

CHOCTAW COMMUNITY NEWS

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CHOCTAW, MISSISSIPPI 39350

MARCH 2017



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

Tribe Pays Off \$10 Million CHC Loan

(CHOCTAW, Miss.) – The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MBCI) recently paid off the remaining balance on a 10-year loan taken out to help finance construction costs of the new Choctaw Health Center.

The loan was financed by six banks, including Trustmark National Bank of Jackson, Citizens Bank of Philadelphia, Bank First of Madison, and three others the Tribe secured for the project.

Signed on March 11,

2015, the 10-year \$10 million loan was paid off in only 23 months.

“I am excited not only because we are able to pay off this loan early, but it just happens to coincide with the two-year anniversary of the opening of our state-of-the-art Choctaw Health Center facility,” stated Tribal Chief Phyliss J. Anderson.

“I am very thankful to our lending partners, finance team, architectural, planning and construction teams, Indian Health Service, our ded-



Front view of the Choctaw Health Center in Choctaw.

icated CHC staff and administrators and Choctaw Tribal Council who worked together to make the vision of delivering quality healthcare to our tribal members a reality. The new Health Center has proven to be one of the Tribe’s best financial endeavors since opening the Pearl River Resort.”

The new CHC project was a joint venture

between the MBCI and the Indian Health Service and was funded by USDA Rural Development and the six banks. After this payment, the sole loan left is a 20-year USDA loan.

The Choctaw Health Center is an acute care facility with a 20-bed In-patient Unit, Primary Care Services, Pediatrics, Emergency Depart-

ment, Pharmacy, Dental Department, Women’s Wellness Center, Diabetes Center, Vision Center, Behavioral Health Services, Environmental Health Services, Managed Care Program, WIC (Women, Infants and Children), Public Health Services (nursing and community health

.....see LOAN, pg. 5

Congratulations!
2017 STATE CHAMPIONS
CHOCTAW CENTRAL

LADY WARRIORS

Deadline Passes For Recall Petition

An official petition to recall Tribal Chief Phyliss J. Anderson did not meet deadline requirements under Tribal Ordinance 6 (Election Rules & Procedures), according to a Tribal Election Committee notice.

The deadline to turn in the petition was 4:30 p.m. CST Monday, March 6.

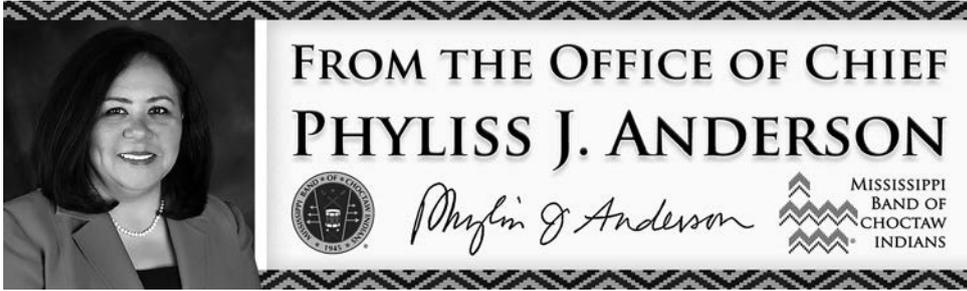
Chief Anderson issued a letter to Tribal members to express her gratitude for their continued support.

“During this time, my office stayed fo-

cused on the important work of our Tribe. The efforts to recall me, without justification, did not discourage me from doing the job the people elected me to do,” stated Chief Anderson.

“Our Tribe is experiencing great growth, extraordinary financial successes, enhanced services for our people and continued improvements in our communities. It is with a grateful heart and sincere

see PETITION, pg. 5



Halito!
 Spring has arrived after another mild winter on the reservation; the days are getting warmer and there is a light coloring of yellow pollen everywhere. It's also the time of year that we make preparations for our gardens and get ready for allergy season!
 Here at Tribal Headquarters, spring means Community Field Days, Spring Festivals and planning for the Choctaw Indian Fair! There are many activities taking place and it's a wonderful time to celebrate our successes and fellowship with fellow tribal members.

Red Water Casino Project

As you know the Choctaw Tribal Council passed a resolution on January 27, 2017, to ex-

pand gaming into Leake County and build a new Casino in the Red Water Community.

The decision to build in Red Water was made after several years of studies and review of important data such as traffic count, income distribution and potential earnings. This data shows that now is the time to build in this location to earn the most money from the metro-Jackson area market.

It was after careful consideration of these facts that I presented this project and the council passed the resolution. I have provided a number of presentations on the study for our tribal members, tribal employees and resort associates and I believe the information has been very beneficial for those who had questions.

It is unfortunate that

there are some that want to slow down our progress and stop this important money-making project that will benefit our Choctaw people.

On Friday, March 17, 2017, I received notification from the Tribal Election Committee (TEC) that a request for a petition referendum on the Red Water Project has met the requirements of Ordinance 6 and the TEC has approved the petition request made by tribal members Vickie Rangel, Nikki Comby, and Barry McMillan.

I have also been made aware many of you are tired of seeing these petitions going around. There are people that are trying to slow down important progress my administration is making for our Tribe.

Before making your decision to sign a petition on the project, here are important facts for you to know and consider.

- The new Red Water Casino will **provide approximately 250 new jobs.**
- The new Red Water Casino will **make the Tribe more money** – at least \$40 Million or more a year.
- The new Red Water Casino will bring in more money to help us **pay down debt** on our existing loans.



The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians' Education Division hosted a retirement reception for Billy Gene Smith on Tuesday, Feb. 28 at the Pearl River Community Gymnasium. Smith, Vocational Evaluator for the Choctaw Rehabilitation Services Program, was honored for his 29 years of dedicated service from 1988-2017. In attendance for the reception included members of the Tribal Administration, co-workers and well-wishers. Chief Anderson, right, presented Smith with an appreciation plaque and Choctaw basket.

The studies show that Red Water Casino is targeted to pick up the metro-Jackson area including residents in Madison, Ridgeland, Canton and Jackson.

The casino will be located at the intersection of Highway 35 and 25 in Red Water and as you know this is a high traffic area. The metro-Jackson market, which travels this road, has the highest income earners and largest population base in the state of Mississippi.

The casino project will cost approximately \$25 Million but we will have that paid off in 2 years! The building, similar to the Bok Homa casino, will be 35,800 square feet with 500 slots, 10 tables games, grab and go and seated dining.

The Red Water Casino is a great opportunity for our Tribe. I plan to move forward with this project because of the great benefits it will provide for

our tribal members, and for future generations of Choctaws.

I truly believe the Red Water Casino is a great opportunity for our Tribe and I urge you to NOT sign the petition.

Tribe Pays Off \$10 Million Health Center Loan in 23 Months

In late February, the Tribe paid off a \$10 Million construction loan for the new Choctaw Health Center. The loan was initially financed for \$10 Million to be paid in 10 years. Through good management of the new health center and responsible financial leadership, we were able to pay this loan off in 23 months!

We opened the new Health Center back in March 2015 and the facility has provided a much needed expansion

...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
 Taryn Carey.....Communications Writer
 Darron Tubby.....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.

of services and capacity for our tribal members.

I am very thankful to our finance and planning partners and our Choctaw tribal members for their support of the Choctaw Health Center.

The new facility has been one of the best financial decisions we have made. I believe it is delivering on our vision of providing exceptional healthcare to our tribal population.

CCHS Lady Warriors

Our CCHS Lady War-

riors have once again taken us to the Big House in Jackson and brought home the Class 3A State Championship trophy. The Lady Warriors defeated the Amanda Elzy Lady Panthers 75-42 during the championship title game on Saturday, March 11, 2017.

Our Tribe really came out to support our girls and it brings me great pride to see our tribal members uniting to cheer on our team! The game was a showcase of skill, determination and

hard work.

This season has been great for all our Warrior basketball teams and we have enjoyed watching.

I had the wonderful opportunity to host a Breakfast of Champions on Tuesday, March 21st at the Golden Moon Bistro to honor this year's remarkable season with our team.

Once again, I offer my congratulations to our Choctaw Central Lady Warriors, coaches, staff, families and fans. It's great to be a Warrior!

Choctaw Central Unified Warriors Special Olympics

Our CCHS Warriors Special Olympic athletes had a great day on Saturday, March 11, 2017, at the Mississippi Basketball and Athletic Complex in Jackson when they competed in the Special Olympics/Unified State Competition and brought home another championship win!

This team and their coaches have accomplished so many of their goals through focused efforts, lots of practice and teamwork.

I thoroughly enjoyed my visit with them before the competition and the time of championship celebration during our Breakfast of Champions on Tuesday, March 21, 2017.

Recall Petition Fails

While hosting our annual Community Field Days, many tribal members have commented or asked about the Recall Petition to remove me from office.

The organizers of the petition, led by Mr. Barry McMillan, failed to meet the requirements of Tribal Ordinance 6 (Election Rules & Procedures). The petition was not turned in by the deadline of March 6, 2017, at 4:30 p.m., and therefore was considered null and void.

After speaking with so many of you I am heartened by your encouraging words and kindness. You know that I am a

trustworthy leader with proven results. I have not let the negativity of this petition slow down the important work of my office for our tribal members.

My promise to the Choctaw people is to always do what I believe to be in the best interest of the Tribe. We must work hard to provide better services for our tribal members now but we also must look ahead to the future.

We are planting seeds today for our children and grandchildren. We must nurture those seeds and grow them into resourceful things for future generations of Choctaws to enjoy.

Our Tribe needs better schools and daycare facilities, more housing, jobs and increased revenue. The projects we are pursuing with the Ramah Settlement funds and the increased revenue that the new Red Water Casino will bring helps us strengthen our Tribe for many years.

Again, I am so thankful for the kind words, encouragement, support and most importantly prayers for my continued leadership.

Community Field Days

During the months of March and April I am so happy to visit each Choctaw Tribal Community and host the annual Choctaw Community Field Days.

This marks the 5th year my office has

....see LETTER, pg. 4



On March 21, Chief Phyliss J. Anderson hosted a Breakfast of Champions event at the Bistro at Golden Moon Hotel & Casino in Choctaw for teams that won their respective sport championship. ABOVE, The Choctaw Central Lady Warriors basketball team was honored for their Class 3A state championship they won on Saturday, March 11 at the Mississippi Coliseum in Jackson. BELOW, The Choctaw Central Unified Basketball Team, comprised of special education & general education students, captured gold medals at the 2017 Spring State Games Basketball Tournament for Special Olympics Mississippi on March 11 at the Mississippi Basketball and Athletics Center in Jackson.



LETTER..... continued from page three

visited each tribal community for a day of fellowship, picnic-style dinner, outdoor activities with children, bingo games, and most importantly, a update on the state of our Tribe.

Please be on the lookout for door-to-door announcements of dates and times we will visit your community. I want you to be aware this event is making its way across our tribal communities. We receive so much great feedback from these visits and have so much fun too!

The successes of these Community Field Day events are attributed to our tribal employees and the countless volunteers who pre-plan and work hard during and after to see things through.

I look forward to visiting with each of you and thank you for your yearly support of these events!

Choctaw Indian Fair

One of the greatest times of the year for our Tribe is fast approaching! The Choctaw Indian Fair will celebrate its 68th Annual celebration and is set for July 12-15th.

The Choctaw Fair Committee has already started meeting and is gearing up to put together another great fair showcasing our Tribal culture.

The World Series Stickball coaches and teams are lining up, Choctaw dance groups are already practicing, and I have noticed flyers calling for potential Choctaw Indian Princess contestants.

It's indeed is a time to look forward to, and a time for tribal members who live away from the reservation to come home and visit.

Each year we try to plan a great fair and this year is no exception.

Please follow the Choctaw Indian Fair's social media sites to be in the know of the latest fair events and happenings. These social media sites include Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter and YouTube. To learn more visit www.choctawindianfair.com.

St. Patrick's Day Parade

On Saturday, March 18th, 2017, Choctaw Indian Princess Autumn Diane McMillan and several members of the Choctaw Cultural Affairs Program represented the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians at the 34th annual Hal's St. Paddy's Parade in downtown Jackson.

The parade named our tribe as Grand Marshall of this year's parade, acknowledging the Mississippi Choctaw as the first native people of the state.

Many thanks to the organizers of the festival for including our tribal members who represented each of us with much pride.

Connecting the Dots Foundation Bestows Award

As many of you may know, March is National Women's History Month and on Saturday, March 25th, I had the great honor of being named a recipient of the Connecting the Dots Foundation, Inc. "Trailblazing Women of Distinction" Award.

This honor is shared with other outstanding women around the state of Mississippi who have accomplished great things, and on behalf of you the Choctaw people, I accepted this award with much gratitude and humbleness.

The event was held in Jackson and is focused on supporting educational scholarship opportunities for young women and historic preservation projects for midwifery in the state of Mississippi.

PRES Saferoom Groundbreaking

On Tuesday, February 14, 2017, a groundbreaking ceremony for a new Saferoom at Pearl River Elementary School was held. I was happy to have the Choctaw Indian Princess Autumn Diane McMillan, PRES Braves and Princesses, members of the school administration, planning and design team and Tribal Council present.

The \$1.6 Million Saferoom project is funded through a FEMA/MEMA grant program. The building is a one-story, re-enforced concrete building with a capacity to accommodate up to 900 people. It is built to meet FEMA P-361 Safe Room standards and can withstand winds up to 250-mile-per-hour.

The safe room will be built on the North side of the campus and is available for the school

population and nearby community.

I am very thankful to FEMA and MEMA for their partnership and support in helping us to provide this safe room for our community. We want to do everything we can to protect our Tribal members and others who are in our care, and the building of this safe room is a step in the right direction.

Closing

Again, as we celebrate the start of spring, remember it is a time of new beginnings. New flowers spring from the ground, the grass greens and trees come alive. *Ecclesiastes 3:1 says: To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.*

It is time to dust off the darkness of winter and start anew with the light of spring. Let this season bring hope and serve as a reminder to us that in life there is a season for all. It is time to turn away from whatever darkness we might have in our own lives, and move forward into the light of newness.

My hope for you, my dear tribal members, is that you find positive things in life that give you great joy and you rededicate your time and attention to those things.

Many Blessings,

Phyllis J. Anderson
Phyllis J. Anderson,
Tribal Chief



Participating in the 34th annual Hal's St. Paddy's Parade in downtown Jackson on March 18 included, from left, drummer Ken Frazier, Katie Henry, drummer Dustin Isaac, Choctaw Indian Princess Autumn Diane McMillan, & Miya Steve.
(Photo courtesy of Cultural Affairs Program.)



CHOCTAW TRIBAL COUNCIL RESOLUTION REVIEW

The following ordinances & resolutions were submitted to the Choctaw Tribal Council for consideration. Listed below 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
MARCH 7, 2017**

Resolution CHO 17-036, approving the 2017 Choctaw Community Fund Budget, was ADOPTED 14 YES (*R. Anderson, R. Bell, T. Chickaway, K. Edwards, R. Isaac, S. Johnson, D. McClelland, W. McMillan, H. Nickey, L. Parkerson, R. Sockey, B. Steve, S. Willis, & D. Wilson*); 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT (*C. Ben, R. Henry Sr., & J. Wesley*).

Resolution CHO 17-037, amending the Election Rules & Procedures of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indi-

ans (MBCI) & to Codify the Rules & Procedures as Title XXXIII of the Choctaw Tribal Code & to amend Title VII of the Choctaw Tribal Code, was ADOPTED 8 YES (*T. Chickaway, K. Edwards, R. Isaac, S. Johnson, D. McClelland, H. Nickey, R. Sockey, & B. Steve*); 6 NO (*R. Anderson, R. Bell, W. McMillan, L. Parkerson, S. Willis, & D. Wilson*); 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

Resolution CHO 17-

038, approving & adopting the MBCI HEARTH Act Leasing Regulations, was ADOPTED 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

Resolution CHO 17-039(B), authorizing the approval of Commercial Land Assignments between MBCI d/b/a Choctaw Shopping Center Enterprise & Various Commercial Tenants, was ADOPTED 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

Resolution CHO 17-040(B), approving Expenditure Plan for Forest Management Deductions, was ADOPTED 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

Resolution CHO 17-041(B), appointing Phyliss J. Anderson as Attorney in Fact for the MBCI to Conduct Negotiations & to Sign Documentation for Conservation Programs Administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS), was ADOPTED 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

Resolution CHO 17-042, delegating authority to the Tribal Chief to approve a Worker's Compensation Settlement, was ADOPTED 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

Notice of Tribal Election

asked to show a form of ID.

The following notice was posted on March 15 by the Tribal Election Committee.

The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MBCI) will hold a Tribal Election on Tuesday, June 13, 2017, for nine (9) seats on the Tribal Council, all for four-year terms.

To be elected to the Tribal Council are:

- Two seats in Bogue Chitto, with term expiring in 2021;
- Two seats in Conehatta, with term expiring in 2021;
- One seat in Crystal Ridge, with term expiring in 2021;
- Two seats in Pearl River, with term expiring in 2021;
- One seat in Standing Pine, with term expiring

in 2021;

- One seat in Tucker, with term expiring in 2021.

The MBCI Tribal Election Committee includes the following members: 1) Berdie John, Chairperson; 2) Amy Pauls, Member; 3) Wanda Davidson, Member; Danita Darlene Willis, Alternate; Shirley Wilson, Alternate; and Gary Williamson, Alternate.

The Tribal Election Committee will appoint a Local Community Election Committee (LCEC) for each community to conduct this election. Tribal members who are registered to vote will cast their ballots at the polling place operated by the LCEC. Voters may be

Tribal Election is Tuesday, June 13, 2017, from 8:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m. Community polling places are listed below:

- Bogue Chitto Facility Building/Gym;
- Bogue Chitto - Henning, TN Multi-Purpose Building, 1230 Hwy. 87, West Henning, TN;
- Conehatta Facility Building/Gym;
- Crystal Ridge Facility Building/Gym;
- Pearl River Community Center;
- Standing Pine Facility Building/Meeting Room;
- Tucker Facility Building/Gym.

REGISTRATION

Tribal members 18 years of age or older

see **ELECTION, pg. 6**

LOAN continued from page one

representatives), Respiratory, Radiology, Laboratory, Physical Therapy, Audiology Services, facility support services, & an ambulance service.

Specialty services/visiting providers include: Orthopedics, Nephrologist, Cardiologist, Pain Management Clinic, Pulmonary Clinic, & Acupuncture.

PETITION continued from page one

gratitude that I say thank you for your support, kind words of encouragement and most importantly your prayers.”

Chief Anderson was democratically elected as the first female Tribal Chief of the MBCI in 2011 and then won a re-election bid in 2015.

The Choctaw Constitution and By-laws allow for tribal members to recall an elected official. In order for a recall to occur, sponsors of this petition had 25 business days to obtain signatures of 40 percent (2,150 signatures) of MBCI registered voters over the age of 18.

ELECTION continued from page five

who have not yet registered to vote may register at the Tribal Election Office. See Mavis H. Hickman, Tribal Voter Registrar.

If you do not register to vote **on or before 5:00 p.m., May 12, 2017**, you cannot vote in the June 13, 2017, election.

If you have already registered to vote, you do not need to register again unless you have moved to another community since the day of your registration.

Any registered voter in a community may challenge the residency of a person on the initial voters list by filing a voter challenge form to the Tribal Election Committee within ten (10) business days of the posting of the initial voters list.

ABSENTEE BALLOT

Any qualified registered voter who is age 57 or above, or who is physically unable to appear at the poll on election date, or who resides 50 miles or more distance from the community in which he or she is registered to vote, shall be entitled to vote by absentee ballot.

Requests for mailed absentee ballots must be submitted in writing to the Tribal Election Committee at the Tribal Election Office no later than **12:00 noon on May 24, 2017**. Requests for mailed absentee ballots received after this date and time will not be honored.

Walk-in absentee bal-

lot requests shall be submitted in writing to the Tribal Election Committee starting on May 25, 2017, through 12:00 noon on the day before the election.

Document of proof supporting the walk-in absentee ballot request is mandatory. Mailed and walk-in requests for absentee ballots can be only for the person making the request; the request cannot be made on behalf of others.

TRIBAL COUNCIL CANDIDATE REQUIREMENTS

Any enrolled member of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians may become a candidate for Tribal Council to be filled by Tribal Election who:

- Is at least 21 years of age at the time of election;
- Has not been convicted of, or pled nolo contendere to, any felony offense occurring at any time in any jurisdiction, unless such felony conviction has been pardoned;
- Has a minimum of a high school diploma or a GED of a twelfth grade equivalency;
- Is a resident of the Choctaw community which he or she desires to represent for at least six (6) months prior to the date of the election;
- Is registered to vote in the Choctaw community which he or she desires to represent;
- Secures endorsement signatures by at least 10 persons registered to

vote in the Tribal Election in the community from which he/she intends to run for office. (This requirement shall not apply to Crystal Ridge community where three (3) signatures will be required.)

TRIBAL COUNCIL CANDIDATE RESPONSIBILITIES

• Must submit these endorsement signatures on a standardized Nominating Petition Form at the Tribal Election Office of the Tribal Election Committee **on or before 4:30 p.m. on April 14, 2017.**

• It shall be the responsibility of each candidate to ensure that the persons signing his or her petition are reg-

istered to vote in Tribal Elections in the community which he or she wishes to represent.

• Shall pay a filing fee of \$50.00 to the Finance Office and shall then present a copy of the receipt to the Chairperson of the Tribal Election Committee.

Candidate qualification challenges must be filed with the Tribal Election Committee within two (2) business days of the posting of the initial candidate list.

The Tribal Election Committee must certify candidate petitions and qualifications before candidate names are placed on the ballots.

INFORMATION

For more information,

contact the Tribal Election Committee at one of the following numbers: (601)650-7475; (601)650-7468 or FAX (601)389-2252. You may also write to:

Office of Tribal Election,
Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians,
P.O. Box 6052 or
131 Annex Circle,
Choctaw, MS 39350.

Chairpersons of the eight (8) Local Election Committees, who are officially appointed to conduct elections in your respective community, may also be contacted.

The Choctaw Tribal Election Code is available at the MBCI website at www.choctaw.org.

SCHEDULES FOR REGISTRATION DRIVE

COMMUNITY	DATES	TIMES	PLACE
Bogue Chitto	Thursday, April 27 Monday, May 8	4:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. 1:30 p.m.-4:00 p.m.	Facility Building
Bogue Chitto -Henning	Saturday, April 22 Friday, May 5	4:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. 1:00 p.m.-3:30 p.m.	MBCI Henning, TN MultiPurpose Bldg. 1230 Hwy. 87 W.
Conehatta	Thursday, April 27 Thursday, May 4	4:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. 9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.	Facility Building
Crystal Ridge	Thursday, April 27 Monday, May 8	4:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. 9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.	Facility Building
Pearl River	Thursday, April 27 Friday, May 12	4:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.	Tribal Election Office
Standing Pine	Thursday, April 27 Monday, May 1	4:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. 1:30 p.m.-4:00 p.m.	Facility Building
Tucker	Thursday, April 27 Thursday, May 4	4:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. 1:30 p.m.-4:00 p.m.	Facility Building

Tribal members who are 18 years of age or older, who have not yet registered to vote in Tribal election, must register in the community where they live. Those who have already registered to vote do not need to register again unless they have moved to another community since they last registered. Please come & update your information.

Voter registration is open year round Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. at the Tribal Election Office, located behind Manpower Training Building. To register to vote, please have available: photo ID & Tribal enrollment number.

Title I Hosts PAB Meeting



Pictured from left are Outstanding Choctaw Educator Harlan G. Bell, Standing Pine Board Member Chantay Frazier & Standing Pine Elementary School Principal Linda Peoples.

The Parent Advisory Board's (PAB) working lunch was held at the Ayipa Café. Eleven board members & 12 guests enjoyed a delicious meal prepared by Nan Hartness & her Culinary Arts students.

PAB Chair Ray Willis recognized Harlan G. Bell as March's Outstanding Choctaw Educator. Harlan has worked with the Tribe since 1997. He was employed by Chahta Development for 14 years. While at Chahta, he helped build Tucker & Standing Pine Elementary Schools. On April 28, 2017, Harlan will have worked with the Tribal School Maintenance Department for 20 years. He is a man of many talents & can build almost anything.

Harlan, a lifelong resi-

dent of the Tucker community, attended Tucker Elementary & graduated from Choctaw Central High School. He has been married to his wife, Melinda, for 28 years. They are the parents of five adult children & are blessed with nine grandchildren.

Linda Peoples, Standing Pine Elementary School (SPES) Principal, has worked for the Tribal Schools for 28 years. She served as a classroom teacher, Lead Teacher, Curriculum Instructional Fascinator, & District Test Coordinator before taking the

helm at SPES.

Peoples believe we all have "mountains" to climb. She emphasized that ALL of our students can reach the summit of their individual mountain.

"The Tribal Schools have the best of everything, but we still need to keep moving forward. Together we can do this," stated Peoples.

The board will meet Tuesday, May 16, for its final meeting this school year. For further information, contact William F. Bell at 601-663-7660 or Dianne Johnston at 601-656-5724.

From the Choctaw Health Center 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 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:
Monday-Friday 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Business Office Phone Number:
601-389-4060

When the Business Office is closed (after 5:00 p.m., weekends and 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.

SPECIAL DIABETES PROGRAM FOR INDIANS
12TH ANNUAL SPRING INTO FITNESS 2 MILE WALK/RUN

NO REGISTRATION FEE APRIL 29, 2017 NO REGISTRATION FEE
(RAIN OR SHINE)

PRE-REGISTRATION DEADLINE:
THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 2017
@ 4:30 P.M.

YOU CAN PRE-REGISTER ONLINE @
www.time2run.net OR BRING THE
FORMS TO THE DIABETES CLINIC.



REGISTRATION BEGINS @
7:00 A.M. ON THE DAY OF
THE RACE

Geyser Falls stretch on
Blackjack Road

Sponsored by: Special
Diabetes Program for Indians

Participants who pre-register by 4:30 P.M. on Thursday, April 13, 2017, are guaranteed an official race t-shirt upon completion of the race. Participants must complete a registration form before entering the race. Participants under 18 years of age must have a parent or legal guardian's signature on the registration form. Forms are available at the Diabetes Clinic and SDPI Fitness Center located next to Piggly Wiggly at Choctaw Town Center until April 13, 2017.

Immediately after the race, awards will be presented to the winners in designated age division.

For more information contact the Diabetes Center: Barbara Bell @ 601-389-4070;
Ethel Thomas @ 601-389-4389 or Lefus Tubby, Jr. @ 601-389-4385.

Lady Warriors 2017 Champs

A year removed from their stunning defeat in the 2016 Class 3A finals, the Choctaw Central Lady Warriors looked to redeem themselves in this year's final. They didn't disappoint.

Employing their version of "shock and awe," the Lady Warriors defeated the Amanda Elzy Lady Panthers 75-42 to claim the 2017 MHSAA Class 3A Girls State Basketball Tournament championship March 11 at the Mississippi Coliseum in Jackson.

"It feels great! The girls worked hard all year and we had one mission to accomplish this year and that was to get back to the finals and take the gold back this time," said Lady Warriors head coach Bill Smith.

In last year's final, the Lady Warriors let a 11-point halftime

lead slip away as Booneville came away with a 58-49 win and 3A state title.

"I reminded them before the game how they felt last year riding home," said Smith. "I told them if they wanted to have a different feeling they would have to get out there, get after it and play. They came out and played as good as they could play."

The Lady Warriors defeated Velma Jackson 48-32 in a March 4 quarterfinal game and New Site 55-40 in a March 8 semifinal. Although a rematch with Booneville wasn't going to happen due to Amanda Elzy's semifinal OT win over the Lady Blue Devils 64-63 on March 8, the Lady Warriors knew they had their work cut out for them.

...see **CHAMPIONS**, pg. 10



Warriors Exit State Tourney

Despite being the number four team out of their region, the Choctaw Central Warriors made the most of their improbable postseason run.

The Warriors knocked out two higher ranked teams to make it to the quarterfinals of the MHSAA Class 3A Boys State Basketball Tournament as they were defeated by the Holly Springs Hawks 80-54 on Friday, March 3 at the Lee E. Williams Athletics and Assembly Center on the campus of Jackson State University in Jackson.

"All season long we've had to fight adversity. At the beginning of the season it always came back to bite us but towards the end of the season we learned to fight through it and come out successful. That's why we're here," said Warriors coach Brent Farmer.

After the 5-3A region tournament, the Warriors went on the road as they defeated Port Gibson 69-53 on Feb. 21 and Crystal Springs 60-44 on Feb. 25 in the opening rounds of the Class 3A tournament.

Coming into the contest, Holly Springs held a distinctive height advantage as 13 out of 16 players on their roster were listed 6-foot and above, compared to Choctaw Central as they had 4 out of 11 players over 6-feet tall.

"We started out with some jitters. We couldn't dribble the ball, shoot the ball, pass the ball. Holly Springs came out with the full court pressure pretty good and it worked for them," said Farmer.

Holly Springs took the opening tip-off but went the wrong

.....see **WARRIORS**, pg. 10



3-A STATE CHAMPIONS



**Chief Phyliss J. Anderson
and the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
congratulate our Lady Warriors,
Head Coach Billy Smith and Assistant Coach Elyse-Willis Etheridge
on their 3A State Championship!!**



**Congratulations to the CCHS Unified Basketball Team
on their Special Olympics Championship!!**

Tribe Mourns Passing of Director Willis

The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MBCI) remembered the service of Department of Public Safety Director Wendell Willis, 56, during funeral services on Thursday, March 2, 2017, at the Pearl River Community Center in Choctaw.

Rev. Gerald Willis, Sr. officiated the service. Interment, with military honors, was in the Pearl River Community Cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services of Philadelphia was in charge of arrangements.

Willis passed away on Sunday, Feb. 26 at the University Medical Center in Jackson.

Tribal Chief Phyliss

J. Anderson ordered all MBCI tribal flags at tribal buildings and grounds lowered to half-staff until sunset of the day of interment as a mark of respect to the first responders' community and in honor of Willis who was an integral part of MBCI Public Safety for 21 years.

"Mr. Willis promoted safety, law and order on our reservation and we are indebted for his honorable service," stated Chief Anderson.

Born on April 5, 1960, Willis graduated from Choctaw Central High School. He then enlisted in the United States Army and served as a military policeman. He was a veteran of the Gulf War and Operation Desert Storm. He retired from the military with the rank of sergeant.

Willis returned home and was employed by the Tribe as an officer with the Choctaw Police Department. He was then promoted as Direc-



WENDELL WILLIS
1960-2017

tor of Choctaw Wildlife and Parks, then Director of the Department of Public Safety.

Willis was a kind man who was honest, fair, strong, and generous. He loved his family and enjoyed spending time with them. He was always willing to lend a helping hand and offered kind encouragement and guidance. People were often uplifted by his positive spirit, smile and laughter.

He was active and never stopped learning.

...see **WILLIS**, pg. 12

CHAMPIONS continued from page eight

Prior to the contest, Lady Warrior junior Kyannah Grant was named the recipient of the C Spire Scholar-Athlete of the Game.

The Lady Warriors jumped out quickly as Grant took the opening tip-off and layed up the first basket within a few seconds. Junior Darien Tubby then took charge and scored six consecutive points for a 8-0 lead before an Elzy timeout at the 6:26 mark. After a Lady Panther basket, Choctaw went on a 15-10 run highlighted by junior Kyarra Grant's two 3-pointers for a 23-12 lead.

Elzy opened the second quarter on a 6-2 run to get within 7, but turnovers plagued the Lady Panthers as Choctaw pushed the offense into overdrive.

Tubby scored 10, Kyarra and Kyannah Grant scored 7 each and senior Sarah Allen added 6 points in the quarter as the Lady Warriors went on 30-5 run for a commanding 55-23 lead at halftime.

Tubby said the game plan was simple - run Elzy until they can't run anymore and shoot a lot.

"We couldn't stop,

...continued next page

WARRIORS continued from page eight

way to score an easy bucket for the Warriors. That would be the only miscue as the Hawks went on a 21-9 run to close the quarter. They then held a 25-9 advantage for a 46-18 halftime lead.

"At halftime, we talked to the boys and told them to settle down and fight through adversity. The boys played great basketball through the season and I was confident we could come back and put up a fight on our way back," Farmer said.

Holly Springs continued on offense as they held a 17-7 advantage as they took a 63-25 lead to close the third.

The Warriors had their biggest offensive output in the contest as they scored 29 points to Holly Springs' 17.

"In the second half we did a lot better. We had a lot of good plays, good shots and good defensive stops, we just couldn't string them all together," said Farmer.

Dillon Farmer scored a team high 10 points for the Warriors. Dylan Nickey and Quentin Anderson scored 8 each, Sri Grant 7, Zane Lilly 5, Caleb Williamson and Josh Isaac 4 each, and Tyler Bell and Tiger Briscoe 3 each. They ended their season with an overall 12-17 record.

"Everybody played hard. I'm really proud of my seniors (Dylan Nicky and Sri Grant). They really played their hearts out," added Farmer.

DaQuan Smith had a game high 29 points and Kendrick Fountain 21 for the Hawks.



The funeral procession, led by officers of the Choctaw Police Department & local departments, traveled down Hwy. 16 to Black Jack Road to the Pearl River Community Cemetery where Willis was laid to rest with full military honors.

even if it was just for a little bit, we had to keep going. We came out and played like we were capable of playing and I am so proud of that," said Tubby.

Sophomore Kaedre Denson's basket at the 5:53 mark in the third made it the largest lead for the Lady Warriors (40 points) as they led 63-23. Elzy went on a 6-0 run but Choctaw's Candace Jefferson scored four and Allison Meely two to close out the quarter up 69-31.

Elzy had a 11-6 advantage in the fourth as Choctaw's Jennavia Bollin, Jordan Bell and Maleighia Joe had a basket each to close out the contest for the 75-42 win.

Darien Tubby was

named the C Spire Player of the Game as she had a game high 18 points, 6 rebounds and 8 assists.

"She played really well. That got everybody going both offensively and defensively and got the crowd involved. Everybody fed off of her. She did a great job," said Coach Smith.

Denson said they needed to keep Elzy off the board as they held a 49-37 rebounding advantage as she and senior Reese Tubby had 8 rebounds each.

"I think we all did that pretty well. We knew how it felt last year to not have that gold ball and now it's a whole different feeling. We made our team proud and, of course, our people

proud," said Denson.

For the 31-3 Lady Warriors, Kyannah Grant had 13 points, 2 rebounds and 3 assists; Kyannah Grant 13 points and 4 rebounds; Sarah Allen 9 points, 4 rebounds and an assist; and Kaedre Denson 8 points, 8 rebounds, 2 assists and 2 blocks.

Seniors Candace Jefferson had an assist and rebound, Reese Tubby 2 points and Allison Meely 2 rebounds and an assist.

Juniors Jennavia Bollin added a rebound, Jordan Bell 2 assists and 4 rebounds, Maleighia Joe a rebound, and Lachrisa Williams 2 rebounds.

Amanda Elzy seniors Jamecia Grice had a team high 14 points and

game high 13 rebounds and Khiyee Robinson 11 points and 3 rebounds. They conclude their season at 29-2.

The Lady Warriors have now won six state basketball championships in Class 2A (1996, 1997, 1999) and Class

3A (2004, 2005, 2017).

Choctaw Central High School also has state championships in boys basketball Class 2A (1998, 1999), girls cross country Class 3A (2013, 2014), and girls slow-pitch softball Class 3A (2013, 2016).



LEFT, Choctaw Central's Kyannah Grant was named recipient of the C Spire Scholar-Athlete of the Game prior to tip-off. RIGHT, Lady Warrior Darien Tubby was named recipient of the C Spire Player of the Game with her 18 points, 6 rebounds & 8 assists.

CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES / CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER
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**Child Abuse Awareness/
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Parade & Activities**

**Wednesday, April 12, 2017
9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
Pearl River Recreational Field
Choctaw, MS**

Join Us As We Observe April As
**NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH
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Contact Children & Family Services at (601)650-1741.

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For More Information, Contact Albert Smith at (601)650-1727.

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present

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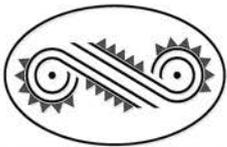
**SATURDAY, APRIL 22, 2017
12:00 P.M.-8:00 P.M.
PEARL RIVER RECREATIONAL FIELD • CHOCTAW, MS**

EVENT SCHEDULE	HOST DRUM	AREA HOTELS/MOTELS
12:00 p.m. - Gourd Dancing	Southern Pine	Pearl River Resort, 601.650.1234
1:00 p.m. - Inter-Tribal Dancing	HEAD DANCERS - TBD	Holiday Inn, 601.656.3553
2:00 p.m. - Choctaw Social Dancing	(All Dancers, Drums Welcomed)	Days Inn, 601.650.3590
4:00 p.m. - Supper Break		Deluxe Inn, 601.656.0052
5:00 p.m. - Grand Entry/Inter-Tribal Dancing		Save Inn, 601.656.1221
6:30 p.m. - Choctaw House Dance		Western Motel, 601.656.1223
7:30 p.m. - Candle Light Vigil		

Vendor Space Limited, \$10 (Must provide own table, chairs)
Contact Harold "Doc" Comby, 601.504.8195

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL
CHOCTAW SANE-SART AT 601.650.1732**

The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, its funding agencies, the Department of Family & Community Services' SANE-SART Program or the Department of Public Safety are not responsible for any injuries, thefts, or travel expenses that may arise from this event. This product was supported by grant number 2011-VR-GA-0029, awarded by the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, and conclusions expressed in this product are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.



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.

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.

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.

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

On Feb. 9, the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians' Traditional Dancers attended the Multi-Cultural Fair, sponsored by the Madison County School District at Ridgeland High School in Ridgeland.

They had a booth displaying exhibits on Choctaw history, culture and crafts. They performed several Choctaw social dances as well as passing out informational leaflets and pamphlets

regarding the Mississippi Choctaw.

Colleges such as Jackson State University, Mississippi College and Tougaloo College were all represented.

Representatives from several countries with booth displays included France, Germany, India, Morocco, Argentina, South Africa, Japan, and China.

Health organizations such as the Mississippi Department of Health



Education & Outreach Coordinator Trudy Jimmie, (second row, fourth from left) & CAP Outreach Coordinator Lorena Alex (second row, fourth from right) along with members of the MBCI Traditional Dancers dress in their full Choctaw attire to take part in a photo session by the International Club.

and Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi also presented some interesting and educational materials.

Ridgeland High School also had presentations from their Latin Club, Spanish Club and International Club.



Valora Sockey (above) did a fine job sewing diamonds on her Choctaw shirt. It is her first time ever to make a traditional Choctaw shirt. The session was held at the Pearl River Community Center on Jan. 31.



During February, Casey Bigpond, Trudy Jimmie & Lorena Alex conducted cultural classes in Crystal Ridge. Everette Sam & Rowena Willis served as consultants for the sessions. Pictured above, participants attend the sash & medallion workshop at the Crystal Ridge Facility Building.

WILLIS..... continued from page ten

He enjoyed fishing, participating in marathons and triathalons, riding his bike, grilling for his family and friends, reading, and watching movies. He also enjoyed traveling with his family, hiking and camping in the wilderness and nation-

al parks. He was a strong, positive role model to many, especially his children. He believed in always being a part of his community and maintaining a strong work ethic. He will always be an inspiration to those who knew him and will never

be forgotten. Willis is preceded in death by his parents, Quinnie Mae Willis and Foreman Bull, Jr.; and daughters, Annabelle Juliet Willis and Natalie Maria Anderson. He is survived by his wife, Roberta Willis; children, Adam Rad-

cliffe, Jamie Radcliffe and Matthew Willis; sisters, Susanna Nick-ey, Connie Willis and Patty Bell; a brother, Dan Willis; four grandchildren; and a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, and friends.

IN MEMORIAM

LORENA JOHNSON LEWIS

Funeral service for Lorena Johnson Lewis, 81, was held on Wednesday, February 22, 2017, from the Pearl River Community Center. Deacon Ricky Thompson & Rev. Travis Willis officiated.

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

Ms. Lewis passed away on Feb. 18 at the Choctaw Health Center in Choctaw.

She was a member of the Pearl River Baptist Church & enjoyed spending time with family & friends, fishing, playing cards, checkers, dominos, & watching wrestling. She was employed at Garan &

Chahta Enterprise.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Whitman & Viola Bell Johnson; sisters, Annie Lou Denson, Linnie Faye Conrad & Priscilla Study Isaac; & a brother, Harris Johnson, Sr.

Survivors include her daughter, Martha Jean Ferguson; a sister, Corina Bear; brothers, Charles Johnson, James Johnson & Chester Ben; four grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

CAMERON KEITH WILSON

Funeral service for Cameron Keith Wilson, 24, was held on Wednesday, March 1, 2017, from the Hope Indian Baptist Church in Pearl

River. Rev. Carl Wilson & Rev. Robert Paul Tubby, Sr. officiated.

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

Mr. Wilson passed away on Feb. 23 at the University Medical Center in Jackson.

He enjoyed being with family, listening to music & playing stickball.

He is preceded in death by his grandparents, John & Zella Martin, & Sammie Wilson, Sr.

Survivors include his parents, Delores Martin & Tony Wilson; sisters, Brianna Martin, Deanna Martin, Kelsey Jim, Tasha Davis, & Samantha Wilson; brothers, Anthony J. Wilson, Brian Martin, Kristopher Wilson, Kevin Wilson, & Thomas Salter; grandmother, Bessie Wilson; two aunts; 11 uncles; a great-aunt; three great-uncles; & a host

of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

WENDELL WILLIS

Funeral service for Wendell Willis, 56, was held on Thursday, March 2, 2017, from the Pearl River Community Center. Rev. Gerald Willis, Sr. officiated.

Burial was in Pearl River Community Cemetery with military honors. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.

Mr. Willis passed away on Feb. 26 at the University Medical Center in Jackson.

He was a U.S. Army veteran & served in the Gulf War. He was employed as a police officer with the Choctaw Police Department, then Director of Wildlife & Parks then Director of Public Safety.

He was preceded in

death by his parents, Quinnie Mae Willis & Foreman Bull, Jr.; & daughters, Annabelle Juliet Willis & Natalie Maria Anderson.

Survivors include his wife, Roberta Willis; children, Adam Radcliffe, Jamie Radcliffe & Matthew Willis; sisters, Susanna Nickey, Connie Willis & Patty Bell; a brother, Dan Willis; four grandchildren; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

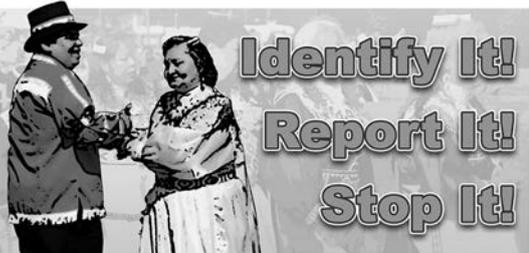
ARTHUR LEE FARMER

Funeral service for Arthur Lee Farmer, 81, was held on Monday, March 6, 2017, from the Pine Bluff Baptist Church in Sebastopol. Rev. Jack Sharp, Jr. & Rev. Dewight Patrick officiated.

....see OBITUARIES, pg. 14

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



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- John 8:31-32

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Pastor Thomas Ben

OBITUARIES..... continued from page thirteen

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

Mr. Farmer passed away on March 3 at the Choctaw Residential Center in Choctaw.

He was a sharecropper & logger. He enjoyed being with family, hunting, fishing, making blow guns, playing the guitar, reading his Bible, & singing.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Henry Farmer & Fannie Cooper; wife, Dorothy Polk Farmer; daughter, Patricia Ann Farmer; sons, Ricky Lee Farmer, Bobby Lee Farmer & Arthur Lee Farmer, Jr.; brother, Simon Farmer; four grandchildren; & a great-granddaughter.

Survivors include daughters, Vanell Farmer, Clara Wilson & Sandra Wesley; sons, Earl Farmer, Sr., Henry C. Farmer & Gilbert Bell, Sr.; 25 grandchildren; 50 great-grandchildren; 5 great-great grandchildren; a niece, a nephew, & a host of relatives & friends.

DAN FRAZIER

Funeral service for Dan Frazier, 61, was held on Thursday, March 9, 2017, from the Bogue Chitto Baptist Church. Deacon Kendall Wallace & Rev. George Dixon officiated.

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

of arrangements.

Mr. Frazier passed away on March 6 at R.P. White Nursing Facility in Meridian.

He was a tree planter & enjoyed fishing & spending time with family & friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Frazier & Linnie Frazier; sisters, Maggie J. Stoliby, Gloria McMillan, Norma Jean Frazier, Jill Robinson, Eva Lynn Frazier, Susan Frazier, & Betty Waltman; brothers, Eugene Frazier & Andy Frazier; & a granddaughter.

Survivors include a daughter, Amelia Williams; sons, Timothy Frazier & Nathan Bell; sisters, Emma Sam & Valerie Frazier; brothers, Odell Frazier, Sr. & David G. Frazier, Sr.; three grandchildren; an uncle, & a host of relatives & friends.

EUNICE BILLY

Funeral service for Eunice Billy, 78, was held on Tuesday, March 14, 2017, from the Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Red Water. Rev. Terry Dixon & Rev. Carl Wilson officiated.

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

Ms. Billy passed away on March 10 at the Choctaw Residential Center in Choctaw.

She was a homemaker & was employed at a restaurant, Garan & Leake Memorial Hospi-

tal as a housekeeper.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Williston & Jesse Billy; sisters, Betty Tubby & Mary Billy; & brothers, Milton Billy, Horace Billy, Vinus Billy, & an infant brother.

Survivors include a brother, Beamon Billy; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

**NANCY ANN BILLY
FARVE**

Funeral service for Nancy Ann Billy Farve, 70, was held on Wednesday, March 15, 2017, from the St. Therese Catholic Church in Pearl River. Father Bob Goodyear, S.T., officiated.

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

Ms. Farve passed away on March 11 at her residence.

She was an administrative assistant at the Division of Schools. She enjoyed spending time with family, cooking & traveling.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Joseph Billy, Sr. & Lilly Billy; husband, Huey Farve; brothers, Terry Billy & Joseph Billy, Jr.; & sisters, Oree Billy & Mary Frances Billy.

Survivors include her daughters, Matilda Rigen & Miranda Farve; a son, Randy Farve; sisters, Sally Steve, Mattie McMillan, Madie Garcia, & Dessie Bownas; brother, Julius Billy;

eight grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

LIAM DOMINIC BILLIE

Funeral service for Liam Dominic Billie, 5 month old infant, was held on Thursday, March 16, 2017, from the Bogue Chitto Baptist Church. Deacon Kendall Wallace & Rev. George Dixon officiated.

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

Infant Billie passed away on March 11 at the family residence.

He was preceded in death by a grandfather, Curtis Ray Bell; & grandmother, Christine Cotton.

Survivors include his parents, Ethan G. Billie & Alma S. Frazier; sisters, Scarlett Billie & Kaylee Billie; a brother, Javen Frazier; grandparents, Glen & Jo Billie, Erica Frazier; great-grandparents, Herman & Doris Billie; great-grandmothers, Valerie Frazier & Elma Bell; & a host of relatives.

**KAYSON RA'SHUN
CLEMONS**

Funeral service for Kayson Ra'Shun Clemons, one month old infant, was held on Friday, March 17, 2017, from the Bogue Chitto Baptist Church. Deacon Kendall

Wallace & Rev. George Dixon officiated.

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

Infant Clemons passed away on March 13 at the family residence.

He was preceded in death by a grandmother, Mattie Wilson; grandfathers, L.A. Townsend & Donnie R. Clemons, Sr.; one aunt; & two uncles.

Survivors include his parents, Donnie R. Clemons, Jr. & Catina Townsend; a brother, Zaiden Clemons; grandmother, Linda Clemons; four aunts; seven uncles; a great-aunt; & a host of relatives.

RANDY LEE WILLIS

Funeral service for Randy Lee Willis, 57, was held on Monday, March 20, 2017, from 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.

Mr. Willis passed away on March 16 at Anderson Regional Medical Center in Meridian.

He was a housekeeper at Silver Star Hotel & Casino. He was formerly employed at Chahta Enterprise, Choctaw Greetings & Choctaw Electronics.

He was competitive

...continued next page

in sports & coached the Tucker youth in the Choctaw youth basketball league during the 1980's.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Roger & Audie Mae McMillan Willis; brothers, Milburn Willis, Norman Willis, Hughie Willis, & Lester Willis; a sister-in-law; & three foster siblings.

Survivors include his sisters, Rita Willis Allen & Dephia Willis Chick-away; brother, Elvie Willis; an uncle; a great-aunt; a great-uncle; a foster sibling; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

LULA MAE LEWIS

Funeral service for Lula Mae Lewis, 85, was held on Sunday, March 26, 2017, from Hopewell Baptist Church in Standing Pine. Bro. Mark Patrick officiated.

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

Ms. Lewis passed away on March 23 at her

residence.

She attended Hopewell Baptist Church & was a member of the Women's Missionary Union. She enjoyed spending time with family & friends, fishing & cooking. She retired from the Choctaw Health Center & worked part-time with the Choctaw Language Program. She was proud of her Choctaw heritage & was a Choctaw social dancer, chanter, basket weaver, & quilter.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Howard Farmer & Martha Denson; husband, Prentis Lewis; daughter, Myra Stoliby; sons, Dickie Lewis, Daniel Lewis & James Lewis, Sr.; sister, Martha Jim; & a brother, Wilton Farmer.

Survivors include her daughters, Linda Champion & Betty Jane Lewis; sons, Amon Lewis & Pete Lewis; sister, Louise Wallace; 28 grandchildren; 84 great-grandchildren; 12 great-great-grandchildren; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

GERALDINE KING ANDERSON

Funeral service for Geraldine King Anderson, 69, was held on Monday, March 27, 2017, from Macedonia Baptist Church in Conehatta. Deacon John Smith, Bro. Mark Patrick & Rev. Robert Park officiated.

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

Ms. Anderson passed away on March 23 at her residence.

She enjoyed spending time with her family, meeting people, sewing, cooking, & attending church.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Joe King & Edna Denson King; sisters, Annistine Billy, Florine Dixon Billy & Necie King; brothers, Emerson King & Dalmon King, Sr.; sons, Savalas Anderson, Sr. & James Anderson; three grandchildren; & a great-grandchild.

Survivors include her daughters, Melissa Jim & Merica Mingo;

sons, Craig Anderson & Blake Anderson; a sister, Orattie King; a brother, Danny King; 17 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

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THE AFTERGLOW

*The memory of you is a happy one,
You leave an afterglow of smiles when life is done.
You leave an echo whispering softly down the ways,
of happy times, laughter, & bright & sunny days.
I'm sorry I didn't get to say "goodbye,"
But you came to me in a dream & said, "Don't you cry!"
You said, "I'm safe now & don't have to suffer,"
"I'm with God now, Mom, Dad & even my brothers."
"Son, I always loved you unconditionally,"
Now please watch over Mina, Grant & Wendy.
Dad, you comfort the tears of those who grieve,
to dry before the sun of happy memories...*

*I love you, Dad! Rest in Peace, Rev. Leonard M. Ben
Keep the faith - Richard B. Ben*



2017 Petal Southern Miss Powwow



April 8-9, 2017

Willie Hinton Park, Petal, Miss.

<p>SATURDAY, APRIL 8 Gourd Dancing 11 a.m. & 5 p.m. Grand Entry 1 p.m. & 7 p.m.</p> <p>SUNDAY, APRIL 9 Gourd Dancing 11 a.m. Grand Entry 1 p.m.</p>	<p>HEAD STAFF: Head Man - Don Ahshapanek Head Lady - Katelyn Shoemake Head Gourd - Doug Blanford Emcee - Harold Comby</p> <p>HOST HOTEL: Wagon Wheel Inn 1872 MS 42 Petal, Miss 601-582-8477</p>
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Happy 2nd Birthday to Danario Bell, Jr. on March 16. We love you Big Boy! Love, Mom, Dad, Jessie, Grandma & Grandpa & the rest of the family.



Happy 1st Birthday to Jessie D. Bell on April 9. We love you Osi Man! From Daddy, Mommy, Danario Jr, Grandma, Grandpa, & the rest of the family.

On March 3, 2017, our revered uncle, Mr. Hubert Jefferson, turned 82 years young. He is the pinnacle of what a man should be. "Hubie," as he is lovingly named, has been married to Melba Dixon Jefferson for 52 years & counting. He is the eldest & rock of our family. As an honorably discharged "Semper Fi," he gives us tough love. We truly respect, honor & love this man. We are blessed for having someone so caring like him in our lives!

With sincere gratitude,
The Jefferson Family



(Pictured with Hubert is Xiomara Fireplace who turned 10 years old on Feb. 27. Happy Birthdays!).

March Madness at DOECE

Fitness & exercise are important components for the overall wellbeing of our children. At the Department of Early Childhood Education (DOECE), we hosted a March Madness tournament on March 23-24 to promote physical activity.

What's more fun for the children than having their family turn out to watch them play, just as they did for the Lady Warriors at the Big House! We did, in fact, have a large turnout of parents & family members for each & every game! Thank you to all who took time out of their busy schedules to cheer on their favorite little player & team!

It was exciting & at times, hilarious, to watch the little ones play. There were those who really knew what they were doing, & then there were those who are still learning the ropes. But it was all in fun & each child received a medal to take home for their participation.

We even had a tie breaker

that resulted in one parent from each team to shoot the most free throws. As luck would have it, the parents selected were brother & sister, although representing different centers!

All the classrooms gave it their best, but the coveted class trophies went to the first & second place teams. Congratulations to Pearl River Head Start 'Lil Rascals of Room 5 for their second place win, & a BIG Congratulations to the Tucker Head Start Space Jam for their first place win! We are very proud of all our classrooms & teams & hope everyone had just as much fun as we did!

A special thank you to Jerod Thompson for allowing us to use the Pearl River Community Gym, & also big thanks to volunteer referees Max Anderson, Danian King, Boris Isaac, & Brian Frazier. You were a great help to us!

The DOECE provides comprehensive child development services to Choctaw children in 6 of the MBCI communities.

CHOCTAW COMMUNITY NEWS

MARCH 2017

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Champions - Tucker Head Start Space Jam



Runner-up - Pearl River Head Start 'Lil Rascals, Room 5

We serve children ages 8 weeks to 5 years.

Applications are accepted year round & we are a full year, full day program. Priority is given to children with

disabilities, foster children, & homeless children. For more information, contact your local center, or call the DOECE main office at 601-650-1680.