the students' hard work & improvements observed on a daily basis. We encourage parents to contact us at RWES if we can be of further assistance.

### First Lady Visits Students



First Lady of Mississippi Deborah Bryant visited Standing Pine Elementary School

students in grades second through fourth on Friday, January 19, as part of her "Read Across Mississippi" program. Since 2014, Mrs. Bryant has traveled the entire state to read to students in a school in all 82 counties to promote literacy and bring attention to reading disabilities. She also gave a presentation about herself, her family and the work she and her husband, Governor Phil Bryant, do for all Mississippians.



LEFT, MBCI Vice Chief Hilda Nickey (left) presents a token of appreciation to First Lady of Mississippi Deborah Bryant for her visit. RIGHT, Mrs. Bryant hugs student Yazmine Hickman. Yazmine's mother made the traditional basket that was presented to Mrs. Bryant.

### PRES Hosts 3rd Annual Literacy Night

Pearl River Elementary School hosted their 3rd Annual Family Literacy Night on Monday, January 8. Students & their families participated in fun activities to promote literacy & the joys of reading. The gymnasium was full of fun and challenging games such as a Spelling Bee, Boggle, Scrabble, Bingo, & a bake walk. All activities were planned by a literacy committee. Inside the cafeteria, students displayed storyboards of their favorite stories & storytellers presented live renditions of Choctaw tales. Several teachers also put a new spin on storybooks the students have read as they performed entertaining literacy raps. Refreshments were served for those in attendance. With great support from the community, the PRES Literacy Committee is already looking forward to next year's event.

# CCMS Claims Tourney Titles

The Choctaw Central Middle School Lady Warriors and Warriors claimed the 2018 Choctaw Tribal Schools 7th-8th grade basketball championships on Friday, January 26 at the Choctaw Central High School Gymnasium.

The Lady Warriors defeated the Conehatta Elementary Lady Choctaws 71-42 for the girls championship. The Warriors defeated the Tucker Elementary Braves 63-30 for the boys title.

The Lady Warriors took a 16-9 lead in the first quarter and ended the first half with a 16-11 advantage for a 32-21 halftime lead over the Lady Choctaws.

The Lady Warriors went on a 22-7 run in the third for a 54-28 lead. In the final quarter, Choctaw Central added to their lead with a 17-14 advantage for a 71-42 win.

"It's a great ending to a good season. The kids worked hard and this is what they live for. It's a tribal tournament and everybody plays for pride," said Lady Warriors coach Elyse

Etheridge.

"We tried to keep them focused all week. I stressed the game is never over. Don't stop, don't quit until its 0:00 in the fourth quarter. Stay focused and stick with the game plan."

Conehatta coach Hersh Smith said he was proud of girls and looks toward a rebuilding year next season.

"We're losing a group of eighth graders and they're going to be hard to replace. They've been winning and most of them have started for the past two years. We're going to be starting over next year."

"Choctaw Central got a real good squad. Thought our girls gave a hard effort. Sometimes you run up on a David and Goliath situation and tonight we were David and they were Goliath. They got a great team and we knew that. I'm proud of my girls," said Smith.

Choctaw Central's Kyla Farmer was named Most Outstanding Player of the game.

Named to the Girls All-Tournament Team were Breely Wil-



Choctaw Tribal Schools Girls Champions - CCMS Lady Warriors



Choctaw Tribal Schools Boys Champions - CCMS Warriors

son (Red Water Elementary), Kacy Nickey (Tucker Elementary), Neera Bell (Bogue Chitto Elementary), Remini Nickey (Conehatta Elementary), and LeLeia McMillan (Choctaw Central).

In the boys' final, the Warriors went on a 20-6 run over the Braves in the opening quarter. They continued with a 13-8 advantage to close out the first .....see **TOURNEY**, pg. 13



## CCHS 20+ Club Recognized

Choctaw Central High School's 20+ Club, an organization with membership reserved for students scoring 20 or above on the ACT, recognized the 2017-2018 members for their academic achievement. The club also encourages students to strive for excellence on the ACT. Pictured, front row from left, are Reyes Willis, India Samuel, Kyarah Grant, Jaysari Mitch, Kyannah Grant, CCHS Principal Dr. Fredrick Hickmon, counselor Claire Threatt, Mahli Bell, Kravon Willis; back row, Jayshun Thomas, Antonio Perez, Ethan King, Cobi John, Mahali Henry, Myric Anderson, East Central Community College representative Sherrell Brown, & Narron Cotton. Not pictured are Kacy Bell, Julius Billy, Skylar Comans, Brayton Jim, Asa Jimmie, Tyus Whitecrow, Jamion "Kiezer" Johnson, & Hunter Smith.

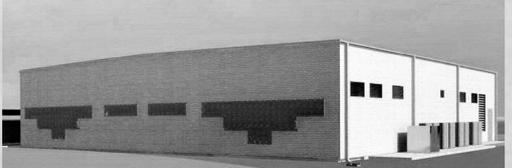


## Bowling Seniors Honored

Choctaw Central High School honored seniors in the bowling program. Team members include, kneeling, Hannah Anderson; middle row from left, Mahali Henry, Autumn Lewis, Katelyn Shoemake, Mahli Bell, Brandon Williams, OTC student intern Breanna Isaac; back row, Malia Burnside, CCHS Principal Dr. Fredrick Hickmon, Daniel Jordan, & OTC Administrator & coach Liddia Hughes.

# 2017

## A Look Back



**Tribe Recognized During State Address**  
Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant recognized the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MBCI) & Tribal Chief Phylliss J. Anderson during his State-of-the-State address in January.

**IHS-Nashville Area Honors Officials, CHC Employees**  
Tribal leaders & health care employees were recognized during the Indian Health Services-Nashville Area Honor Awards Ceremony on Jan. 12. Chief Phylliss J. Anderson was recipient of the Nashville Area Director’s Award for Excellence. Choctaw Health Center (CHC) employees Laura Dees, Beverly Terry, Philip J. Evans, D.M.D., Gregory Griffin, & Matthew Bell were also honored for their service.

**15th FLL Tourney held at PRES**  
The Choctaw Tribal Schools held the 15th Annual FIRST LEGO® League (FLL) Tournament on Saturday, Jan. 21 at the Pearl River Elementary School Gymnasium in Choctaw. Nearly 100 students participated.

**CCMS Claims CTS Titles**  
The Choctaw Central Middle School Lady Warriors & Warriors claimed the Choctaw Tribal Schools’ annual basketball tournament championships on Thursday, Jan. 26 at the Bogue Chitto Community Gymnasium. The Lady Warriors defeated the Red Water Elementary Lady Braves 50-31 & the Warriors defeated the Red Water Braves 46-30.

**Tribal Council Approves Red Water Casino Resolution**  
The Choctaw Tribal Council voted 9-7 to adopt Resolution CHO 17-033, “a Resolution to Expand Gaming & Make Resort Area Designation in the Red Water Community, Choctaw Indian Reservation,” during a special call meeting on Friday, Jan. 27. The 35,800 square-foot casino will be built in Leake County, Miss. The project’s estimated time frame is 12 months.

**Wesley Wins District Spelling Bee**  
Jaeden Wesley, seventh grader at Red Water Elementary School, was the grand champion speller at the 23rd Annual Choctaw Tribal Schools District-Wide Spelling Bee on Feb. 3 at the Conehatta Elementary School Gymnasium.

**Tribe Breaks Ground For PRES Safe Room**  
The MBCI held a groundbreaking ceremony

for Phase II of the \$1.6 million Pearl River Elementary School (PRES) Safe Room Project on Feb. 14, in Choctaw.

**Tribe Pays Off \$10 Million CHC Loan**  
The MBCI paid off the remaining balance on a 10-year loan taken out to help finance construction costs of the new Choctaw Health Center. Signed on March 11, 2015, the 10-year, \$10 million loan was paid off in only 23 months.

**Tribe Mourns Passing of Director Willis**  
MBCI Department of Public Safety Director Wendell Willis passed away on Sunday, Feb. 26. He was an integral part of MBCI Public Safety for 21 years.

**Warriors Exit State Tourney**  
The Choctaw Central High School (CCHS) Warriors (12-17) were defeated by Holly Springs 80-54 in the quarterfinals of the MHSAA Class 3A Boys State Basketball Tournament on Friday, March 3 in Jackson.

**Lady Warriors Class 3A State Basketball Champs**  
The CCHS Lady Warriors defeated Amanda Elzy 75-42 to claim the MHSAA Class 3A Girls State Basketball Tournament championship March 11 in Jackson.

**Choctaw Central Unified Warriors Special Olympics**  
The CCHS Warriors Special Olympic athletes brought home another championship from the Special Olympics/Unified State Competition on Saturday, March 11 in Jackson.

**CCHS Hosts Author’s Night**  
Members of CCHS’s senior class showcased their year-long writing project as part of Author’s Night on Monday, April 10 in the CCHS library. Seniors read their selections of stories and poems to the audience as they also displayed personal illustrations.

**Child Abuse Prevention Activities Held in Choctaw**  
The MBCI Department of Family & Community Services hosted a child abuse prevention event on Wednesday, April 12 at the Pearl River Recreational Field in Choctaw. Children & teachers from the Department of Early Childhood Education programs participated in activities in observance of April being National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

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**Choctaw Transit Hosts 2017 Rodeo**

The Mississippi Public Transit Association, along with the Mississippi Department of Transportation's Public Transit Division, co-sponsored their annual Rodeo in Choctaw on April 21-22. It was the 17th consecutive year the Rodeo was hosted by Choctaw Transit.

**Lady Warriors South State Champs**

The 3A South State champions Choctaw Central Lady Warriors (20-9) were swept by Mooreville in the Mississippi High School Activities Association's Class 3A state fast-pitch softball championship series at Freedom Ridge Park in Ridgeland.

**CCHS Holds Graduation Ceremony**

CCHS hosted the Class of 2017 commencement ceremony on Tuesday, May 23 at the Silver Star Convention Center in Choctaw. Ninety-five seniors successfully completed their high school education requirements. Valedictorian & STAR Student honors went to Searra Wilson & Diajah York was named Salutatorian.

**Lady Warriors Named Team of the Year**

The 2016-2017 CCHS Lady Warriors basketball team was named #MSPreps Team of the Year during the Clarion-Ledger's sports awards banquet May 25 in Jackson.

**Wreath Laying Ceremony Held At Veterans Memorial**

A wreath laying ceremony commemorating Memorial Day was observed at the Choctaw Veterans Memorial. Veterans, families of veterans & MBCI officials paid tribute to U.S. military personnel who served our nation & remembered those that made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedoms.

**Official Election Results Released**

The MBCI Tribal Election Committee released official results of the June 13 Tribal elections for nine seats on the Choctaw Tribal Council. Elected were Roderick Bell (Bogue Chitto), Kendall Wallace (Bogue Chitto), Tarina K. Anderson (Conehatta), Hilda Nickey (Conehatta), Christopher Eaves (Crystal Ridge), Deborah Martin (Pearl River), Barry McMillan (Pearl River), Loriann Denson Ahshapanek (Standing Pine), & Dorothy Wilson (Tucker).

**CCPC Hosts Leadership Conference**

The Choctaw Community Planning Coalition (CCPC), along with Choctaw Behavioral Health, hosted the 12th Annual Youth

Leadership Conference at Tucker Elementary School on June 21-22. The conference was designed to provide information on social issues concerning youth ages 11-18.

**Teams Participate In Unity Run/Walk**

Players representing Choctaw stickball teams participating in this year's World Series Stickball tournament took part in the 11th Annual Unity Walk/Run on Saturday, June 24. The event was sponsored by the Special Diabetes Program for Indians & Diabetes Prevention Program.

**Beaver Dam Wins Stickball Gold**

The Beaver Dam youth stickball team (ages 9-12) claimed gold medals in the State Games of Mississippi stickball tournament over Pearl River 4-3 at Warrior Stadium in Choctaw on June 24. Bok Cito claimed bronze medals with a 4-3 win over Koni Hata Osi in the consolation game.

**Geyser Falls Donates To Wounded Warrior Project**

Geyser Falls Water Theme Park celebrated its 15th anniversary with a special discount that benefitted disabled veterans across the country. On Tuesday, July 4, Geyser Falls park admission was only \$17, with a portion of the proceeds donated to the Wounded Warrior Project.

**Tribal Officials Sworn-In**

Elected tribal officials were officially sworn-in during a regular Tribal Council meeting on Tuesday, July 11. Also during the meeting, Hilda Nickey was selected as Vice Chief, Richard Isaac as Secretary/Treasurer, & Berdie Steve as Committee Systems Chair.

**68th Annual Choctaw Indian Fair**

During the 68th Annual Choctaw Indian Fair on July 12-15, Kassie Lann Cox of the Red Water Community was crowned the 2017-2018 Choctaw Indian Princess. Also crowned were World Series Stickball champions in their respective divisions: Koni Hata (mens); Koni Hata Ohoya (womens); Bok Cito (35-over mens); Koni Hata Himintah (Tulli Okchi Ishko, 14-17); & Pearl River (Pushmataha, 10-13). Iron Warrior winners were Eric Pinto (men's division) & Miranda Stamper (women's division). Rez Run winners were Joseph Chebet & Meggan Franks (10k), Lucy Hardy & Dustin Mettler (5k). Tucker Development Club placed first in the Community Booth Competition.

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**Tribe Commemorates Nanih Waiya Day**  
 The MBCI hosted activities at the Nanih Waiya Ceremonial Mound in Winston County on Tuesday, Aug. 22, to commemorate the restoration of the Nanih Waiya Mound & Cave sites back to the Tribe. That evening, the Nanih Waiya Day All-Star Stickball Games were played at Warrior Stadium. In the women's contest, Fichik Cito Ohoyo (Big Star) defeated Fichik Malata Ohoyo (Shining Star) 7-5. In the men's contest, Fichik Cito defeated Fichik Malata 10-9.

**Adult Education Hosts Graduation Ceremony**

The Choctaw Adult Education Program hosted the 2016-2017 GED Commencement Ceremony on Thursday, Aug. 24 at the Silver Star Convention Center in Choctaw.

**CCHS Receives Laura Bush Foundation Grant**

CCHS was awarded a \$7,000 library grant from the Laura Bush Foundation for America's Libraries. CCHS is one of 160 schools in 38 states to receive a 2017 grant from the foundation.

**Bell Among '40 Under 40' Award Recipients**

Tribal member Lanisha Bell was honored on Sept. 6 as one of the recipients of the 2017 National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development's "Native American 40 Under 40" award.

**New Safe Room Opens At PRES**

The MBCI held a ribbon cutting ceremony on Friday, Sept. 8 for the opening of Pearl River Elementary School's new \$1.6 million Safe Room. The 5,600 square-foot structure is constructed of reinforced concrete & has the capacity to shelter 900 people, which includes PRES students, teachers, staff, & community members.

**Activities, Fun Day In Choctaw**

A day of fun & activities for the whole family was held on Saturday, Sept. 16 in Choctaw. The Boys & Girls Club of the MBCI hosted a Day for Kids event at the Pearl River Amphitheater. At Lake Pushmataha, the Choctaw Wildlife & Parks Department and MSU Extension Services hosted the Choctaw Wildlife Jamboree.

**Jackson, Choctaw Fresh Produce Honored**

On September 18-22, the MBCI Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program sponsored

Disability Awareness Week activities to raise awareness of disability issues & celebrate successes of workers with disabilities. The program honored an employer that has made a significant impact on the employment of qualified individuals who experience disabilities & an individual who experiences a disability & has made a significant personal success in employment. This year's recipients, Michael Jackson, Sr. as Employee of the Year & Choctaw Fresh Produce as Employer of the Year, were honored on Wednesday, Sept. 20.

**Tribe Breaks Ground For New Red Water Clinic**

The MBCI held a ground breaking ceremony for the new Red Water community health clinic on Thursday, Sept. 28. Construction on the new 10,860-square-foot Red Water community health clinic is expected to be completed in the fall of 2018.

**Families Remember Homicide Victims**

The MBCI Family Violence & Victim's Services hosted an event at the Pearl River Baptist Church in Choctaw honoring the memories of homicide victims. The event, held on Thursday, Sept. 28, coincided with the observance of the National Day of Remembrance for Homicide Victims.

**MBCI Economic Development Website Now Online**

The MBCI Office of Economic Development launched a new website ([www.MsChoctawbizopps.com](http://www.MsChoctawbizopps.com)) focused on attracting & recruiting new business opportunities for the MBCI.

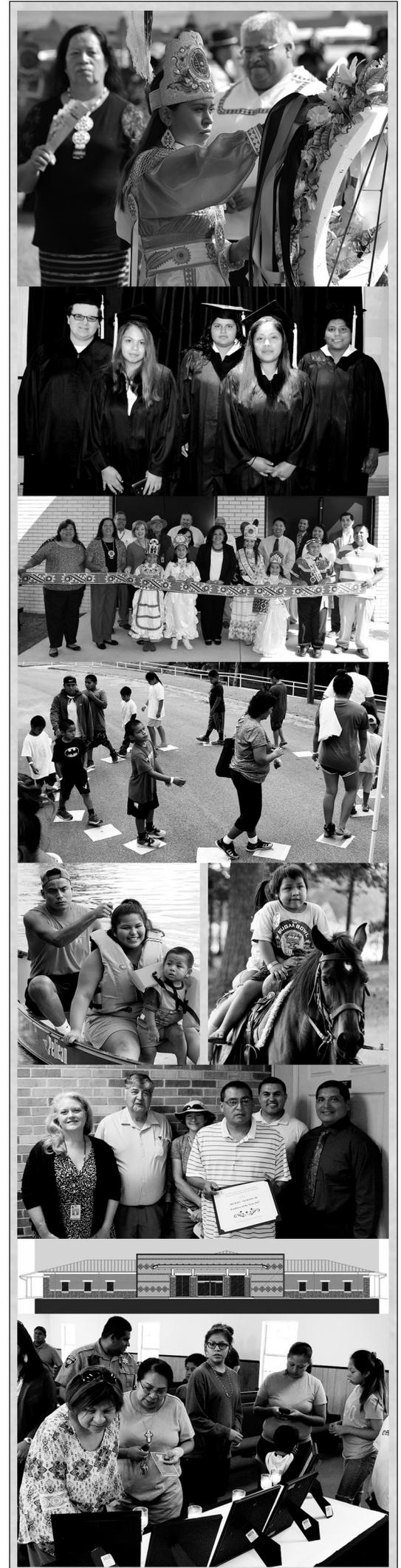
**CCHS Solar Car Team Places 2nd In World Solar Challenge**

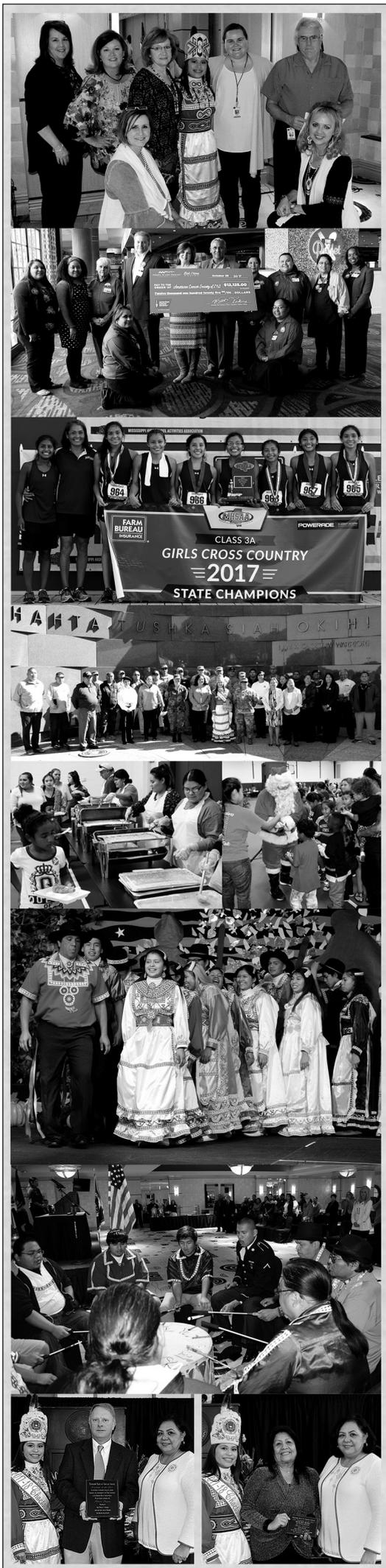
The CCHS Solar Car Team placed second in their division at the Bridgestone World Solar Challenge in Australia October 8-15. The team, driving their vehicle Tushka Hashi III (Sun Warrior), traveled 1,800 miles across Australia. Out of nearly 40 entries comprised of colleges & universities from over 30 countries, CCHS (the only Native American team) was one of only two high schools participating & one of four teams representing the U.S.

**Taylor Sworn In As Criminal Court Judge**

Tribal member Anthony Drew Taylor was confirmed as a judge for the Choctaw Tribal

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Criminal Court during a regular-call Tribal Council meeting on Tuesday, Oct. 10. He was sworn in to the judiciary after the meeting.

**Exceptional Education Hosts Dyslexia Awareness Event**

The Choctaw Tribal Schools' Exceptional Education Department's Dyslexia Therapy Program hosted a Dyslexia Awareness Night at the Golden Moon VIP Room on Tuesday, Oct. 17 in Choctaw. Students diagnosed with dyslexia & their parents were invited to learn more about strategies to help them be more successful in school & make the community more aware of what dyslexia is.

**Resort Associates Donate For Breast Cancer Awareness**

In honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Pearl River Resort associates showed their support by donating \$12,125. Each year, the Resort gives its associates an opportunity to get involved with "Paint the Promenade Pink" & "Buttons for the Cause." All proceeds benefitted the American Cancer Society.

**DOECE Hosts Green Corn Festival**

The annual Green Corn Festival was held on Friday, Oct. 27, at the Bogue Chitto Elementary School Amphitheater. This year's festival was dedicated to Bogue Chitto Center Director Lola Jackson, who is retiring after 42 years of service.

**Lady Warriors Win 3A Cross Country Title**

The CCHS Lady Warriors Cross Country Team captured their third Class 3A state title in five years during the MHSAA State Cross Country Championships on Monday, Nov. 6 in Clinton. The Warriors finished third overall in Class 3A.

**Veterans Honored During Parade**

The MBCI honored those who served in our nation's military during the MBCI Veterans Day Parade on Thursday, Nov. 9 in Choctaw. This year's theme was "Let Freedom Ring: Operation Enduring Freedom & Operation Iraqi Freedom."

**Tribe Hosts Thanksgiving Feasts**

The MBCI hosted a Thanksgiving Feast for Tribal members in the Henning, TN community on Sunday, Nov. 5 at the Multi-Purpose Facility Building. On Tuesday, Nov. 14, Tribal members, guests & dignitaries gathered in the Silver Star Convention Center in

Choctaw for the Reservation-Wide Thanksgiving Feast.

**Voters Reject Resolution CHO 17-033**

A proposed \$25 million casino project in the Red Water Community of Leake County was rejected by members of the MBCI as a result of a special reservation-wide referendum vote on Thursday, Nov. 16. The final tally was 1,506 No - 710 Yes, which included absentee ballots, according to official results released by the Tribal Election Committee on Nov. 17. The outcome of the referendum reversed Resolution CHO 17-033.

**Tribe, VA Signs MOU**

The MBCI & the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) held a ceremonial signing on Thursday, Nov. 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. The event was held at the Golden Moon Hotel & Casino VIP Room in Choctaw.

**Holiday Fun At Cookies & Cocoa**

Cookies & Cocoa with Santa Claus & Choctaw Indian Princess Kassie Cox was held on Thursday, Dec. 7 at the Pearl River Community Center. The event included activities for children, storytelling, & pictures with Santa & the princess. Several organizations were recognized for their service to Tribal members & were recipients of donations.

**Bok Homa Casino Celebrates 7th Anniversary**

Bok Homa Casino celebrated its seventh year anniversary on Wednesday, Dec. 20. Guests celebrated with cake, hors d'oeuvres, live entertainment, & free t-shirts.

**Tribe Hosts Christmas Luncheon For Employees**

The MBCI hosted its annual Tribal Government Christmas Luncheon on Thursday, Dec. 21 in the Pearl River Community Gymnasium. Chief Anderson offered her appreciation to all employees for the Tribe's success in 2017. Delilah Gibson was the overall winner of the 16th Annual Reservation-Wide Christmas Decoration Contest. Kevin Payne of the Office of the Attorney General was announced the 2017 Employee of the Year. Wanda Davidson, Acting Director of the Housing and Loan Program, was named honorable mention.



**Soccer Seniors Honored**

Choctaw Central High School honored seniors in the soccer program during a recognition ceremony during intermission of the Choctaw Central-Mississippi School for Mathematics & Science contests on Tuesday, January 23. ABOVE, Team members are pictured with seniors Isaiah Billy (left) and Dregen Joe (right). RIGHT, From left are seniors Lauren Ben, Jayna Ben, Brekaiya Ray, & manager Hannah Anderson.



**TOURNEY ..... continued from page eight**

half with a 33-14 lead. Choctaw Central went on a 16-5 run in the third for a 49-19 lead. The Warriors added to their lead in the fourth quarter with a 14-11 advantage for a 63-30 victory.

“We went out there with the same plan, just execute and we had to make sure to do that and limit our turnovers,” said Warriors coach Jimmy Tangle. “I told them we’re going out there and we’re giving it all we got and leaving it on the court. That’s how we came out with the win.”

Tucker coach John Miller commended his team’s effort in making it to the championship game.

“Throughout the season we fought and battled in every game. A lot of people didnt expect us to make it here, but our team believed we would. I’m proud of our boys and the effort they gave us. Choctaw Cen-

tral has a good, tough team and you have to give it to them.” Choctaw Central’s Jahiem Nash was named Most Outstanding Player of the game. Named to the Boys All-Tournament Team

were Dylan Stephens (Red Water Elementary), Markeleus Mingo (Bogue Chitto Elementary), Dresen Jimmie (Conehatta Elementary), Haden Jones (Tucker Elementary) and Eli Joe (Choctaw Central).



Pictured above are members of the Choctaw Tribal Schools All-Tournament Teams & Most Outstanding Players of the games.

**CCHS FAST-PITCH SOFTBALL 2018 SCHEDULE**

Feb. 23	@ Kosciusko Classic (2 games)	TBA
Feb. 24	@ Lake High School Classic (2 games)	TBA
Feb. 27	@ West Lauderdale	5:00Jv/6:00v
Mar. 2	@ Oxford	TBA
Mar. 6	@ Neshoba Central	5:00Jv/6:00v
Mar. 9	@ West Lauderdale	5:00Jv/6:30v
Mar. 16	@ Clarkdale-23 <sup>rd</sup> Spring Fling (2 games)	TBA
Mar. 19	@ Newton County	5:30Jv/6:30v
Mar. 22	Newton County	5:00Jv/6:00v
Mar. 23	@ Forest	5:00Jv/6:00v
Mar. 27	@ Raleigh	5:00Jv/6:00v
Mar. 29	Southeast Lauderdale	5:00Jv/6:00v
Mar. 30	Kemper County	5:00/6:30v
Apr. 5	@ Sebastopol	5:00Jv/6:00v
Apr. 6	@ Taylorsville	5:00Jv/6:30v
Apr. 10	Forest	5:00Jv/6:00v
Apr. 12	Raleigh	5:00Jv/6:00v
Apr. 13	Sebastopol	5:00Jv/6:00v
Apr. 16	@ Southeast Lauderdale	5:00Jv/6:00v

**2018 CCHS BASEBALL SCHEDULE**

Feb. 24	@ Sebastopol/Lake Classic	11:00/2:30
Feb. 26	Pisgah	4:30/6:30
Mar. 2	Nanah Waiya	4:30/6:30
Mar. 3	@ Union	11:00
Mar. 3	Newton	2:00
Mar. 5	Forest*	4:30/6:30
Mar. 6	Quitman	5:00/7:00
Mar. 9	@ Forest*	4:30/6:30
Mar. 10	@ Scott Central	3:00
Mar. 13	@ Rush Spring Break Tourney (Sykes Field)	TBA
Mar. 15	@ Rush Spring Break Tourney (Sykes Field)	TBA
Mar. 20	@ Morton*	4:30/6:30
Mar. 23	Morton*	4:30/6:30
Mar. 24	Lake	11:00/1:00
Mar. 27	Southeast Lauderdale*	4:30/6:30
Mar. 29	@ Southeast Lauderdale*	4:30/6:30
Apr. 3	Forest*	4:30/6:30
Apr. 6	@ Morton*	4:30/6:30
Apr. 10	@ Southeast Lauderdale	4:30/6:30
Apr. 13	Make Up Date (If Necessary)	TBA
Apr. 14	Union	11:00/1:00
Apr. 14	@ Philadelphia	4:00/6:00

\*DENOTES Division Game

# Teen Dating Violence: Is It Real?

*Submitted by Department of Family & Community Services, Family Violence & Victim's Services*

One-in-three seventh grade students report being a victim of dating violence, according to the Robert Wood Foundation. The startling reality is that almost half (44% of students) have been in an abusive relationship by the time they graduate from college.

Dating violence among our young people is a rapidly growing problem. Furthermore, teenagers use technology more & more each day. Unfortunately, this means their abusive girlfriend/boyfriend does as well. Victims are harassed through texts, emails, social media, & video chats. A study by MTV & AP showed that 10% of the abusers demanded that the teen victims hand over their passwords.

Yes. It is happening. Teen Dating Violence (TDV) is real. What are the warning

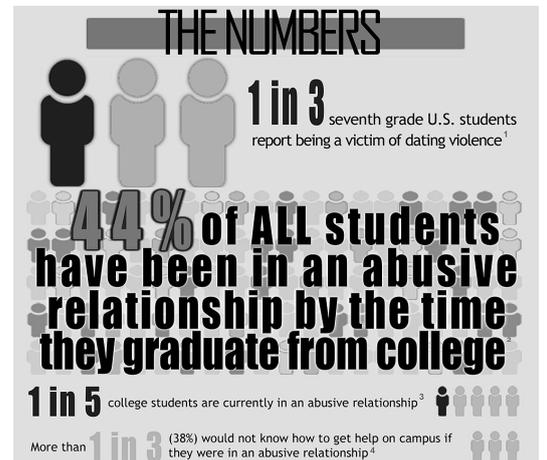
signs for parents, school administrators, & victims?

**For Parents:** Look for changes in behavior such as being more anxious or sad? Has your teen stopped participating in extracurricular activities? Are the friends of your teen no longer coming around?

**For School Administrators:** Does the couple argue loudly in the hallway? Does a student try to change his/her schedule to avoid the abuser? Are the student's grades falling? Does the abuser seem to control or firmly hold on to the victim when you see them together?

**For the Victim:** Does your boyfriend/girlfriend put you down? Does he/she blame you for everything? Does he/she hit or shove you, or throw things at you? Does he/she threaten to reveal private things about you on social media?

Yes, TDV is real & it is happening. As parents, teachers, friends, & victims, we need to speak up to help put a stop to TDV.



Presented by Jennifer Ann's Group  
 A 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization preventing teen dating violence through awareness, education, and advocacy (video games) in memory of Jennifer Ann O'Connell, a high school senior murdered by her ex-boyfriend.  
 2054 Dow Valley Rd NE  
 Atlanta, Georgia 30329  
 404.877.1100  
 404.877.1100

# Risk Factors for Teen Dating Violence

*Submitted by Department of Family & Community Services, Family Violence & Victim's Services*

Teenagers are not immune to violence. Research in 2016 by the National Centers for Disease Control suggested that 22% of women & 15% of men first experienced some form of violence from a dating partner between the ages of 11-17.

There are some identified factors that might put your teenager at risk for being abused or becoming an abusive partner:

**1. A belief that dating violence is acceptable.**

If a teenager is already seeing domestic violence within his or her own home, then perhaps accepting that violence will be done to him/her in a relationship is easy.

**2. Conflict with partner.** Teenagers ages 11-17 may not have developed a firm, healthy sense of handling conflict in their lives. Therefore, conflict with a dating partner might very well lead to violent behaviors.

**3. Substance abuse.** Anytime a substance is introduced into a situation, there will be some sort of altered state of thinking, which could contribute to violent behavior or accepting that

“the person only hurt me because he/she was drinking,” which is not acceptable.

**4. Depression, anxiety & other trauma symptoms.** There may already be some issues within the teenager – either from being a victim at home, or from victimizing someone else. This could be causing mental health issues, which sometimes affect how the person responds

to dating issues.

**5. Having a friend involved in dating violence.** Teenagers talk & listen to friends. If they see other friends involved already in dating violence, the teens will frequently think dating violence is okay. It might be the thinking that “everyone’s doing this, & it’s no big deal.” TDV is a big deal. It can be very dangerous & life threatening.

Our teenagers deserve a bright future. If you or someone you know needs our help, please call Family Violence & Victim's Services at 601-650-1774.

**STALKING: KNOW IT. NAME IT. STOP IT.**

*Stalking is when a person knowingly pursues a pattern of conduct that would cause another person to feel frightened, intimidated or threatened.*

If you or someone you know needs help or more information, please call Family Violence & Victim's Services at 601-650-1774

**REPORT CRIMES ANONYMOUSLY**

**Wetip** inc.

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:**

- Theft
- Child Abuse
- Vandalism
- 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!**

# CFS Hosts Special Christmas For Children

*Submitted by Albert Smith, Children & Family Services*

Children and Family Services (CFS) once again thanks the Pearl River Resort for their annual commitment to the CFS program during the Christmas period.

In particular, we wanted to mention Dominique Lewis and the staff from the Public Relations/Marketing Department and others for having an Angel Tree which benefitted all of the foster children over the Christmas period. We are grateful to have them support our program and the children who are in our care and custody.

We could not do it without your commitment and support. We thank you once again for making Christmas special for our foster children.

dren.

In addition, we would like to give big thanks to Ms. Patricia Battle from Choctaw Mission who was kind enough to provide children in our care and others with gifts and a gathering in late December.

We sincerely appreciate the kindness and contribution from Ms. Battle and her congregation during a festive time, which may also be a difficult time for some people.

The annual Toys For Chahta Alla Osi Basketball Tournament was held in Pearl River during December. Although the tournament was disrupted by some white fluffy stuff, it was still very successful and well attended. A big thank you to all those who donated to the CFS program.

We would like to men-

tion Kelby Anderson, Kevin Grisham and Valerie Thomas from the Choctaw Police Department and others for their

efforts in making this event successful once again.

We would also like to thank Tribal Security,

# CTEOHP Focuses On Cultural History

*By Melford Farve, Staff Writer*

Life experiences, as told by Tribal elders, can help one see a way of life and perspective from another time. In contrast to this present world of technology and innovations, an elder's life as a youth was of a simpler time, living a life of family and traditions in a constantly changing world.

Today's younger generation cannot fathom ideas such as living in wood frame houses with no indoor plumbing, working as sharecroppers to make ends meet, and living off the land to eat.

The Department of Chahta Immi's Special Projects/Media Program is bringing to light the lifeways of Choctaw elders to today's young minds and interested individuals through an innovative project called the Choctaw Tribal Elders Oral History Project (CTEOHP).

The scope of this project is to capture oral histories of Tribal elders born and raised in Mississippi Choctaw communities from the 1930s-1960s, and use

the collected knowledge to help Choctaw youth learn more about the culture and language.

Eddie Johnson, Special Projects/Media Coordinator, explains how the project initiated.

"The whole purpose was to bring cultural education resource material to Tribal members, especially the young people. Our elders are our best resource because they experienced and lived a more traditional lifestyle, and we have an opportunity for them to tell their story."

There were three main objectives in the project. The first was to recruit and record Tribal elders from the Choctaw communities. From spring 2016 to fall 2017, the

all the CFS staff and all other volunteers. Without the help from everyone, this event could not take place. Yakoki!

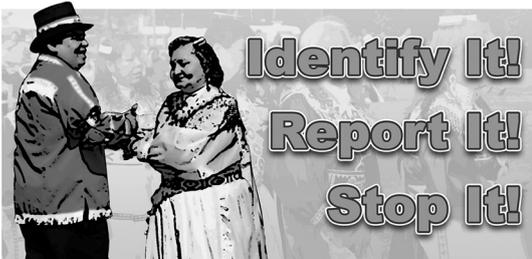
CTEOHP staff conducted interviews on video with several elders they recruited. The videos were then utilized to develop scripts for a series of short features based on cultural topics.

The second part of the project included researching and gathering copies of cultural and historical material. While the elders were being recorded, members of the CTEOHP team gathered material, artifacts and old photos from Choctaw community members. They also delved into public collections to acquire photos and documents pertaining to Choctaw culture and history.

The third objective involved developing and disseminating the recorded and gathered

..see CTEOHP, pg. 20

## Prevent Elder Abuse



### Warning Signs

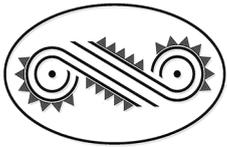
- Fear, withdrawal, depression
- Shame, anxiety, embarrassment
- Unexplained bruises or injuries
- Hesitation to talk openly
- Isolation by caregiver
- Unkempt appearance
- Loss of self-esteem
- Unexplained disappearance of funds or valuable possessions

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



Members of the Department of Chahta Immi's Special Projects/Media Program conducting the CTEOHP include, from left, Ty Isaac, Priscilla Williams, Eddie Johnson, & Sequita Phillips.



**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  
EDUCATION DISCOUNT \$3  
MILITARY DISCOUNT \$3  
TRIBAL MEMBERS WITH TRIBAL ID \$2  
SENIORS (57 AND ABOVE) FREE  
CHILDREN (UNDER 5) FREE

## DEPARTMENT OF CHAHTA IMMI NEWS

### Ornament Beading Classes

The Cultural Affairs Program (CAP) held ornament beading classes in the communities of Pearl River, Bogue Chitto, Standing Pine, & Red Water during December.

The classes are usually in great demand before the Christmas holiday & attendance was well. Tribal Chief Phyllis J. Anderson, a proud supporter of the CAP, visited the class in Red Water.

It was a pleasure for the staff to serve the public at the beading class in Red Water. There were participants from Minnesota & Alabama as they all completed their ornaments. Instructors were Trudy Jimmie, May McGeisey & Lorena Alex.

Christmas ornament beading classes have become so popular they have become another

fashion of promoting & sharing Choctaw traditional beading.

### DCI Christmas

On Tuesday, Dec. 19, the Department of Chahta Immi (DCI) held their annual Christmas luncheon & staff meeting at the Pearl River Entertainment Trailer.

A presentation on the Choctaw Tribal Elders Oral History Project was given by Eddie Johnson, Special Project Media Coordinator. Each DCI supervisor gave a brief summary of their program's operation & activities. The staff then played a game of Dirty Santa & had their feast afterwards.

Christmas caroling by Tribal elders was held at the Choctaw Elderly Activity Center on Thursday, Dec. 21. The message of the birth of Jesus through Christmas songs were sung



**ABOVE,** Red Water beading class in session.

**BELOW,** Lindsey Jennings, broadcast journalist & reporter for WTOK News 11 in Meridian, visited the Bogue Chitto class on Dec. 13 & interviewed Tribal members in attendance on traditional beading. The staff offered Ms. Jennings hands-on-training as she beaded an ornament & did quite well.



in Choctaw by the DCI staff, coordinated by Peggy Williams, Choctaw Tribal Language Program Language Resource & Liaison.

### DCI Attends Festival

A Choctaw social dance group performed & gave cultural presentations at the Winter Solstice Celebration: Native American Festival in Tallahassee, Florida. The event was held at Mission San Luis on Dec. 16-17, 2017.

Southeastern Native American dancing & cultural demonstrations, such as stickball, crafts & storytelling, were presented.

Social dancers included DCI Director Jay Wesley, Danielle Wesley, Jocelyn Wesley, Jaeden Wesley, CAP Coordinator Phyllis McMillan, Tora Shoemake, Wendy Thompson, Tryeston Thompson, Miya Steve, Teara Phillips, Toby Lewis, Casey Bigpond, Rian Willis, Garrison Joe, Ken Frazier, & Priscilla Williams.

Stickball exhibition participants included Casey Bigpond, Rian Willis, Garrison Joe, Ken Frazier, & Tryeston Thompson.

...continued next page

Pictured right is the DCI staff with displays of Choctaw drums & a Choctaw traditional Christmas holly tree in front of the Chahta Immi Cultural Center.



# IN MEMORIAM

**CECILIA ANNA CABRERA**

Funeral service for Cecilia Anna Cabrera, 30, was held on Tuesday, January 2, 2018, from the Bogue Chitto Facility Building. Pastor Thomas Ben officiated.

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

Ms. Cabrera passed away on Dec. 29, 2017, in Neshoba County.

She was a Call Center Agent at the Pearl River Resort. She enjoyed

being with family & friends, playing stickball, beading, cooking outdoors, & coaching basketball.

She was preceded in death by her mother, Junie Cabrera; step-father, Fraley Wallace; brother, Fredrick Ronald Wallace; grandparents, G.W. & Ann Bell; two aunts; three uncles; a great-uncle; three nephews; & a companion, Larry Shane Thomas.

Survivors include her daughters, Mona Frazier, Aiyana Frazier & Morningstar Frazier; sons, Raven Frazier &

Blackcloud Frazier; sisters, Melissa Wallace, Virginia Rochelle Wallace, Deelenna Jefferson, & Melinda Wallace; brothers, Kenneth Wallace & Jonathan Reyes Cabrera; four aunts; four uncles; one great-aunt; five great-uncles; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

**FREDRICK RONALD WALLACE**

Funeral service for Fredrick Ronald Wallace, 36, was held on Tuesday, January 2, 2018, from the Bogue Chitto Community Gymnasium. Pastor Thomas Ben officiated.

Burial was in the Bogue Chitto Commu-

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

Mr. Wallace passed away on Dec. 29, 2017, in Neshoba County.

He was a Greeter at Silver Star Hotel & Casino. He enjoyed being with family & friends, playing stickball & basketball, & fishing.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Junie Cabrera & Fraley Wallace; sister, Cecilia Anna Cabrera; grandparents, G.W. & Ann Bell, Lincoln & Samantha Wallace; two aunts; three uncles; a great-uncle; & three nephews.

Survivors include his daughters, Daebreon Wallace, Nikitta Wallace & Kaydence Wallace; sisters, Melissa Wallace, Virginia Rochelle Wallace, Deelenna Jefferson, & Melinda Wallace; brothers, Kenneth Wallace & Jonathan Cabrera; special friend, Elizabeth Robinson; four aunts; four uncles; two great-aunts; five great-uncles; & host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

**LARRY SHANE THOMAS**

Funeral service for Larry Shane Thomas, 37, was held on Wednesday, January 3, 2018, from the Pearl River Community Gymnasium. Deacon Ricky Thompson, Sr. & Rev. Tim Tubby officiated.

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

Mr. Thomas passed away on Dec. 29, 2017, in Neshoba County.

He was a member of Greenhill Methodist Church. He was a Group Team Leader at the Boys & Girls Club-Bok Cito Unit. He was previously with MBCI Protective Services & a lifeguard. He enjoyed playing basketball, taking kids on field trips & running.

He was preceded in death by his grandparents, Claude & Priscilla Isaac, Amos & Lillie Thomas; & a companion, Cecilia Cabrera.

Survivors include his parents, Madge Isaac & Larry C. Thomas; a daughter, Haylen Thomas; sons, Hayden Thomas & Redainen Thomas; sisters, Jennifer Thomas & Toni Thomas; a brother, Shaun Thomas; one aunt; six uncles; two great-aunts; two great-uncles; & a host of relatives & friends.

**RANDY HICKMAN**

Funeral service for Randy Hickman, 52, was held on Thursday, January 4, 2018, from the Pearl River Pentecostal Church. Pastor Harvey King officiated.

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

Mr. Hickman passed away on Dec. 31, 2017, at his residence.

He was a U.S. Army & Army National Guard veteran. He was a medical & instructional aide

.....see OBITS, pg. 18

The CAP offers thanks & gratitude to Don Hayes Creative Photography of Tallahassee, FL for the amazing photos of the MBCI dancers!

**Upcoming Workshops**

The CAP will soon be hosting cultural training in all communities. Watch closely on social

media for a workshop schedule in each community. Call the CAP office at (601) 663-7506 for more information!



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Social dancers, pictured from left, are Garrison Joe, Ken Frazier, Jay Wesley, Toby Lewis, Rian Willis, Danielle Wesley, Jocelyn Wesley, Wendy Thompson, Teara Philips, Miya Steve, Phyllis McMillan, Jaeden Wesley, & Torah Shoemake. Not pictured are chanters Priscilla Williams & Casey Bigpond.

(Photo courtesy of Don Hayes Creative Photography)

OBITS ..... continued from page seventeen

with the Choctaw Tribal Schools. He was a scoutmaster & enjoyed being outdoors, camping, working on automobiles, being with his dogs, & watching football games.

He was preceded in death by his parents, John & Christine Frazier Hickman; sisters, Lourean Hickman Denison & infant sister Ruth Hickman; & brothers, William Hickman, Sr., Dale Hickman & Terry Lee Hickman.

Survivors include his wife, Diana Tehau-no Hickman; daughter, Shawna Hickman; sons, Brandon Hickman & John Hickman; sisters, Fannie Hickman Jones & Annie Hickman; brother, Willie Hickman; an aunt; an uncle; & a host of relatives & friends.

**MARILYN BILLY**

Funeral service for Marilyn Billy, 64, was held on Thursday, January 4, 2018, from the Standing Pine Facility Building. Bro. Shelly Peoples officiated.

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

Ms. Billy passed away on Dec. 31, 2017, at her grandson's residence.

She was retired from Division of Schools & enjoyed being with family, social dancing, traveling, cooking, sewing, & watching her favorite TV shows.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Greer & Leona Sam Billy; sisters, Nellie Ruth Billy, Valema Jean Billy, Louise Billy Jim Lopez, Margia Nell Billy Homer, Virginia Carol Billy James, & Maude Billy Durant; brothers, Laverne Billy & Richard Billy; & a grandchild.

Survivors include her daughters, Trisalena Tubby, Tracy Billy & Tessa Sanders; a son, Malachi Steve; a sister,

Sarah Cantu; brothers, Adam Billy & Daniel Billy; 10 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

**SALLY ANN FARMER**

Funeral service for Sally Ann Farmer, 67, was held on Saturday, January 6, 2018, from the Holy Rosary Catholic Church in Tucker. Father Bob Goodyear, S.T., officiated.

Burial was in the church cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.

Ms. Farmer passed away on Jan. 3, 2018, at St. Dominic Hospital in Jackson.

She was a Greeter at Silver Star Hotel & Casino. She enjoyed being with her son, gardening, cooking, & tending to her yard.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Mose & Clennie Farmer; sisters, Latina Farmer Holmes & Mealie Farmer Nickey; brother, John Farmer; & half-brothers, Henry Willis & J.C. Farmer.

Survivors include her

son, Jeremy Farmer; sisters, Anita McMillan, Gladys Hernandez, Mary Agnew, & Sarah Williams; brothers, Ray Farmer, Rayburn Farmer & Ervin Farmer; & a host of relatives & friends.

**ALVIN KEITH WAITER**

Funeral service for Alvin Keith Waiter, 45, was held on Wednesday, January 10, 2018, from the Pine Bluff Baptist Church in Sebastopol. Deacon Joseph Wesley & Rev. Robert Patrick officiated.

Burial was in the church cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.

Mr. Waiter passed away on Jan. 7, 2018, at his residence.

He was employed with the MBCI Protective Services Unit. He enjoyed being with his family, traveling, golfing, & watching football.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Thomas Waiter, Sr. & Selina Billie Waiter.

Survivors include his daughters, Kayla Waiter & Kandria Waiter; son, Jakob Waiter; brother, Thomas Waiter, Jr.; 4 grandchildren; 4 aunts; an uncle; & a host of relatives & friends.

**JONAH LEE WILLIS**

Funeral service for Jonah Lee Willis, 44, was held on Friday, January 12, 2018, from the Standing Pine Commu-

nity Gymnasium. Pastor Thomas Ben officiated.

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

Mr. Willis passed away on Jan. 8, 2018, in Leake County.

He was employed with the Pearl River Resort. He enjoyed spending time with family & friends, participating in sports, coaching basketball, & fishing.

He was preceded in death by his brother, Gaylan Willis, Sr.; father, Leroy Willis; grandparents, Johnny & Jeanette Willis, Sim Clemons & Jimmie Lee Wallace; 2 aunts; & 7 uncles.

Survivors include his companion, Samatha Polk; children, Dustin Polk, Geronimo Willis, Kyana Willis, Tushka Willis, Tiak Willis, & Fichik Willis; mother, Shirley Clemons Philoman; sister, Cassandra Willis; brothers, Samuel Willis, Fabian Wilson & Andre Bouley; 10 grandchildren; 7 aunts; 4 uncles; & numerous nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

**DEANRICK SHEA ISOM, JR.**

Funeral service for Deanrick Shea Isom, Jr., 19 day-old infant, was held on Saturday, January 13, 2018, from the Greenhill Methodist Church in Pearl River.

...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**



**Sunday - 10:00 a.m.**  
**10341 Road 789**  
**Philadelphia, MS 39350**  
Pastor Patrick Evans

Rev. Daniel Tubby officiated.

Burial was in the church cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.

Infant Isom passed away on Jan. 8, 2018, at the University Medical Center in Jackson.

He was preceded in death by his twin sister, Faith Isom; great-grandfather, Benford Tubby; great-great grandparents, Elizabeth & Irvin Jefferson; & an aunt.

Survivors include his parents, Jenna Tubby & Deanrick Isom, Sr.; sisters, Trinity Isom, Dawnanna Tubby, Macy Clemons, Emma Isom, & Mila Isom; brothers, Deandra Clemons, Riley Clemons, Avery Isom, & LaDianian Isom; grandparents, Tammie Williams & Ronnie Reed, Sr., Judy Isom, Mack Anderson; great-great grandmothers, Mamie Tubby & Alleen Hickman; & numerous aunts, uncles, & relatives.

**WINNIE SUE JOE HENRY WILLIS**

Funeral service for Winnie Sue Joe Henry Willis, 79, was held on Saturday, January 13, 2018, from the Bogue Chitto Baptist Church. Deacon Kendall Wallace & Rev. Charles Doby Henry officiated.

Burial was in the church cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.

Ms. Willis passed away on Jan. 9, 2018, at Regency Hospital in Meridian.

She was a member of the Bogue Chitto Baptist Church & served as director of the Woman's Missionary Union & Hospitality Committee. She was a homemaker & enjoyed fishing, gardening, sewing, cooking, & doing mission work.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Austin & Lola Bell Joe; husband, Norman Henry; a son, Rexdale Henry; sister, Mary Sue Willis; & brothers, Less Joe, Marshall Joe & Thad Joe.

Survivors include her son, Ronnie D. Henry, Sr.; foster sons, Roger Ben, James Ben & Cecil Ben; 3 nieces; a nephew; 10 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; & a host of relatives & friends.

**ELIZABETH BELL ALLEN**

Funeral service for Elizabeth Bell Allen, 70, was held on Friday, January 12, 2018, from her residence in Bogue Chitto. Bro. Jason Martin officiated.

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

Ms. Allen passed away on Jan. 10, 2018, at Neshoba County General Hospital in Philadelphia.

She was Pentecostal by faith. She loved spending time with her family. She attended New Zion Pentecostal Church & was involved in the Living Water United Pentecostal Church.

She was preceded in death by her parents

John Levi Bell, Sr. & Maggie Wallace Bell; husband, Freeman Allen; brothers, Benny Bell, Lawrence Bell & Benjamin Bell; & a grandson.

Survivors include her daughters, Trina Jim, Cheryl Allen Willis & Lindsay Allen; sisters, Dorothy Wilson & Sally Bell; half-brother, John Levi Bell, Jr.; 8 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

**SUSAN IRENE SMITH FRAZIER**

Funeral service for Susan Irene Smith Frazier, 51, was held on Saturday, January 13, 2018, from the Pearl River Baptist Church. Bro. Eddie Johnson officiated.

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

Mrs. Frazier passed away on Jan. 12, 2018, at her residence.

She was employed at MBCI Employment & Training then became a homemaker. She enjoyed being with her family, gardening & landscaping.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Alton & Susie Smith; sister, Rita Allen; & a grandchild.

Survivors include her husband, Elvie L. Frazier; daughters, Erica McMillan, Ariane Frazier & Alanna Frazier; sisters, Mae Bell, Ina Solomon & Tonya Reed; brothers, Johnny Smith

& Chancellor Solomon; 8 grandchildren; & a host of relatives & friends.

**RON KEITH LEWIS**

Funeral service for Ron Keith Lewis, 31, was held on Saturday, January 27, 2018, from the Standing Pine Community Gymnasium. Bro. Shelly Peoples officiated.

Burial was in Standing Pine Community Cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.

Mr. Lewis passed away on Jan. 23, 2018, in Philadelphia.

He was employed at McDonalds in Philadelphia.

**D's NATIVE EDGE Barber Shop**

202 Choctaw Town Center  
Choctaw, Mississippi

◆◆◆◆ Business Hours ◆◆◆◆

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday  
8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Saturday 7:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

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Saturday, Appointment Only

phia. He enjoyed being with his family & playing sports.

He was preceded in death by his grandparents, Prentis & Lula Lewis; an aunt & and uncle.

Survivors include his daughter, Keianna Lynn Lewis; companion, Evanna Dixon; parents, Ronald Jim, Sr. & Betty Jane Lewis; sister, Lisa Lewis; brothers, Ryan Lewis, Sr., Jeremy Vaughn, Ronan Jim, & Ronald Jim, Jr.; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

**CHOCTAW TOWN CENTER**

**OUTDOOR MARKET**

**COME JOIN US!!  
A GREAT PLACE  
FOR A SALE!!**

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food sales, or bake sales  
for individuals, organizations  
or ball teams.*

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.

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**Heating & Air Conditioning Service**



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**P.O. Box 6003**  
**Choctaw, MS 39350**

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

*Allen Peoples, President/Owner,  
Chahta Owned & Operated*

# DPS Announces Policy Change

*Article provided by the MS Department of Public Safety*

The Mississippi Department of Public Safety (DPS) has changed its policy regarding the suspension of driver's licenses for unpaid fines, fees, or assessments under Mississippi Code § 63-1-53(1) and (2)(h).

DPS has discontinued the suspension of driver's licenses solely upon notice of unpaid fines, fees, and assessments under those statutory provisions. This official policy will remain in place unless and until future significant developments occur, such as a statutory change.

Driver's licenses will continue to be suspended for all of the reasons permissible under Mississippi law, including but not limited to Mississippi Code Section 63-1-51(f) that provides for a one-year suspension of licenses upon a court order finding a driver in contempt for failure to pay a fine or fee

or failure to respond to a traffic summons or citation.

DPS will reinstate licenses previously suspended solely for nonpayment of fines, fees, or assessments under section 63-1-53(1) and (2), and the reinstatement fees for such licenses will be waived. DPS will provide written notice to those affected by this decision.

For drivers whose license privileges have been suspended for multiple reasons, including grounds other than non-payment of court assessed fines and fees pursuant to Mississippi Code § 63-1-53 (I) and (2)(h), DPS will remove the non-payment basis for suspension, but the driver's license suspension will continue until the other reasons for suspension have been cleared.

DPS will provide written notice to those affected by this decision.

The reinstatement of these licenses will **not** relieve the drivers of the legal obligation to pay the fines, fees, or assessments.

**CTEOHP ..... continued from page fifteen**



resources. A website was designed by the CTEOHP staff to be the main channel to present cultural educational resources to the public.

On December 15, 2017, the [www.choctawculturallegacy.com](http://www.choctawculturallegacy.com) website was launched to the public. A link to the website can be found on

*The photo (pictured left) was provided by Harold "Doc" Comby of the Pearl River Community as it features his grandmother, Allie Chitto Comby, & an unidentified lady as they were preparing cane for basket weaving.*

## CHOCTAW COMMUNITY NEWS

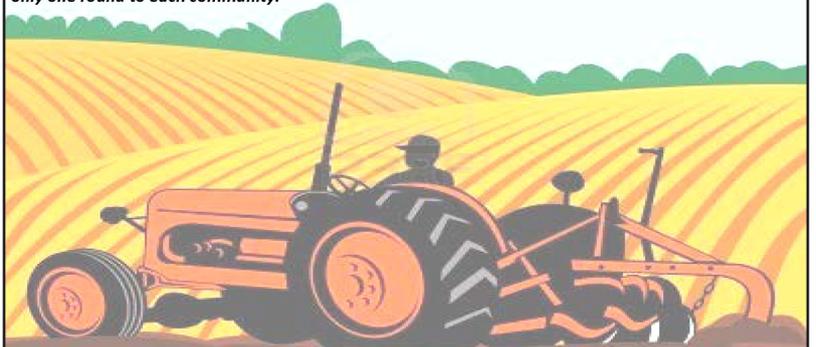
### JANUARY 2018

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#### 2018 GARDEN PREPARATION APPLICATIONS

DEADLINE MARCH 2, 2018

MBCI Agriculture program will be accepting applications for the 2018 Garden Preparation in month of February. Applications are available to tribal members at Community Facility Buildings or at the Choctaw Farmer's Market Building. Due to equipment transport limitations this year, we will make only one round to each community.



*If garden site is not located within residential site boundary, a garden lease must be obtained from MBCI Real Estate Office, 601-650-1605. If you have any questions, contact Samihah Willis or Brantley Willis @ 601-656-2070.*

the [www.choctaw.org](http://www.choctaw.org) home page for those interested in seeing the past come to life.

At the click of the icon, the website will take you on a pathway to the past, such as preparing hominy, hunting with rabbit sticks, or listening to old stories.

The CTEOHP hopes to renew interest for our youth to the culture and traditions of our past, and to its preservation which will honor the experiences and lives of our Tribal elders.

"All this would not have been possible without the help of Choctaw tribal members, Chief Phyliss J. Anderson and the Tribal Government, and support from the Multicultural Initiative for Community Advancement (MICA)," said Johnson.

For more information about the Choctaw Tribal Elders Oral History Project, contact the Special Projects/Media Program at (601)663-7735.