Dixon wins 2016 CTS Spelling Bee

Kaisen Dixon, fifth grade student at Pearl River Elementary School, was the grand champion speller of the 22nd Annual Choctaw Tribal Schools District-Wide Spelling Bee held Feb. 4 at the Standing Pine Elementary School Gymnasium.

Dixon will represent the Choctaw Tribal Schools in the Mississippi Spelling Bee in Jackson on Tuesday, March 15. The competition will be aired live on Mississippi Public Broadcasting beginning at 10:00 a.m.

Dixon was one of 45 local spelling bee winners representing grades fourth-eighth from Bogue Chitto (BCES), Conehatta (CES), Pearl River (PRES), Red Water (RWES), Standing Pine (SPES), and Tucker Elementary Schools (TES) and Choctaw Central Middle School (CCMS).

In the opening rounds, champion spellers from

USET SPF Impact Week Held in Washington

(WASHINGTON, DC) - The first official USET Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF) Impact Week Meeting was held Feb. 8-11 at the Marriott Crystal Gateway and on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.

USET SPF is a 501(c) 4 organization that places focus and attention on education of Congress and the nation’s administration regarding issues challenging Indian Country and advocating for the policy and legislation needs of its member Tribal Nations.

During the Impact Week Meeting in Washington, D.C., Tribal leadership once again placed focus on renewing their efforts to promote and protect the inherent sovereignty of Tribal nations.

In his opening remarks to Tribal leaders, USET President Brian Patterson stated, “Empowering our Indian people is key to making positive, progressive, and visionary change across our Tribal Nations. In doing so, we are promoting and protecting our inherent sovereignty rights and authorities which will ensure that we have strong, healthy and vibrant communities.”

“Our goal each time we meet is to unlock doors of opportunity for our Tribal Nations and find the solutions to the challenges that have prevented our Tribal Nations from thriving rather than just surviving. That is the important and sacred responsibility that we have and it is central to the work we face this week.”

With a year remaining in the current Administration, USET’s Board of Directors discussed its priorities for 2016; implementation of the Tribal Law and Order Act; updating of the Quiet Crisis Report with the U.S. Civil

Tribe Participates in Inauguration Parade

The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians participated in the 2016 Inauguration Parade of Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant on Tuesday, January 12 in downtown Jackson. The delegation, led by tribal drummers & Choctaw Indian Princess Emily Shoemake, included princesses & braves from the Choctaw Tribal Schools & members of the Choctaw Central High School Social Dancers.
Halito! As we start this new year I am so encouraged and excited about the many things in store for our great Tribe. With our new budget, not only are we able to provide cost-of-living increases and several other employee benefits but we also set aside money for building renovations, community improvements and new projects that will improve services and quality of life for our tribal members.

Throughout this issue of Community News and in the coming months you will see these projects underway as we move forward in creating new Choctaw progress.

**Tribal Elder Roofing Project**

This summer I introduced my “Next 100 Day Plan” which included a $10 Million Housing Plan. As part of this housing plan, I have set aside $1 million to make much needed and necessary roofing repairs to the homes of many of our tribal elders living on the reservation.

In the month of February we accepted applications through the Choctaw Elderly Program. We had a number of elders apply for the program and assessment teams have already gone out in the communities to evaluate the needed repairs. Those tribal elders living in conditions with the most damage, income hardships and degree of disability are considered urgent and will be serviced first.

We are also collecting data to determine how we can best serve those elderly living off the reservation but in the local county area. I am confident this program will provide the needed services to so many of our tribal elders and I thank everyone that is supporting this project.

**Pearl River Community Center (formerly known as Downstairs Facility Building)**

Also included in the FY16 budget were funds to update and renovate the downstairs facility building in Pearl River. This building has been used over the years for countless occasions such as birthday celebrations, school programs, Choctaw Indian Fair exhibits, funerals, and meetings to name a few.

In the last few months engineers, planners and a construction crew have worked to correct infrastructure problems such as drainage, electricity and sewage.

The facility had a number of overdue repairs that were made as well as fresh paint, new flooring and a new kitchen. I think the building looks great and I am excited to show it off.

Our new Pearl River Community Center (formerly known as the Downstairs Facility Building) was featured at an open house for tribal members on Tuesday, February 23, 2016, at 10:00 A.M. when light refreshments, self-guided tours and door prizes were offered.

The building is available to rent for $50 by calling Tribal Member Services office at 601-650-1538. I encourage you to stop by and see our newly improved and renovated facility building.

**More Upcoming Renovations**

More updates are still scheduled in the coming months before our Choctaw Indian Fair. We will build a new press box and restrooms at the CCHS Football Stadium; provide significant updates and improvements at the CCHS Softball field; new bathrooms at the Amphitheater Stage area; repair drainage and sewage lines, and renovate the entertainment house at the Amphitheater.

**Choctaw Health Center Marks One Year of Service in New Facility**

It’s hard to believe that just one year ago we held the grand opening celebration of our new Choctaw Health Center on March 2, 2015, and opened for services on March 9, 2015. It was indeed a monumental project and truly a great achievement for our Tribe.

We currently have 13 physicians on staff and offer a range of services to our tribal members for comprehensive healthcare. Those include dental, diabetes care, emergency department, emergency medical services, primary care, women’s wellness, WIC, laboratory services, optometry, medical imaging, pharmacy, rehabilitation services, respiratory therapy, behavioral health, and acute care.

We will celebrate the anniversary with a come-and-go reception on Wednesday, March 9th, 2016. Please stop by for light refreshments starting at 11 AM.

**NASA Tournament**

The Native American Sports Association (NASA) Basketball Tournament was held January 22-23, 2016, in Hollywood, Florida hosted by the Seminole Tribe.

Mississippi Choctaws were well represented with ten 18 &
Over men and women’s teams and one Over 40 men’s team. There were 37 teams total competing in the tournament.

MBCI had the first place team in the 18 & Over division coached by Brison La-Sarge and Trent Thompson; and the MBCI Legends Over 40 Men’s team coached by Rickey Anderson came in second in their division.

Congratulations to all our players and teams for a great showing at this year’s basketball tournament.

CCHS Athletics

Rick and I have enjoyed watching our student athletes during this season of CCHS Warrior basketball and soccer.

So far CCHS Lady Warriors are #1 in their division; CCHS Girls Soccer has won district now for four years in a row; and CCHS Boys Soccer had a great season clinching a playoff bid for the first time. In addition, the CCHS Bowling Team has also finished their season after competing in the regionals in Tupelo, MS.

We congratulate all of these student athletes on their achievements on their field of play and look forward to cheering on our basketball teams as they continue their drive to the “Big House!”

Upcoming Community Field Days

In the coming months, I will visit our communities for the annual Community Field Days. It is a time of fellowship, fun and food for all community residents, but more importantly it is a time that I can provide a report and updates on our tribal and resort progress.

It is important to me that I have these occasions to visit with you in your home community and to hear of your concerns and personal growth. We are making great strides to improve all our communities and provide more employment and housing opportunities.

I will share important numbers, details on programs and spend one-on-one time with our tribal members. If you are interested in volunteering at a community field day we welcome your support. Please call the Office of Special Projects at (601) 663-7524.

Closing

Over the last few weeks we have been experiencing some rough weather conditions. As the temperatures change we have seen wintry weather conditions and some tornadoes. I want to encourage everyone to take precautionary measures to ensure the safety and comfort of everyone in your homes, especially the elders, disabled and young children.

Please plan ahead and know your safe place in case of severe weather. We do our very best to alert people of bad weather through sirens, text messages and of course local media outlets.

Every Choctaw life is dear to me. Let’s look after each other to ensure safety for all our tribal members and may God continue to richly bless our great Tribe, the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians.

Many Blessings,

Chief Phyliss J. Anderson

Employees, Contest Winners Honored

Several employees of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MBCI) and winners of the annual Christmas decoration contest were honored during the Tribal Government Christmas Luncheon Dec. 18 at the Pearl River Community Gymnasium.

Clarissa Stewart of the Choctaw Health Center was named recipient of the 2015 MBCI Employee of the Year. She was also the recipient of the Extra Mile Award.

Other employee category award recipients included: Leslie J. Willis of the Choctaw Health Center, Workplace Improvement/Innovation Award; Verna Williamson of the Boys & Girls Club of the MBCI, Administrative or Clerical Support Award; Kevin Cotton of Choctaw Transit, Heroism Award; and John K. Cumberland of Tribal Administration, Leadership Award.

Winners of the 14th Annual Reservation-Wide Christmas Decoration Contest were recognized for their efforts and received cash awards. With 29 registered contestants from all eight Choctaw communities, Juannina Mingo of Standing Pine was the overall winner and received $600.

Shirley Wilson of Pearl River placed second and received $500; Judy Nickey of Conehatta placed third and received $400.

Contests named Honorable Mentions and $150 recipients include: Karene Jefferson, Bogue Chitto; Jennifer Thomas, Bogue Homa; Tonya Lay, Conehatta; Savannah Galvan, Crystal Ridge; Lorena Alex, Pearl River; Betty Ross, Red Water; Holly Peters, Standing Pine; and Marsha Davis, Tucker.
The following ordinances and resolutions were submitted to the Choctaw Tribal Council for consideration. Listed below is a brief summary and action taken. Individuals wishing to request a resolution and/or its attachment must have a DOCUMENT REQUEST FORM completed and submitted to the Policy and Legislative Office. For more information, call 601-650-7486.

TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING JANUARY 12, 2016

Resolution CHO 16-012, approving a Memorandum of Understanding between the University of Mississippi Medical Center and the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians’ Choctaw Fire Department and Emergency Medical Service, was ADOPTED 15 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain, 2 Absent (C. Ben & D. McClelland).

Resolution CHO 16-013, approving amendments to the Bylaws of the Choctaw Health Center, was ADOPTED 17 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

Resolution CHO 16-014, approving Laurie Hamilton, MSN, FNP, research “Utilizing Culturally Congruent Educational Interventions To Improve Native American Outcomes, was ADOPTED 17 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

Resolution CHO 16-015, approving publication request by University Medical Center Children’s Hospital employee, Dr. Laura Newman, Pediatric Hematologist/Oncologist, regarding Congenital Amegakaryocytic Thrombocytopenia; A Case Series and Review of Literature, was ADOPTED 17 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

Resolution CHO 16-016, applying for a grant from the State of Mississippi Department of Public Safety, Division of Public Safety Planning, to continue the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Grant Program, was ADOPTED 17 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

Resolution CHO 16-017, confirming the appointment of members to serve on the Tribal Personnel Grievance Panel, was ADOPTED 17 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.


Resolution CHO 16-019, approving a member to the Tribal Enrollment Committee, was ADOPTED 15 Yes (R. Bell, C. Ben, H. Ben, T. Chickaway, K. Edwards, R. Henry, R. Isaac, S. Johnson, D. McClelland, H. Nickey, L. Parkerston, B. Steve, J. Wesley, S. Willis, D. Wilson), 0 No, 0 Abstain.

Resolution CHO 16-020, confirming appointments of members to the Choctaw Tax Commission, was ADOPTED 16 Yes, 0 No, 1 Absent (L. Parkerson).

Resolution CHO 16-021, applying for a 2016 Native Agriculture and Foods Systems Initiative (NAFSI) Grant from The First Nations Institute, was ADOPTED 17 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

Resolution CHO 16-022, approval of commercial land assignments between the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians db/a/ Choctaw Shopping Center Enterprise and various tenants, was ADOPTED 16 Yes, 1 No (L. Parkerson), 0 Abstain.

Resolution CHO 16-023, adopting a Strategic Energy Plan, was ADOPTED 17 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

Resolution CHO 16-024, applying for a 2016 Tribal Energy Development Capacity (TEDC) Grant from the U.S. Department of Interior, was ADOPTED 17 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

Resolution CHO 16-025, accepting grant funds for an Economic Development Administration (EDA) Planning Grant, was ADOPTED 17 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

Resolution CHO 16-026, authorizing the Office of Economic Development to apply for a grant from the Administration of Native Americans, was ADOPTED 17 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

Resolution CHO 16-027, appointing directors to the Board of Directors of Chahta Holding Group, Inc., was ADOPTED 17 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

Resolution CHO 16-028, approving Tribal enrollments, was ADOPTED 17 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

Resolution CHO 16-029(B), approving increase in blood degree from previously enrolled members, was ADOPTED 17 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

The late Catawba Indian Nation Assistant Chief Wayne George

USET Rights Commission; discussing the Native specific provisions included in the recently passed Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and focusing on taxation issues facing Indian Country with the U.S. Department of Treasury.

Additionally, Impact Week also included updates and discussions regarding Trust modernization efforts, economic development, housing, health, Tribal historic preservation, and gaming. USET Tribal leadership also visited with members of Congress and discussed a wide range of issues.

USET took a moment to reflect, remember, and honor the life of Catawba Indian Nation Assistant Chief Wayne George, who passed away in January.

One of George’s passions during his lifetime was working to ensure opportunities and support to Catawba youth as he understood their success would ensure the success of the Catawba Nation and Indian Country.

USET also continued its tradition of involvement of its Tribal youth and focusing on future leadership development. Students from various USET member Tribals Nations were in Washington, DC to attend the Tribal Youth Summit. The week of activities was supported by USET and the Close Up Foundation, who worked in partnership to bring an enriching and empowering experience for USET Tribal youth.

USET Leadership Meets with Tribal Youth Summit Students

About 100 high school students from 23 of the USET member Tribal Nations met in Washington, D.C. as part of the Tribal Youth Summit. The 2016 Tribal Youth Summit is the 19th where the USET has partnered with the Close Up Foundation to promote within these students a greater learning about their Tribes, gain an understanding about how the federal government works with Indian Country, and engage in a cultural exchange.

A goal for the Tribal Youth Summit is to build leadership skills and foster positive development among the younger generations.

Throughout the week, students analyzed challenges facing their Tribal communities; developed solutions to those issues; visited with members of Congress; and held a mock board of director session where they discussed issues and presented resolutions to the USET Board of Directors.

USET President Patterson told the students on Feb. 7, at the beginning of their Tribal Youth Summit, the empowerment they receive through this week will help build resources for their Tribal Nations.

“You, as young leaders, will build some great skills and take back with you tools and resources that will eventually make a great impact on your community, and yes for your children’s future. Empowering you to make positive and lasting changes is what this week is all about,” said Patterson.

USET Secretary Dr. Lynn Malerba also told the students their attitudes toward making great change is a key factor in how their work as leaders will be effective.

“I really like how President Patterson always tells us at the beginning of each USET meeting that we must approach our work as Tribal leaders with good hearts and good minds. You must do the same this week and you will make the change,” said Malerba.
We would like for you to have the best patient experience at the Choctaw Health Center (CHC). Here are some quick reminders from the Business Office about referrals.

**REFERRALS**
In order to be eligible for Purchased and Referred Care, you must live on the reservation or in one of the ten counties: Attala, Winston, Noxubee, Leake, Neshoba, Kemper, Scott, Newton, Jasper and Jones.

**REFERRAL APPOINTMENTS**
- If the doctor at CHC decides you need a non-emergent referral, please allow a week or more before getting an appointment. We ask that you contact us if you have not received a phone call or a voice mail message.
- For NEW and FOLLOW-UP appointments, pick up your referral at the Business Office. You should not be asked for a co-pay at the appointment.
- For FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENTS, call to inform us or bring your appointment card at least one week in advance. If you bring it the day before, we may not have sufficient time to obtain all medical information from your referring physician. We want to ensure you have all information needed for your appointment.
- Be sure to take your Driver’s License or photo ID, insurance card, and medications to all doctor visits. Some providers will not see you without photo ID.
- Be sure to call the doctor’s office within 24 hours if you CANNOT make your REFERRAL appointment. Notify the Business Office as well. Call the doctor’s office to cancel or re-schedule your REFERRAL appointment. There will possibly be a FEE to you, for “no show” from that doctor’s office. CHC cannot cover these “no show” charges.

**BILLS/STATEMENTS**
- If you have received a bill from a previous referral, this means that we have not received it at CHC. Providers will send the bill to us or you, not both. We rely on you to bring in the bill to us timely. CHC pays only if you had a referral for the visit. Please be aware when you go to the doctor outside of CHC on your own without a referral, you are responsible for the bill and/or copay.
- Bills/statements brought in to CHC will require a two forms to be filled out. This includes information about the bill/statement and an authorization for us to request your bill information from the doctor. According to HIPAA guidelines, providers will not speak with us about your bill without this authorization form.
- We receive a high volume of bills/statements. Please allow us at least 30 days to receive the information from the doctor’s office or hospital. For more information, call the CHC Business Office at 601-389-4060.

**MEET THE CHC SPECIALTY DOCTORS**

Dr. Sarita Elizabeth Cox, ND, LAc., practices Naturopathic Medicine and is a licensed Acupuncturist. Dr. Cox currently has a clinic in Meridian. She will be at the Choctaw Health Center (CHC) weekly doing acupuncture. Dr. Cox will be able to help with symptoms such as adult post-operative, chemotherapy nausea and vomiting, addiction, headache, menstrual cramps, fibromyalgia, osteoarthritis, low back pain, and carpal tunnel syndrome. You may call the Primary Care Clinic to schedule an appointment.

Dr. Jennifer Rodriguez, MD, is a heart specialist (Cardiologist). She will start her clinic in March 2016 and will be available monthly. She currently works as a cardiologist at IMC in Meridian. You may call the Primary Care Clinic to schedule an appointment.

Dr. Ronnye Purvis, MD, is an OB/GYN who practices at the Purvis Clinic in Meridian. He will be available at Women’s Wellness Clinic to see patients who are referred from the primary care physician or one of our nurse practitioners at CHC.

Dr. Sarita Elizabeth Cox

Dr. Gregory Auzenne

Dr. Gregory A. Gordon

Dr. Otis Gowdy, Jr.

Dr. Jennifer Rodriguez

Dr. Ronnye Purvis

Dr. Urelaine Simon-Hart

Dr. Juantina Johnson

Dr. Urelaine Simon-Hart, LAc., will start her clinic twice monthly. He currently works as a Kidney Specialist at Meridian Internal Medicine Clinic (IMC). You may call the Primary Care Clinic to schedule an appointment.

Dr. Jennifer Rodriguez, MD, is a heart specialist (Cardiologist). She will start her clinic in March 2016 and will be available monthly. She currently works as a cardiologist at IMC in Meridian. You may call the Primary Care Clinic to schedule an appointment.

Dr. Ronnye Purvis, MD, is an OB/GYN who practices at the Purvis Clinic in Meridian. He will be available at Women’s Wellness Clinic to see patients who are referred from the primary care physician or one of our nurse practitioners at CHC.

Dr. Jennifer Rodriguez, MD, is an OB/GYN who practices at the Women’s Wellness Institute in Meridian. She is available at Women’s Wellness Clinic to see patients who are referred from the primary care physician or one of our nurse practitioners at CHC.

Dr. Ronnye Purvis, MD, is an OB/GYN who practices at the Purvis Clinic in Meridian. He will be available at Women’s Wellness Clinic to see patients who are referred from the primary care physician or one of our nurse practitioners at CHC.

Dr. Urelaine Simon-Hart, MD, is an OB/GYN who practices at the Women’s Wellness Clinic in Meridian.

Dr. Juantina Johnson, Chief Medical Officer, has a weekly Pulmonology (Lungs) Clinic at CHC. She sees patients with asthma, COPD and other causes of lung diseases. You may call the Primary Care Clinic to schedule an appointment.

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Dental Health Tips for Children

Children’s Dental Health Month has been observed in February since 1941. It has grown from a day-long event to an entire month now. This time is intended to bring awareness of dental health of children.

We are very busy with activities from the Early Child Care Centers to the Choctaw Health Center. Stay tuned for pictures and articles in the coming months.

BEFORE BABY IS BORN

Mothers, before your baby is born, you can begin taking care of his or her teeth. How, you ask? By taking care of your mouth and teeth.

We can treat prenatal moms throughout the pregnancy now to ensure that no harmful bacteria is passed from mom to baby. The same bacteria that causes cavities in mom’s mouth can cause preterm deliveries, low birth weights and miscarriages.

Please get a dental check up early during your pregnancy so dental treatment can be completed before delivery. We know how busy you will be after delivery.

HEALTHY TEETH ARE IMPORTANT
(EVEN BABY TEETH)

Children need healthy teeth to help them chew and to speak clearly. And baby teeth hold space for adult teeth.

Please read the following and maybe put yourself in Maria’s or Ann’s place.

Ann and her friend Maria were watching Maria’s children play.

“What are you doing?” asked Ann.

“I’m cleaning my baby’s teeth,” said Maria.

“But your baby hardly has any teeth!” asked Ann.

“Yes, but the dentist said there are things I can do to keep my baby from getting cavities.” said Maria.

“But don’t baby teeth just fall out?” asked Ann.

“Yes, but before they fall out baby teeth can decay and cause pain for the baby. And baby teeth are important—they hold space for adult teeth,” said Maria.

“What else did the dentist say?” asked Ann.

“She told me that fluoride protects teeth. She also said to feed my baby healthy foods and not to put my baby to bed with a bottle,” said Maria.

“When do you have to start taking care of a baby’s teeth?” asked Ann.

“As soon as they come in. Teeth can start to decay as soon as they appear in the mouth,” said Maria.

“I’ll have to start thinking of those things soon!” said Ann.

CHECK YOUR BABY’S TEETH

Healthy teeth should be all one color. If you see spots or stains on the teeth, take your baby to the dentist.

CLEAN YOUR BABY’S TEETH

Clean teeth as soon as they come in with a small, soft cloth or a baby’s toothbrush. Clean the teeth at least once a day. It’s best to clean them right before bedtime.

Young children cannot get their teeth clean by themselves. Until they are 7 or 8 years old, you will need to help them brush. Try brushing their teeth first and then letting them finish. Also, let them see you brush your teeth. This will reinforce the importance of brushing daily. You are your child’s best example.

FEED YOUR BABY

Healthy foods

Choose foods without a lot of sugar in them. Give your child fruits and vegetables for snacks. Save cookies and other treats for special occasions.

Diabetes Clinic News

The Diabetes Clinic is providing better services to every diabetic patient that comes to our clinic. We now have two providers, Dr. Joshi and Teresa Cumberland, FNP. Our clinic days have increased from 3 days to 5 days per week.

Diabetes patients have annual requirements to complete to satisfy the Diabetes Standards of Care. The requirements are:

• Diabetes check-up with labs;
• Diabetes management education;
• Foot exam;
• Diabetic eye exam;
• Dental exam;
• Nutrition assessment;
• Immunizations;
• Exercise education;
• Behavioral health screening.

Please call or stop by and make an appointment. If you are receiving any of these services from providers outside the Choctaw Health Center or one of the community clinics, let us know so the information can be placed in your CHC health record.

Important to Know

If you are coming to the Diabetes Clinic to pick up supplies, please allow at least 20 minutes. Required education services will be provided when you pick up supplies.

Clinic hours are 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. from Monday-Friday. Phone number is 601-389-4370.

THE CHOCTAW HEALTH SERVICES OUTREACH SERVICES PROGRAMS:

CONNECTING KIDS TO COVERAGE

HEALTH FAIR

Thursday, March 17, 2016
1:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.
Pearl River Facility Building

The Outreach Services Program received a grant through the Insure Kids Now program under the Department of Health & Human Services & is promoting education & enrollment for the Medicaid & CHIP Federal Programs.

Kids & Teens - all the way up to the age of 19 - could qualify for the free health insurance. They can get regular check-ups, immunizations, doctor & dentist visits, hospital care, mental health services, prescriptions, & more.

The Outreach Services Program encourages Department to come set-up a booth at the community event & offer their services at the Health Fair. If interested in setting up a booth, forms are available here at the Choctaw Health Center, 2nd Floor - Public Health. Deadline to turn in booth forms is Thursday, March 10 at 4:30 p.m. For more information, contact Lindsey Gibson at 601.389.4109 or Jenna Tubby at 601.389.4125.

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To find out if you qualify, visit www.KidsFlour.com or call Outreach Services Program
1-800-741-9862 KIDS FLOUR (Flour for Kids)
1-800-741-3163 Medicaid, PERS, or
1-800-385-4280 Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)

Reimbursement by the government.

For more information, visit us online at www.kidsflour.com
MOSQUITO CONTROL

Submitted by the Choctaw Health Center Office of Environmental Health

The Choctaw Health Center Office of Environmental Health strives to aid Tribal members in keeping pests which may be detrimental to public health controlled to as reasonable a level as feasible. Homeowners, business owners & Tribal government must work together through a system known as Integrated Pest Management.

WHAT IS INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT?

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is an overall pest management strategy for control of pests in homes, apartment buildings, dorms, & businesses.

IPM is a pest management system that combines non-chemical control strategies with less toxic pesticides using minimalizing risk to human health & the environment.

For example, traps, baits & gels might be used instead of sprays to control pests. IPM minimizes health risks for susceptible populations, such as small children & older adults. IPM also focuses on eliminating ways for pests to get into homes, as well as eliminating access to food & water if they do get inside.

MOSQUITO CONTROL

Everyone has had the unpleasant experience of being bitten by a mosquito. Mosquito bites can cause skin irritation through an allergic reaction to the mosquito’s saliva – which causes the red bump & itching. But a more serious consequence of some mosquito bites may be the transmission of serious diseases such as malaria, dengue fever & several forms of encephalitis, including West Nile Virus.

Not only can mosquitoes carry diseases that afflict humans, but they can also transmit diseases & parasites that dogs & horses are very susceptible to. These include dog heart worms, eastern equine encephalitis & West Nile virus.

There are about 200 different species of mosquitoes in the U.S., all of which live in specific habitats, exhibit unique behaviors & bite different types of animals. Despite these differences, all mosquitoes share some common traits, such as a four-stage life cycle.

Different species of mosquitoes prefer different types of standing water to lay their eggs. The presence of beneficial predators, such as fish & dragonfly nymphs in permanent ponds, lakes & streams, usually keep these bodies of water relatively free of mosquito larvae.

However, portions of marshes, swamps, clogged ditches, & temporary pools & puddles are all prolific mosquito breeding sites. Other sites in which some species lay their eggs include:

- Tree holes
- Old tires
- Buckets
- Toys
- Potted plant trays & saucers
- Plastic covers or tarps
- Places as small as bottle caps!

HABITATS

An important part of mosquito control around your home is making sure that mosquitoes don’t have a place to lay their eggs. Because mosquitoes need water for two stages of their life cycle, it’s important to monitor standing water sources.

- Get rid of standing water in rain gutters, old tires, buckets, plastic covers, toys or any other container where mosquitoes can breed.
- Empty & change the water in bird baths, fountains, wading pools, rain barrels, & potted plant bases at least once a week to eliminate potential mosquito habitats.
- Drain temporary pools of water or fill with dirt.
- Keep swimming pool water treated & circulating.

PREVENT EXPOSURE TO MOSQUITOES

Use the following tips to help protect yourself from exposure to mosquitoes:

- Use EPA-registered mosquito repellents when necessary & follow label directions & precautions closely. Repellents containing DEET have proven to be very effective. Some other products, such as citronella-based repellents, are somewhat effective. “Bug zappers” are NOT recommended. These actually attract mosquitoes & other flying insects.
- Tuck shirt into pants & pants into socks to cover gaps in your clothing where mosquitoes can get to your skin.
- Use head nets, long sleeves & long pants if you venture into areas with high mosquito populations, such as marshes.
- Stay indoors at sunrise, sunset & early in the evening when mosquitoes are most active, especially if there is a mosquito-borne disease warning in effect.
- Replace your outdoor lights with yellow “bug” lights, which tend to attract fewer mosquitoes than ordinary lights. The yellow lights are NOT repellents, however.
- Cover all gaps in walls, doors, & windows to prevent mosquitoes from entering.

...see MOSQUITO, pg. 8

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF PROGRAM FUNDS

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infant and Children (WIC) have been awarded funds by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to provide free supplemental food to eligible and certified participants. Eligible to participate in the program are pregnant, breastfeeding women who are at nutritional risk, infants and children up to the age of 5 years who are of low income and are eligible to receive services at the Choctaw Health Center. WIC also provides other services such as:

1. Nutrition Education
2. Referral services to other Health services when necessary for specific health protection and health promotion activities
3. Dietary assessment
4. Breastfeeding counseling
5. Farmer’s Market

All applicants must bring proof of income, residence, and I.D. to certify.

Examples of Proof of Income:
- A current pay stub less than 60 days old
- A signed statement from an employer indicating gross income earnings for a specified pay period
- Current W-2 forms
- An income tax return for the most current year
- Proof of Medicaid, TANF, or Food Stamps

Examples of Proof of Residence Include:
- Pieces of mail that include the client’s current address (e.g. current utility bill, bank statement, etc.)
- A valid driver’s license with the current address
- A mortgage/rental agreement

Examples of Proof of Identification Include:
- Driver’s license
- Tribal ID
- Student ID
- Employee Badge

The WIC office, located on the first floor of the Choctaw Health Center, is open to process applications and issue Food Vouchers, Monday to Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. For more information, please call the WIC office at 601-389-4510.

“...in accordance with Federal law and US Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, disability or national origin. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call toll free (866)632-9992 (voice). Individuals who are hearing impaired or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800)877-8339 or (800)845-6136 (Spanish).” USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. (2-11-11)
ACA Indian Exemption Info for Tribal Members

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) requires all Americans to obtain health care coverage beginning in 2014 or pay a tax penalty. American Indians and Alaska Natives are exempt from the penalty if they claim the Indian Exemption.

WHO IS COVERED BY THE INDIAN EXEMPTION?
The Indian exemption applies to anyone who is:
- An enrolled member in a federally-recognized Tribe;
- An Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) village or regional shareholder;
- Eligible to receive services from an IHS or Tribal health clinic.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE SERVICES FROM AN IHS OR TRIBAL HEALTH CLINIC?
IHS eligibility includes:
- Enrolled members of federally-recognized tribes and descendants who are part of a community served by the IHS or tribal health facility;
- California Indians as defined by 25 U.S.C. 1679;
- Non-Indian women who are pregnant with the child of an eligible Indian.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO TO CLAIM THE INDIAN EXEMPTION?
The exemption may be claimed by you or your tax preparer by filling out IRS Tax Form 8965, and selecting option “E” in Part III. You may also qualify for the exemption through the Health Insurance Exchange operating in your State, but using IRS Tax Form 8965 may be easier. If you already obtained an exemption certificate through the Exchange operating in your State, you may enter your Exemption Certificate Number in Part I.

The Indian exemption is not automatic. You need to claim it using IRS Tax Form 8965.

DO I NEED TO CLAIM INDIAN EXEMPTION IF I ALREADY HAVE INSURANCE OR SOME VERAL?
No, but you may want to claim the Indian Exemption in case you lose your coverage.

WHERE CAN I GET IRS TAX FORM 8965?

MOSQUITO ..................................................................................................continued from page seven

WHERE CAN I GET IRS TAX FORM 8965?

MOSQUITO SURVEYING
If you would like your property to be evaluated for mosquito harborage, contact the Office of Environmental Health at 601-389-4142.

Title I PAB Hosts Working Lunch
The Title I Parent Advisory Board (PAB) met at the Ayipá Café in Choctaw for their working lunch on Dec. 15, 2015. Fifteen board members and 22 guests enjoyed a delicious Christmas lunch.

Standing Pine Elementary School Music Teacher Melody Starling, along with eight of her exceptionally talented students, entertained board members and guests with their rendition of a Disney musical.

PAB Chair Ray Willis honored Walter Jím as December’s Outstanding Choctaw Educator. Walter has worked with the Tribal Schools since 1994. He has been a custodian at both the old and new Tucker Elementary Schools and takes pride in his work and always strives to make the school look good.

Before his employment with the schools, Walter worked with the Tribal Construction Company. He and his late wife, Louise, have been blessed with two daughters and three sons.

Willa Brantley, Director of Education, and David Germany, Director of Schools, both shared information about the schools’ progress with board

...........continued next page
FIRST LEGO League Tournament Winners Announced

The Choctaw Tribal Schools held the 14th Annual FIRST LEGO League Tournament on Jan. 23 at the Pearl River Elementary School Gymnasium. Over one hundred students participated in this year’s event.

FIRST LEGO League (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 following awards were presented after a day of competition.

Judges’ Award
During the course of competition the judges may encounter a team whose unique efforts, performance or dynamics merit recognition. Some teams have a story that sets them apart in a unique way. Sometimes a team is so close to winning an award that the judges choose to give special recognition to that team. The Judges’ Award allows the freedom to recognize a remarkable team. The Judges’ Award was presented to System Overload from Pearl River Elementary School.

Robot Performance Award
The Robot Performance Award was presented to Oka Homma representing Red Water Elementary School. The Oka Homma’s robot achieved the best score on the competition field.

Robot Design Award
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 Design Award was presented to System Overload from Pearl River Elementary School.

Judges’ Award Recipient - System Overload

Members and Guests
Chantay Frazier was elected Standing Pine representative to the PAB.

The Board will meet again on Feb. 23. For more information, contact William F. Bell at 601-663-7660 or Dianne Johnston at 601-656-5724.

Pictured from left are Walter Jim, December’s Outstanding Choctaw Educator; Willa Brantley, Director of Education; PAB Chair Ray Willis, new board member Chantay Frazier, & PAB Co-Chair Crystal Roach.

Standing Pine Elementary School music students & their teacher, Melody Starling.

BEE .................................................................................... continued from page one

Project Presentation Award
The Project Award was presented to Standing Pine Elementary School’s Garbage Terminators for their utilization of diverse resources to formulate an in depth and comprehensive understanding of the problem they identified.

..........see LEGO, pg. 10

Pictured from left are spelling bee grade category winners Kaisen Dixon (5th grade-overall winner), Nataysia Willis (4th grade), Makayla Hickman (6th grade), Cheyan Robinson (7th grade), & Martina Willis (8th grade).
LEGO ................................................................. continued from page nine

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. 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 Core Values Award was presented to OTG Squad from Tucker Elementary School.

Champion's Award
This award recognizes a team that embodies the FIRST LEGO League experience, by fully embracing our CORE Values while achieving excellence and innovation in both the Robot Game and Project. The Champion's Award was presented to Pearl River Elementary School's LEGO® Warriors.

Pearl River’s LEGO® Warriors will represent the Choctaw Tribal Schools at the FIRST LEGO® League Mississippi Championship in Vicksburg in March.

FLL Core Values Award Recipient - OTG Squad
Team members include Kristina Taylor, Seriah Cumberland, Malakai Charlie, Nyonia Kanaogawa, Elray Willis, Dewight Chickaway, Leilani Charlie, Olivia Willis, Ariana Ramirez, Ellyonna Chickaway, & Coach Karla Clearman.

Project Presentation Award Recipient - Garbage Terminators
Team members include Jaeden Wesley, DeShaylee Tubby, Conner Billy, Taezalin Tubby, Kaiden Dixon, Armando Conner, Billy, Tamaya Hampton, Tyra Billy, Demidrea Stokes, Alejandro Clemmons, Coach Felicia Hudson, & Coach Maria Hartness.

Robert Design Award Recipient - Triple “R” Squad

RWES Hosts Spelling Bee
Red Water Elementary School (RWES) hosted their school-wide spelling bee on Jan. 13. Winners in grades 4th-8th then participated in the Choctaw Tribal Schools' District-Wide Spelling Bee on Feb. 4.

Representing RWES in the district spelling bee were Carmelo Dixon (4th grade), Keri Wilson (5th grade), Zander Sockey (6th grade), Ashanti Body (7th grade), and Armando Lopez (8th grade).

Students placing first, second, or third in the RWES spelling bee included the following:
(Pre-K) - Presley Phillips, Ginger Burnside & Logan Bell;
(K) - Serenity Kopaddy, Hadley Mack & Paris Martinez;
(1st grade) - Zahe Wilson, Josiah Wishork & Ashlyn Killingsworth;
(2nd grade) - Christopher Williams, Leah Lewis, Adarius Lewis, Kinsleigh Willis, Ansley Wallace, & Carlyle Phillips;
(3rd grade) - Sebastian May, Bracyn Willis & Kaden Edwards;
(4th grade) - Carmelo Dixon, Buford Billie & Bralanna Wilson;
(5th grade) - Keri Wilson, Maddux Dixon & Tayler Tigges;
(6th grade) - Zander Sockey, Breely Wilson & Avontae Jones;
(7th grade) - Ashanti Body, Jurnee Jones & Trevell Vivi ans;
(8th grade) - Armando Lopez, Taezalin Tubby & Iver son Allen.

First LEGO League
Core Values Award
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 and other potential supporters.

Team members include Kristina Taylor, Seriah Cumberland, Malakai Charlie, Nyonia Kanaogawa, Elray Willis, Dewight Chickaway, Leilani Charlie, Olivia Willis, Ariana Ramirez, Ellyonna Chickaway, & Coach Karla Clearman.
Lady Warriors, Choctaws Win CTS Tournament

The Choctaw Central Middle School Lady Warriors and Conehatta Elementary School Choctaws claimed this year's Choctaw Tribal Schools basketball championships on Jan. 28 at the Tucker Community Gymnasium.

The Lady Warriors defeated the Conehatta Lady Choctaws 55-24 for the girls title while the Choctaws topped the Warriors 50-40 for the boys championship.

The annual tournament, hosted this year by Tucker Elementary School, features seventh & eighth grade teams representing Bogue Chitto, Conehatta, Red Water, and Tucker Elementary Schools and Choctaw Central Middle School.

The Lady Warriors jumped on the Lady Choctaws early as they took a 14-6 lead in the opening quarter. Choctaw Central then took a 9-2 advantage in the second for a 23-8 lead into halftime.

The Lady Warriors scored 15 to the Lady Choctaw's 9 in the third for a 38-17 lead. In the final quarter the Lady Warriors added 17 and held Conehatta to only seven points.

LaCaniya Anderson of CCMS scored a game-high 10 points and earned MVP honors. Tia Saunders scored seven & Shemah Crosby six. Jashuntaye Isaac, Maiya Joe, Taelor York, Meloney Thames scored five each & Melanian Jimmie four. Lali Crosby, Rayven McMillan, Jaida Bell, & Krystyn Martin scored two each.

For Conehatta, Layla Wishork had a team high nine points as Christi Lewis scored six, Leloni Shoemake four, Shaylene Thomas three, & Candace Willis two.

In the boys' final, Conehatta went on a 13-7 run in the first quarter & was highlighted by a half-court shot at the buzzer by the Choctaws' Deshane Wishork.

Conenhata held CCMS to four points in the second as they scored 13 for a 26-11 halftime lead. CCMS had a 11-10 advantage in the third but still trailed Conehatta 36-22.

Zane Lilly of CCMS scored 13 of the team’s 18 points in the fourth but come up short as the Choctaws came away with the 50-40 win.

Conenhata’s Gerald Isom had a game-high 22 points as teammate Wishork had 18 points and earned MVP honors.

Ronald Billy and Chris Thomas scored four each and Billie Isom had two for the Choctaws.

Tristen Gibson scored 13 for the Warriors, Kashden Bell six and Dewanye Cotton and Miles Steve scored four points each.

RWES Science Fair Winners
The following students placed first or second in the school-wide science fair at Red Water Elementary School. They are, kneeling from left, Eladia Martinez, 2nd place; Ansley Wallace, 1st place; Natalie Chitto, 1st place; Carlsile Phillips, 1st place; standing, Ashanti Body, 1st place; Sissie Gibson, 1st place; Gabriel Chitto, 1st place; Ta Jae Cook, 1st place; & Karideon Willis, 1st place.

SPES releases Honor Roll
Standing Pine Elementary School announced the Honor Roll for the second nine-weeks of the 2015-16 school year. Students on the Chief’s List attained an average of 90 or higher. Students on the Principal’s List attained a 90 average or higher.

CHIEF’S LIST
First grade - Brady Farve, Yazmire Hickman & Malenu Sockey.
Second grade - Zander Frazier & Tyris Stokes.
Third grade - Brylee Willis.
Fourth grade - Cameron Reed & Nataysia Willis.
Fifth grade - Taiton Stokes.
Sixth grade - Jaeden Wesley.

PRINCIPAL’S LIST
First grade - Lacy Alex, Bayliss Billy, Ty Briscoe, Hayden Denson, Bryant Jim, & Jakayla Moore.
Second grade - Zahya Amos, Aninston Billy, Yuriana Crosby, Jonas Hardy, Treylon Lindsey, & Sunshine Thomas.
Third grade - Kaymeree Gibson, Sadie Vaughn & Keira Willis.
Fourth grade - Aiden Alex, Anya Anderson, Jabari Denson, Chloe Wesley, & Fichik Willis.
Fifth grade - Tayen Jim, Christy John, Ruben Mendez, Bishop Reed, Braxton Roach, & Deshaylee Tubby.
Sixth grade - Connor Billy, Ethen Hernandez, Trenton Reed, Thomas Tangle, & Seth Thomas.
CCHS 20+ Club Honored
The 20+ Club at Choctaw Central High School is an organization with membership reserved for those who have scored 20 or above on the ACT. It was created to recognize & reward academic achievement & to encourage other students to strive for excellence on the ACT. Members of the 20+ Club & two students of the 30+ Club were honored. Pictured above, seated from left, are Tayshaun Mingo & Bryce Billy; middle row, Katie Mingo, Jaysia Mitch, Searra Wilson (30+), Lattoriah Johnson, Breanna Isaac, Harvey McMillian; back row, Reyes Willis, Nicholas McMillian (30+), Robert York, Emilee Thames, Coby Smith, Jennard Bollin, Peyton Bell, & Billy Johnson. Not pictured are Dylan Alex, Jasmine Hickman, Dustin Mingo, & Adonis Willis.

Grant Named All-State Cross Country
Choctaw Central High School sophomore Kyannah Grant, left, was selected to the Best of MSPreps 2015 Girls All-State Cross Country Second Team. For the second consecutive year she placed runner-up in the MHSAA Class 3A State Cross Country Championship on Nov. 9. Also pictured is Lady Warriors coach & mother Gwynn Grant.

CCHS Bowling Team Competes in Region Tourney
The Choctaw Central High School Bowling Team competed in the Class I Central Bowling Regional Tournament on Feb. 9 in Tupelo. The Lady Warriors placed fourth & the Warriors placed fifth. Named to the All-Region Team were Mahali Henry (Girls 1st Team), Carlee Jimmie & Breanna Isaac (Girls 2nd Team), & Montel Jordan (Boys 2nd Team). Team members include (LEFT) kneeling, Hannah Anderson; back row, Carlee Jimmie, Breanna Isaac, Annerly Smith, Autumn Lewis, Katelyn Shoemake, & Mahali Henry; (RIGHT) kneeling, Billy Johnson, Derrick Mingo, Montel Jordan; back row, Josh Jordan, Quentin Naneto, Gunnar Tubby, Michael Wilson, & Brandon Farmer. Serving as coach was CCHS Assistant Principal Liddia Hughes.

CCHS Soccer Teams Make Playoffs
The Choctaw Central High School soccer teams earned a berth in the girls & boys Class 1A-2A-3A playoffs. The Lady Warriors (17-3-1) claimed their fourth consecutive division title & made it to the second round of the playoffs before being defeated by South Pontotoc 3-0 on Jan. 30. The Warriors (9-8) made the play-offs for the first time & were defeated in the first round to Independence 4-1 on Jan. 26. Team members include (LADY WARRIORS) Malania Grasshopper, Dana Briscoe, Keyla Mingo, Angelia Morales, Symone Williams, Leighanna Thomas, Breanna Billie, Alexis Sam, Betty Mingo, Hope Pesada, Jayna Ben, Brekaitya Ray, Jayna Thomas, Kyliyah Tubby, Anastasia Ben, Alliya King, Amya McMillian, Charlita Gibson, & Sierra Wallace; (WARRIORS) Wilson Dixon, Jeremiah Robinson, Graviel Velasco, Adam Joe, Jacob Billy, Randale York, Keynon Wilson, Jennard Bollin, Toby Lewis, Forrest Billy, Treyton Ben, Beeman Farmer, Isaiah Billy, Coby Smith, Nick McMillian, Jacob Wacker, Josiah Tubby, Peyton Bell, Reyes Willis, & Robert York. Coaches are Aaron Terrell, Sharon Howard & Daniel Thomas.

Billy Signs With East Central
Choctaw Central High School senior Bryce Billy signed a football scholarship with East Central Community College during National Signing Day on Feb. 3. Billy was the starting quarterback the last two seasons & has passed for 2,263 yards with 22 touchdowns. He also rushed for 295 yards & 11 touchdowns. He is also a member of the Warrior basketball team. Pictured above, seated from left, are CCHS Head Coach Jerod “Taco” Thompson, Bryce Billy, mother Melanie Stephens, CCHS Assistant Coach Aleric Keams; standing, CCHS Athletic Director Walter Wilson & CCHS Basketball Head Coach Brent Farmer.

Warriors Earn Football Honors
Several members of the Choctaw Central High School Warriors football team were honored for their outstanding play in District 5-3A during the 2015 season. Pictured, front row from left, are All Region honorees Bryce Billy (Co-Academic MVP); Dayton Bell (First Team); Harvey McMillan, Jr. (Second Team); Dakota Kennedy (First Team); middle row, Sri Grant (Second Team); Damion Williams (Second Team); Tanner John (Second Team); Titus Jim (Second Team); back row, Anfernee Dixon (First Team); & Jeremiah Robinson (Best Kick Returner).
Business & Bugs
By Jim McAdory, MSU Extension Agent for MBCI

Craig Hilohwa Nickey, a member of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians and a sophomore at Mississippi State University (MSU) in Starkville, has an ambition to earn a finance degree, return to the Tribe and serve the Choctaw people. But a job opportunity that’s a little off the future accountant’s beaten path has arisen.

Assistant professor Dr. JoVonn Hill, a Meridian native, is a research professor in the MSU Entomology Department. Through a grant from the National Park Service, they are researching the Monarch Butterfly through native wildflower and prairie restoration. Much of this project is taking place near Tupelo.

Since the grant pays for a student worker, the search for a bright, dependable student landed Nickey into this unlikely field, literally.

“The work is unlike anything I’ve ever done, and I’m really glad to receive such a wide array of exposure to what MSU does, not just in academics, but in research too,” said Nickey.

A product of Choctaw Central High School, Nickey believes the education he received prepared him well for the challenges of earning a degree.

“It’s a lot of hard work but anyone can do it if they really want to.” Nickey said he highly recommends Tribal students in choosing MSU as their college of choice.

“The atmosphere here is great, the quality of education is very high and it’s not too far from home.”

Nickey is achieving great things. Not only is he studying hard and making the grades to prove it, but he’s working in a field of research that will not only broaden his horizons, but benefit the university and the state while protecting the Monarch Butterfly. He is an example of what MSU is all about - learning, research and service to make a better world.

Congratulations to not only Nickey, but to his family, school and Tribe for producing such productive, young people.

CCHS Hosts Senior Night
Choctaw Central High School honored seniors in basketball & cheerleading during a recognition ceremony during intermission of the Choctaw Central-Kemper County contests on Friday, Feb. 5. Honored were basketball players Kyree Alex, Tori Johnson, Tiara Joe, Tayshaun Mingo, Bryce Billy, Harvey McMillan, manager Hananiah Tubby, and cheerleaders Breanna Isaac, Hillary Joe, Cecilia Ketcher, & Autumn McMillan. Melanie Stephens was also honored as CCHS Supporter of the Year.
**GED Test: “Pass” Score Lowered**

Earning a GED just got easier. The company that administers GED testing for many states has lowered the score it takes to pass each subject area from 150 to 145.

Officials with GED Testing Service announced the changes on Jan. 26, explaining that data shows students who took the GED test were being held to a higher academic standard than their counterparts in high school.

Mississippi has adopted the lower test score effective immediately, according to an email to community college educators by Sandy Crist, state director for Adult Education & High School Equivalency, Mississippi Community College Board.

Officials with GED Testing Service recommend that states grant a GED to students who have taken the test since Jan. 1, 2014, and scored at least 145 in each subject area.

“What this means for Mississippi: We will be issuing an additional 637 High School Equivalency Diplomas – grandfathers those who passed the test,” Crist wrote in the email.

At East Mississippi Community College, Adult Basic Education Director Jim Bearden said his staff is scrambling to identify students who have passed all or portions of the test under the new guidelines.

Bearden said his office has already identified eight students who have taken the test and now qualify to receive their diploma. There may be more.

On the GED test, students must earn a passing score of 145 in each of the following areas: Reasoning through Language Arts; Mathematical Reasoning; Science; and Social Studies. Students who earned a 145 or greater in any of the four test areas will not need to retake that portion of the test.

“Those students who took the test and now qualify to receive their diploma should update their address on their account,” Bearden said. “We want to encourage students who have been holding off, thinking they weren’t quite ready, to renew preparations to take the test now that the passing score has been lowered.”

GED Testing Service has also added two additional performance levels: GED College Ready, used to signify readiness to enter credit-bearing college courses; and GED College Ready + Credit, which may qualify students for up to 10 hours of college credit.

The new GED test performance levels are:

- **Pass / High School Equivalency** (Score 145 or higher)
- **GED College Ready (Score 165 or higher)**
- **GED College Ready + Credit (Score 175 or higher)**

More information is available at www.gedtestingservice.com.
NEW YEAR’S TIP-OFF
YOUTH TOURNAMENT
RUNNERS-UP, CHAMPIONS

Tiny Girls (ages 5-6) Runner-Up
RIM ROCKERS

Tiny Girls (ages 5-6) Champions
LIL’ BALLERS

Rookie Girls (ages 7-8) Runner-Up
BEARCATS

Rookie Girls (ages 7-8) Champions
LIL’ CHAOS

Tiny Boys (ages 5-6) Runner-Up
WILD INDIANZ

Rookie Boys (ages 7-8) Runner-Up
BULLDOGS

Rookie Boys (ages 7-8) Champions
LIL’ SOONERS

Little Boys (ages 9-10) Runner-Up
FLIGHTS

Little Girls (ages 9-10) Runner-Up
STORM

Little Boys (ages 9-10) Champions
MERIDIAN WARRIORS

Young Boys (ages 11-12) Runner-Up
Flights

Young Girls (ages 11-12) Runner-Up
CHAOS

Young Girls (ages 11-12) Champions
TEAM HUSTLE

Young Boys (ages 11-12) Champions
MERIDIAN WARRIORS

Young Girls (ages 11-12) Runner-Up
LIL’ BALLERS

Young Boys (ages 11-12) Champions
LIL’ SOONERS

Young Girls (ages 11-12) Runners-Up
LIL’ SOONERS

Young Boys (ages 11-12) Runners-Up
MERIDIAN WARRIORS

Young Girls (ages 11-12) Runners-Up
TEAM HUSTLE

Young Boys (ages 11-12) Runners-Up
MERIDIAN WARRIORS
The Department of Chahta Immi (DCI) was one of three recipients of a monetary award from the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MBCI) at the 2015 Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony on Dec. 3. The $7,500 monetary award will go towards the Cultural Affairs Program’s (CAP) Alhipa Chito Ikbi (drum making) project. The Choctaw drum is considered the heart of our Choctaw people. The CAP staff will be seeking the expertise of experienced drum makers as project consultants so the younger generation can acquire skills to make Choctaw drums.

Support and generosity from the Tribal Administration greatly benefit CAP in their endeavor to inspire, promote, enhance, and embrace Choctaw culture. Thanks to all who were involved!

ECCC Teams Up With DCI To Serve Up Native Cuisine

Chef Barry Karrh and the Culinary Arts Program at East Central Community College in Decatur had incorporated a unit on Native American food pathways and traditions into American Regional and International Cuisine and requested the MBCI to assist with the menu and preparation of the traditional meal.

The purpose for the luncheon was to educate Chef Karrh’s students on the importance of Native food traditions and for the MBCI to share their understanding with students. An authentic meal was made consisting of roasted venison leg, pork loin, succotash (squash corn & bean stew), frybread, hominy, tomato salad, blueberry cobbler, and cake.

Choctaw Beading Classes

Before Europeans brought beads over 500 years ago to America, animal bones, teeth, horns, stones, shells, seeds, wood, etc., were carved into beads by Natives. When glass beads were introduced, it became part of the culture of many tribes, including the Choctaws. Today, CAP hosts beading classes to preserve traditional skills in beadwork using glass beads for necklaces, moccasins, earrings, and all sorts of ornamental coverings.

In December 2015, CAP conducted beading classes in the Pearl River and Conehatta communities.

DCI Special Projects/Media Program Announces Oral History Project

In August 2015, the DCI Special Projects/Media Program was awarded a grant by the Multicultural Intermediary for Collaborative Action (MICA) to conduct an oral history project.

The goal of Choctaw Tribal Elders Oral History Project (CTEOHP) is to conduct a series of oral history interviews with Mississippi Choctaw elders and create educational materials on Choctaw cultural topics to educate young Choctaws about their heritage. Project activities include collecting cultural artifacts and photographs.

Currently, the CTEOHP staff has begun recruitment...
activities. The project staff is seeking elders who would like to share their stories and wisdom in oral history interviews. Community members are invited to share their photographs, newspaper clippings, video and audio recordings, artifacts, and memorabilia from the 1930s-1960s. Those interested in participating with the CTEOHP can contact the Special Projects/ Media Program at (601) 650-7743.

Pushmataha’s Final Resting Place
Pictured above after a recent snowstorm is the final resting place of Choctaw Chief Pushmataha in the Historic Congressional Cemetery in Washington, D.C. Many historians considered him the “greatest of all Choctaw chiefs” & was highly regarded for his skill & cunning in both war & diplomacy. In 1824, Pushmataha traveled to Washington to petition the Federal government against further cessions of Choctaw land. During his visit, he contracted a viral respiratory infection & passed away. He was buried with full military honors. A replica of his cenotaph is on display at the Chahta Immi Cultural Center in Choctaw.

(Taken courtesy of Historic Congressional Cemetery, Washington, D.C.)

Round Comb Workshops
A round comb workshop was held in Crystal Ridge on Jan. 4 and was a big success. The CAP staff instructed participants on applying modern style decorations on the combs using rhinestones. Participants used the new style Choctaw round combs to decorate.

The CAP staff incorporated into their Cultural Activity Workshops series a round comb decorating workshops throughout the fiscal year. Workshops are scheduled on the first Monday of every month, except June and July. To date, workshops have been held in the Crystal Ridge and Red Water communities and the Choctaw Elderly Activity Center in Choctaw. The elders and CAP staff members met on Jan. 21.

In March, a round comb decorating class will be held in the Bogue Chitto community on Monday, March 7, from 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. January was extremely busy for CAP. A collar necklace making workshop was held on Jan. 8 in Tucker and a Choctaw dressmaking class was held in Bogue Chitto on Jan. 19. CAP also hosted a deer hide tanning event in Conehatta on Jan. 16 and a hog killing work-

Tribal elders Helen Thompson, left, & Emma King enjoyed the workshop inside the Elderly Activity Center.

CAP staff member Lorena Alex (seated third from left) gave instructions to one of the participants at the workshop.

CULTURAL AFFAIRS PROGRAM
WORKSHOP SCHEDULE FOR 2016

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<tr>
<td>May 17 (Tues.)</td>
<td>Beading a Medallion (Tucker)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 24 (Tues.)</td>
<td>Kabotcha Ikbi (Crystal Ridge)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 27 (Fri.)</td>
<td>Sash Making (Bogue Chitto)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 4 (Sat.)</td>
<td>Round Comb Making (Pearl River)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 1 (Mon.)</td>
<td>Round Comb Making (Bogue Homa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 9 (Tues.)</td>
<td>Blow Guns &amp; Dart Making (Tucker)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 12 (Fri.)</td>
<td>Medallion Beading (Standing Pine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 16 (Tues.)</td>
<td>Headband Making (Bogue Homa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 5 (Mon.)</td>
<td>Round Comb Making (Conehatta)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 2 (Fri.)</td>
<td>Choctaw Dress Making (Conehatta)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 13 (Tues.)</td>
<td>Pottery Firing Part 2 (Pearl River)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 20 (Tues.)</td>
<td>Stick Apron Making (Red Water)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scheduled time will be from 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. (Lunch on your own from 12 p.m.-1 p.m.). Workshop locations will be mostly at the Facility Building in each community. Participants 10-17 years old must have parental supervision. Child care services will not be provided. With respect, workshop will be postponed if there is a death in that community where the workshop is scheduled. If postponed, it will be rescheduled at a later date. These workshops are sponsored by MBCI Tribal members & their descendants. If you are interested in attending or have any questions, please contact Cultural Affairs Program at 601 663-7506. Yakokih.

Report Crimes Anonymously
WeTip
Call 1-855-4-THE REZ (1-855-484-3739)
or visit 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!
SEAN MYCHAL PERKINS

Funeral service for Sean Mychal Perkins, 34, was held on Thursday, January 7, 2016, from the Pearl River Baptist Church. Ricky Thompson, Sr. & Rev. Mark Patrick officiated.

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

Mr. Perkins passed away on Jan. 1 at Leake Baptist Hospital in Carthage.

He was employed as a bartender at the Pearl River Resort. He enjoyed fishing, playing stickball, basketball & softball.

He was preceded in death by his parents, four aunts & three uncles.

Survivors include his daughters, Daisy’alyn Perkins & Daz’yynn Perkins; sons, Daylen Perkins & Deiman Perkins; four aunts; an uncle; & a host of relatives & friends.

HAYWARD Mc MILLAN, JR.

Funeral service for Hayward McMillan, Jr., 41, was held on Thursday, January 7, 2016, from the Holy Rosary Catholic Church in Tucker. Father Augustine Palimattam officiated.

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

Mr. McMillan passed away on Jan. 2 in Philadelphia.

He was employed as a dealer at the Pearl River Resort. He enjoyed being around family & friends, playing air guitar, teaching & playing basketball, & being with his grandson.

He was preceded in death by his grandmother, parents & sister.

Survivors include his daughter, Taryn Walking Eagle; son, Brenden McMillan; sisters, Adrienne Tubby & Jolena McMillan; a brother, Teddy McMillan; two grandchildren; & a host of nieces, nephews, great-nieces & great-nephews, relatives, & friends.

HORACE REED

Funeral service for Horace Reed, 48, was held on Friday, January 8, 2016, from the Hope Indian Baptist Church. Rev. Robert Paul Tubby, Sr. & Rev. Leonard Ben officiated.

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

Mr. Reed passed away on Jan. 3 at Michigan Medical Center in Clare, MI.

He was an employee of Keep It Green, Corp. He enjoyed being in sales, traveling, football, & spending time with family & friends.

He was preceded in death by his brother.

Survivors include his parents, William Reed & Allene Mitch Reed; sisters, DeeDee Grisham-Beckwith & Tondrea Williamson; brothers, Charlie Reed, Tommy Reed, Lannie Reed, Ronnie Reed, & William Hickman, Jr.; stepson, Joey Hamric; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

JOANN WALLACE

Funeral service for Joann Wallace, 62, was held on Friday, January 22, 2016, from the Bogue Chitto Facility Building. Rev. Doby Henry officiated.

Burial was in the Nanih Waiya Mennonite Church Cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.

Ms. Wallace passed away on Jan. 19 at Regency Hospital in Meridian.

She attended Nanih Waiya Mennonite Church & enjoyed playing volleyball, fishing & spending time with her grandkids.

She was preceded in death by her parents, a sister, three brothers, a great-aunt & a great-uncle.

Survivors include three daughters, Mary Johnson, Annie Wallace & Atnea Wallace; a son, Billy Wallace; brother, Don Frazier; sisters, Carlene Mingo & Clara Cotton; a companion, Joey Thomas; 16 grandchildren; 9 great-grandchildren; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

LA SHUNTA DAWN JEFFERSON

Funeral service for LaShunta Dawn Jefferson, 17, was held on Saturday, January 30, 2016, from the Nanih Waiya Mennonite Church. Rev. Tim Tubby & Rev. Glenn Myers officiated.

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

Ms. Jefferson passed away on Jan. 26 at her residence.

She was a senior at Neshoba Central High School where she was a member of the Big Blue Band & the color guard. She enjoyed attending band competitions, playing basketball, cheering, doing beadwork, & spending time with family & friends.

She was preceded in death by her grandfathers & great-grandparents.

Survivors include her mother, Ginger McMillan; father, Vincent Jefferson; sisters, VaShunti McMillan & Tiffany Jefferson; brother, Jessiah McMillan; grandparents, Edna Cotton & Rosie McMillan; five aunts; two uncles; great-grandparents; & a host of relatives & friends.

DONNIE EVANS FARMER

Funeral service for Donnie Evans Farmer, 42, was held on Monday, February 1, 2016, from Holy Rosary Catholic Church in Tucker. Father Augustine Palimattam officiated.

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

Mr. Farmer passed away on Jan. 28 at his residence.

He was a U.S. Navy veteran & member of Holy Rosary Catholic Church. He enjoyed family gatherings, listening to music, grilling, surfing the web, cheering for the Minnesota Vikings, & spending time with his father.

He was preceded in death by his grandparents.

Survivors include his daughter, Tala Rose Hughes; his father, Ervin Farmer; mother, Donna Jimmie; sisters, Shan na Tubby & Ashley Burr; two nieces, three nephews, & a host of relatives & friends.
RICHARD MASON JEFFERSON

Funeral service for Richard Mason Jefferson, 30, was held on Thursday, February 4, 2016, from the Bogue Homa Baptist Church. Lee Farmer & Pastor Dennis Middleton officiated.

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

Mr. Jefferson passed away on Jan. 28 at his residence.

He enjoyed fishing, playing washers, cards, dominoes, softball, & spending time with his son.

He was preceded in death by his father, his wife, grandparents, an uncle, & cousins.

Survivors include his son, Ryder Jefferson; mother, Margaret Jefferson; brothers, Jason Jefferson, Jeffrey Jefferson & Bruce Jefferson; adopted sister, Randi Jefferson; adopted brother, Hunter Jefferson; grandmothers, Kathleen Isaac & Mazola Thomas; grandfather, Morris Jefferson; a companion, Alicia Frazier; & a host of aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews; relatives & friends.

JASON HESTER JOHN

Funeral service for Jason Hester John, 36, was held on Thursday, February 4, 2016, from the Pearl River Baptist Church. Rev. Travis Willis & Rev. Tim Tubby officiated.

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

Mr. John passed away on Jan. 30 at Anderson Regional Medical Center in Meridian.

He was a member of the Pearl River Community Baptist Church & enjoyed watching Walker, Texas Ranger.

He was preceded in death by his parents, two brothers & grandparents.

Survivors include his adopted mother, Christine John; sister, Rachel Willis; brother, Jonathan Willis; five aunts; & a host of relatives & friends.

JANICE MARIE STIRBLING

Funeral service for Janice Marie Stribling, 52, was held on Thursday, February 4, 2016, from the Chihowa I Chuka. Rev. Travis Willis officiated.

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

Ms. Stribling passed away on Jan. 29 at the Choctaw Health Center in Choctaw.

She enjoyed fishing, cooking & spending time with family & loved ones.

She was preceded in death by her parents & a sister.

Survivors include her children, Randy Sam, Kevin Sam & Tamekia Morris; stepchildren, Constance Brand & Jamie McDonald; sisters, Wanda Collier, Catherine Lee & Denyse Marcum; brothers, Randy Miller & Eddie Sam; a friend, Chad Davis; 10 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

MINNIE BELL

Funeral service for Minnie Bell, 93, was held on Saturday, February 6, 2016, from the Bogue Chitto Facility Building. Kendall Wallace & Rev. Doby Henry officiated.

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

Mr. Bell passed away on Feb. 6 at his residence.

He was a veteran of the U.S. Army & enjoyed gardening, woodworking, making bird houses & Christmas decor, whitting, doing word searches, & reading the Bible.

He is preceded in death by his parents, three brothers & a sister.

Survivors include three sisters, Ella Mae Isaac, Nan Whiteman & Ruby Thomas; three half-sisters, Shirley Jefferson, Gloria Hickman & Linda McMillan; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

ROBERT LEE BELL

Funeral service for Robert Lee Bell, 78, was held on Tuesday, February 9, 2016, from the Bogue Chitto Baptist Church. Kendall Wallace & Rev. Doby Henry officiated.

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

Ms. Bell passed away on Feb. 4 at Tennova Healthcare-Dyersburg Regional Hospital in Dyersburg, Tenn.

She was employed with Tupperware for 25 years. She loved fishing, gardening, sewing, cooking outdoors, & visiting family & friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents, husband, five brothers, two grandsons, & a great-granddaughter.

Survivors include her daughters, Pauline LongFox, Mazzelle Bell, Linda Rumbo, Bonnie Williams, & Annie Frazier; two sons, Calvin Bell & Newman Bell; 23 grandchildren; 35 great-grandchildren; special brothers, Ricky Willis & John Crawford Willis, Jr.; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

WINCY BELL

Funeral service for Winchy Bell, 84, was held on Wednesday, February 10, 2016, from the Pearl River Facility Building. Rev. Doby Henry & Rev. Rocky Gilliam officiated.

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

Ms. Bell passed away on Feb. 4 at Tenova Healthcare-Dyersburg Regional Hospital in Dyersburg, Tenn.

She was employed with Tupperware for 25 years. She loved fishing, gardening, sewing, cooking outdoors, & visiting family & friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents, husband, five brothers, two grandsons, & a great-granddaughter.

Survivors include her daughters, Pauline LongFox, Mazzelle Bell, Linda Rumbo, Bonnie Williams, & Annie Frazier; two sons, Calvin Bell & Newman Bell; 23 grandchildren; 35 great-grandchildren; special brothers, Ricky Willis & John Crawford Willis, Jr.; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

JEAN Mc MILLAN ISOM

Funeral service for Jean McMillan Isom, 84, was held on Saturday, February 13, 2016, from the Holy Rosary Catholic Church in Tucker. Father John Edmunds, S.T., officiated.

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

Ms. Isom passed away on Feb. 9 at her residence.

She was a member of the Holy Rosary Catholic Church. She was a retired Choctaw Health Center housekeeper & enjoyed fishing, sewing & spending time with family & friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents, husband, five brothers, & two sisters.

Survivors include two daughters, Mary Elizabeth McMillan & Alice Marie McMillan; two sons, Jimmy Ray McMillan, Sr. & Thaddeus James Tubby; 18 grandchildren; 25 great-grandchildren; & a host of nieces, nephews & relatives.

LETTER OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The family of Sean Mychal Perkins would like to express its heartfelt appreciation to the people who offered their assistance to our family during the untimely death of our beloved father, nephew & cousin. We are grateful to the Tribal programs for making available the cooks & fire-keepers during the wake. Thanks to Choctaw Tribal Maintenance for ensuring we had the necessary equipment as needed & the Office of Communications for all the paperwork. We are so appreciative to the Pearl River Baptist Church for allowing us the use of their facility & staff & to the different churches for singing & providing words of comfort. May God bless you all.

- The Family of Sean Mychal Perkins

Come and Worship with us

Macedonia Baptist Church
130 Campus Drive
Columbia, MS 38617

Sunday
3:30 a.m. - Morning Service
10:00 a.m. - Sunday School
11:00 a.m. - Worship Service
5:00 p.m. - Evening Service
2nd Sunday at 7:00
Pastor: Rev. George Dixon

Wednesday
5:30 p.m. - Pray With
6:00 p.m. - Pray Meeting
6:30 p.m. - Disciples@Family Ministry Class
7:30 p.m. - Worship Service
Youth Pastor: Rev. Monica Fearn

To the families who had blessed him, John said, “If you hold to my teachings, 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.....

Sunday 10:00 am
Wednesday 6:30 pm

Spirit of Life Christian Center
278 Black Jack Road
Chocotaw, MS 38955
Pastor Thomas Ben
901-389-5440
Visit us on the web at SPIRITOFLIFECHOCTAW.ORG
Happy 21st Birthday to my best friend, Daishia Mo’Nique Billie, on Jan. 21, from Mare J. Happy 21st Birthday to my best friend, Katalina Morris, on Feb. 9, from Mare J.

Happy Birthday to Michele “Moss” Jim on Jan. 21, from Baby Sis, Bro, Falun, Dale Amos, Ashley B., Darry & Elizabeth Williams & family.

Happy Birthday to our friend Kathie Marie Henry on Feb. 22, from your cousin (P.R. downstairs).

Happy Birthday to our cousin, James “Falun” Bell, from your family in B.C., Arb, Sip Sara, Karene, & Kat. Keep your head up!

ON OUR 25TH ANNIVERSARY
To Joey - We made it this far through the mercy of God. We been through trials & tribulations, but we made it. Many more is coming but the spirit of Christ will see us through. Just got to hold on a little longer & it’ll be worth it after all. God did say, “I give you rest,” & He has. Thank you for being my friend & partner in Christ. Prayer changed our lives & I wouldn’t take anything back from the past, but just hold onto Jesus for he who holds our future. Love, Debi.

Spring Creations set for April 1-2

The 7th Annual Spring Creations Arts & Crafts Show is scheduled for April 1-2 at the Choctaw Town Center in Choctaw, located on Hwy. 16 West of Philadelphia.

The event, co-sponsored by Native Creations, LLC & Glow Enterprises, showcases hand crafted or hand-finished items made by talented local & statewide artists & crafters.

In addition, there will be entertainment, Native cultural demonstration/exhibitions, and food featuring cultures from our area.

For more information, call 601-650-8871, 601-416-2013 or 601-416-0010.

Winter Guard Places at Competitions

The Choctaw Central Winter Guard recently placed first in the Scholastic A division of the Mississippi Indoor Association’s Guard Show in Oak Grove & Brandon. They scored 62.83 in Oak Grove & 68.82 in Brandon. Congratulations!

Tribal Members Win $1,000

Three Tribal members were winners of a nationwide giveaway by H&R Block. The Choctaw office of H&R Block, located at the Choctaw Town Center in Choctaw, announced winners of the $1,000 A Day Giveaway which included Alicia Vaughn, Leslie Tubby & Gabriel Bell. H&R Block was giving away $1,000 to 32,000 people for a total of $32 million during the first month of tax season. Anyone who filed at a participating H&R Block office by Feb. 15 was automatically entered into the sweepstakes. Pictured below is winner Leslie Tubby, left, as she was presented with her check by tax associate Cheryl Crane.

Weaving Healthy Families Project

Would you like to help us envision and strengthen healthy families?

- What will you do: Tribal community members (ages 12 and above) and professionals (who work with community members) can engage in some of the following activities:
  - Life history interviews
  - Family interviews
  - Focus groups
  - Observation/Questionnaire

This study is aimed at:
(1) Defining healthy families;
(2) Finding out how many people have overcome violence and trauma;
(3) Lowering family conflict; and
(4) Improving the well-being of community members.

- Participants will be paid for their time and effort. If you might be interested in helping tribal families, please contact: Catherine Burtinete, PhD, LMSW at cburtinete@tulane.edu or 504-862-3405.

H&R Block office manager Alex Bell presents the $1,000 check to winners Alicia Vaughn (pictured above right) & Gabriel Bell (pictured below left.)