CHOCTAW COMMUNITY NEWS

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TRIBAL PUBLICATION OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS

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Wells Honored with Tenn. Governor's Art Award

Sally Wells, a revered Tribal elder of Tennessee's Choctaw community, was recently honored as one of 12 recipients of the 2019 Tennessee Governor's Arts Award, Tennessee's highest honor in the arts.

Since 1971, the Governor's Arts Awards have celebrated those who have made outstanding contributions to the state's cultural life. An awards ceremony took place in Conservation Hall at the Governor's Executive Residence on October 23 in Nashville.

see WELLS, pg. 7

Folklife Heritage Award recipient Sally Wells is hugged by Gov. Bill Lee during the 2019 Tennessee Governor's Arts Awards on Oct. 23 in Nashville.
(George Walker IV/The Tennessean)

Tribe Hosts USET Annual Meeting, 50th Anniversary Celebration

The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MBCI) hosted the Annual Meeting of United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. (USET) & United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF) from Monday, November 4 through Thursday, November 7 in Choctaw.

Opening ceremonies included The Passing of the Fire ceremony at Lake Pushmataha. The Passing of the Fire between USET member Tribal Nations who host the meetings has become a USET tradition. Unique to this year's fire ceremony, all USET member Tribal Nations contributed sage, tobacco, cedar, & other items to the fire as a ceremonial expression of unity. The unity ashes were then placed in 50th Anniversary commemorative jars for attendees as a keepsake from this special occasion.

Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians Chief Cyrus Ben (left) is passed the fire from Cattaraugus Councilor Jeffrey Gill of the Seneca Nation of Indians. The Senecas hosted the previous USET Annual Meeting in Salamanca, NY. The ceremony took place at Lake Pushmataha in Choctaw.

see USET ACTIVITIES, pg. 8

Tribe Hosts Annual Thanksgiving Feast

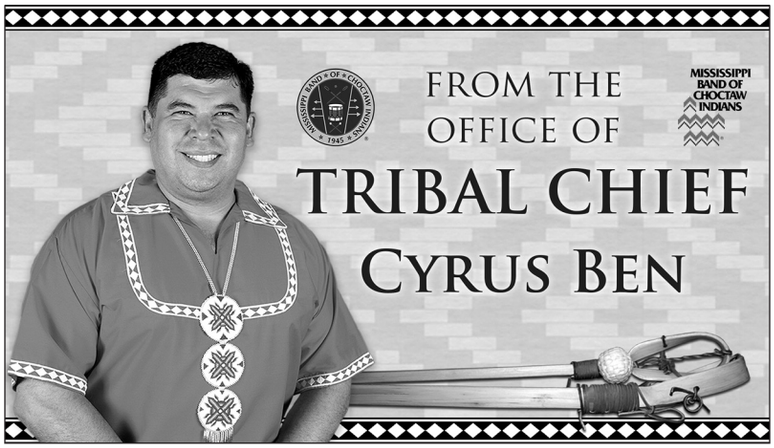
Members of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MBCI) gathered at the Silver Star Convention Center in Choctaw to give thanks for the many blessings upon the Tribe & celebrate the upcoming holiday season during the 2019 Reservation-Wide Tribal Thanksgiving Feast on Thursday, November 14.

Hundreds were in attendance as Tribal drummers led a procession that included members of the Choctaw Veterans Color Guard posting the U.S. & MBCI flags. Standing Pine Elementary School students Tyris Stokes, Yuriana Crosby & Yazzlynn Alex sang the National Anthem in Choctaw & Tribal Council Bogue Chitto representative Ronnie Henry, Sr. offered the invocation.

Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben spoke of the Tribe recently hosting the annual meeting & 50th anniversary celebration of USET, Inc. (United South & Eastern Tribes) & how the MBCI was one of the four founding member tribes in 1969.

Chief Ben meets with Tribal members at the Annual Tribal Thanksgiving Feast at the Silver Star Convention Center on Nov. 14.

see TRIBAL FEAST, pg. 10



Officials from the Department of Family & Community Services and the Family Violence & Victims Services Program were in attendance as Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben (seated center) signed a proclamation declaring October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month on the Choctaw Reservation.

Halito!

The fall season of 2019 brought us lots of reasons for celebration. Our tribe as a whole has stayed very busy the last couple of months supporting our local schools via athletics & literacy campaigns, preparing for events & activities while staying vigil during various weather conditions.

We started off October with Read Aloud Month. I, along with other tribal members & tribal employees, had the pleasure of reading to many classes across the Choctaw Tribal Schools & a few local schools as well.

Reading is extremely important for children & adults because not only can a child learn 4,000 to 12,000 words per year through reading, but it has been shown to reduce stress, slow the heartbeat & relieve muscle tension; therefore, not only can it be fun, but beneficial to your physical & mental health.

To accomplish this, the goal is to read for at least 20 minutes each day. Thank you to all the classrooms who welcomed guest readers & I hope we all helped instill into our next generation the value & importance of reading.

On October 7, I signed a proclamation declaring October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Domestic violence is not a Choctaw tradition, & we all should do everything we can to take a stand against this public health & social issue.

There are on average 20 people a minute who experience domestic violence, which equals to more than 10 million abuse victims annually. Of those 10 million, nearly 1-in-4 women & 1-in-7 men have experienced severe physical violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime.

Domestic violence touches the lives of children, leaving a devastating impact & lifelong repercussions from the emotional & physical trauma. Thank you to our Family Violence & Victims Services & Department of Family & Community Services for all the educational activities they held during the month of October.

We closed out October with various fun events for our kids throughout the Reservation. Tribal Council members & Development Clubs in the various communities hosted fun Halloween activities for their members.

The second annual Halloween Extravaganza was held the Monday before Halloween. It was great to see so many families come out to this event.

Chief Ben joined in the fun as he helped distribute candies during the 2nd annual Halloween Extravaganza on Oct. 28.

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:

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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.

Chief Ben & Choctaw Indian Princess Elisah Jimmie made their way to the outlaying Choctaw Tribal Schools to read to the lower grade students as part of Read Aloud Month activities in October.

Tribal leaders of all the member Tribes of USET, Inc. pose for group photo during the 50th Anniversary Gala on Nov. 5.

Thank you to all those programs & departments who participated in all of the different events held throughout that week. We also had a few programs & business open their doors to trick or treaters on Halloween. It is great to see our community come together & provide safe trick-or-treat activities for our Tribal youth.

On November 4-7, the Tribe hosted the 50th Annual United South & Eastern Tribes (USET) Conference at Pearl River Resort. Over the four days, the Tribe held a fire ceremony, welcome reception, past-presidents luncheon & gala that featured live action exhibits of the four founding Tribes (Cherokee, Choctaw, Miccosukee & Seminole).

With more than 600 people in attendance for the conference, it was a collaborative effort of many to plan, prepare & conduct a conference of this magnitude. Thank you to everyone who was involved in planning & executing all the activities before, during & even after the conference.

It was definitely an event like no other that we have ever had the chance to be a part of. On many different occasions during the week people commented on the outstanding job our Tribe had done & in doing so set the bar high for other Tribes in the future.

On November 7, Pearl River Resort's IT Department was recognized & awarded in the Tribal Business/Enterprise category for their work on becoming the first Tribally-owned & operated Sportsbook in the U.S. at the 10th Annual Industry Awards held during the 19th Annual TribalNet Conference & Tradeshow. Congratulations to the PRR IT Department for receiving this impressive award in making MBCI an innovator in this industry.

I would like to say a special 'Thank You' to all our Veterans & active military. A Veterans Appreciation Luncheon was hosted at the newly renovated Spectrum at Golden Moon. It was so wonderful to see so many veterans & their families join us.

Members of the Choctaw Tribal Council in attendance for the USET 50th Anniversary Gala included, front row from left, Richard Sockey (Standing Pine), Richard Isaac (Red Water), Vice Chief Dorothy Wilson (Tucker), Deborah Martin (Pearl River), Loriann Ahshapanek (Standing Pine); back row from left, Chief Cyrus Ben, Chris Eaves (Crystal Ridge), Timothy Thomas, Sr. (Conehatta), Roderick Bell (Bogue Chitto), Michael Briscoe (Bogue Homa), & Nigel Gibson (Pearl River). Not pictured are Ronnie Henry, Sr. (Bogue Chitto), Kendall Wallace (Bogue Chitto), Tarina Anderson (Conehatta), Hilda Nickey (Conehatta), Barry McMillan (Pearl River), Sharon Johnson (Red Water), & Wilma Simpson-McMillan (Tucker).

We owe a lot to you & thank you every day for the sacrifices all veterans made, & active military continue to make, on our behalf. Also thank you to the departments/organizations/programs/families that chose to participate in the Veteran's Day Parade. It was a cold one but a wonderful tribute to those that sacrificed so much for all of us.

If you are in the Womens, Infants & Children (WIC) program at the Choctaw Health

see CHIEF, pg. 4

RIGHT, *Chief Ben speaks with Tribal Veterans & their families during the first Military Service Appreciation Luncheon held at the Spectrum at the Golden Moon Hotel & Casino on Nov. 8.*

USET

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November 13, 2019

Chief Cyrus Ben
Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
101 Industrial Road
Choctaw, MS 39350

Dear Chief Ben,

Our heartfelt thanks for hosting this year's Annual Meeting and 50th anniversary celebration at the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians. We can't imagine a more successful week of inspiring ceremonies, productive meetings, and plans for continued success.

From the beginning, we knew the week would be special. As the Passing of the Fire Ceremony began at Lake Pushmataha, the first rays of the morning sun broke through the clouds, as if to bestow a blessing on the upcoming events and activities.

During the removal of most Choctaw to Indian territory, a Choctaw miko described the tragedy as "a trail of tears and death." Since then, the Mississippi Band of Choctaw have been one of the most successful Trial Nations in Indian country, an inspiring example of the strength and determination of a people to overcome extreme hardship.

USET has grown into one of the most prominent and effective intertribal organizations in Indian country. Working together, we have implemented programs that enhance the lives of Tribal citizens throughout the south and eastern United States.

Please pass along our thanks not only to Tribal Council, but also to all of the kind and hard-working staff who helped make this Annual Meeting one of the most memorable and successful ever.

Sincerely,

Kirk Francis
President

Kitcki A. Carroll
Executive Director

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF TRIBAL NATION UNITY 1969-2019

USET STAFF

CHIEF ..... from page three

Center, you have experienced a new method of purchasing this month. The introduction of the eWIC card was rolled out on November 14 & went live on November 15. A job well done to the MBCI WIC Program staff for their hard work to bring the eWIC card into our community!

I hope everyone enjoyed their Thanksgiving. It is a time to spend with family & be thankful for every blessing we have been given. The Friday after Thanksgiving is Native American Heritage Day, which was created to celebrate the contributions Native Americans had made & continue to make to this great country.

November is also a time most schools learn about Native Americans & Thanksgiving. I am glad so many of our Tribal members, programs, our Princess Elisah Jimmie & myself took the opportunity to go into various classrooms in our area this month to educate our fellow Mississippians about the Choctaw People.

We are proud to be Choctaw, & we should take every opportunity available to educate folks about our continued impact in this community.

High School Sports Highlight

Our Choctaw youth have proven themselves time & again the wide range of talent that we as a tribe possess. Our Choctaw community is well represented across our local area schools & of course our very own Choctaw Central High School. I encourage everyone to attend the various athletic events to show our youth that we support them in all of their endeavors.

Cross Country teams had their championships the first week of November. Congratulations to all the runners who participated that day. We had quite a few Choctaw runners compete in both the 4A & 5A races, as well as a few in the 3A run.

Sierra Wallace placed third overall out of 148 runners with her time of 21:14.27 in the 5k race. She was awarded a bronze medal in addition to being named an All-State medalist. The Lady Warriors finished 6th overall out of 20 teams.

Alonso Henry placed 8th

A check in the amount of $45,600 was recently presented to the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians by Central Electric Power Association (CEPA) through a TVA new construction incentive program for the Pearl River Elementary School Upper Elementary Building. Accepting the check on behalf of the Tribe was Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben. PryorMorrow served as the architectural and engineering firm responsible for the design of the building, as well as the TVA Preferred Partner. Pictured, from left, are Michael Taylor, AIA – President, PryorMorrow PC; Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben; Aaron Akers, CGS – Director of Economic Development, CEPA; and Ashley Weekly, PE – MEP Engineer, PryorMorrow PC.

overall out of 171 runners with his time of 18:00.86 & was named an All-State medalist. The Warriors finished 8th overall out of 25 teams.

Cross Country seniors are Anastasia Ben, Justine Isaac, Alonso Henry, Dewayne Cotton & Cody Roach.

CCHS Football, in its second year under head coach Pepper Posey, went 4-6 this season as the Warriors put up some great wins, close games & showed true heart & grit out on the field. This was not a season anyone should be ashamed of, & I know the team will work hard in the off season to come back stronger next year.

Homecoming was held October 4 & included a full day of activities that culminated with the crowning of the 2019 Homecoming Queen. Congratulations to the CCHS Homecoming Court & to Homecoming Queen Shemah Crosby.

Neshoba Central held their Homecoming the same night, & it was my pleasure to go & support Sophomore Maid Sydney Nickey & Junior Maid Onnahili Williams.

Senior Night was held for CCHS football, band, cheer, & cross country on October 25. Twelve football players, seven band members, six cheerleaders, & five cross country runners *(names & pictures are on pages 18-19)* were celebrated prior to the game & at halftime. Each of these seniors will be missed in their respective sport/activity, but we know they will continue to do great things.

I hope everyone enjoyed the sky divers who carried in the American flag and our Tribal flag and brought the game ball prior to the start of the final home game of the season *(pictured right)*. It was a great addition to the pre-game ceremony, & I want to thank All American Skydiving Team for their amazing jump!

On November 8, Neshoba Central High School held their Senior Night. Choctaw football players Bryce Parkerson & Bryce Thomas; cheerleader Sunshine Clemmons & band member Dinah Jim were recognized. We are proud of your accomplishments at NCHS, & we wish you the best!

The CCMS Warriors football team ended their season against Scott Central. Seventh grade had a 1-4 record & eighth grade 0-5 record.

CCHS slow-pitch softball held their Senior Night on October 1, celebrating three talented student-athletes. All have been players since middle school & have been contributors on & off the field. Congratulations to Melanian Jimmie, Maiya Joe & Tia'Rain Saunders on your senior season. It's bittersweet as you close out your high school career, but the best is still yet to come.

CCHS softball team ended their season 18-10 in the quarterfinal game against Newton County on October 10. It was a great final season of slow-pitch for our Lady Warriors. I want to congratulate slow-pitch Class I State Champions Lake High School & Class II State Champions Neshoba Central High School. It's important for us as a Tribe to recognize that all four of these top slow-pitch softball teams include Choctaw student athletes. We are well represented as a Tribe.

Congratulations to Tribal members Tia'Rain Saunders (Senior - CCHS), Tenly Grisham (Sophomore - NCHS) & Hama'ya Fielder (Sophomore - NCHS) for their selection to the Clarion Ledger's 2019 All-State slow pitch softball team. What a great honor & recognition for these talented players!

Please remember, as we move into our winter season, there are going to be times of much colder temperatures. It is our duty as a whole to check up on our Tribal elders & persons who may need extra assistance.

Let's take the time to look after each other & make sure everyone has what they need. Make sure that you yourself are prepared for the winter season. We will share some preparedness & safety tips in this issue of the *Community News*.

Enjoy the upcoming holiday season, especially time spent with family and friends.

Chi Yakokilih Chitto,

Cyrus Ben, Tribal Chief

Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben pulled double duty for Homecoming Night at both Choctaw Central and Neshoba Central on Oct. 4. **LEFT**, *Choctaw Central High School senior Shemah Crosby was crownded the 2019 CCHS Homecoming Queen. She is the daughter of Oga Crosby & Lane Denson of the Standing Pine Community. Members of the Homecoming Court included Freshman Maid Catherine Jim, Sophomore Maid Picabo Hernandez, Junior Maid Shantashia John, Football Maid Tia'Rain Saunders, Senior Maid Melanian Jimmie, & Senior Maid Pernilla Morris. Crown Bearer was Zaydrian Reynolds & Flower Girl was Jacy Tubby. Pictured far left is Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, & far right, CCHS Principal Dr. Fred Hickmon. The Choctaw Central Warriors defeated Kosciusko 38-35 to win their first 4A division contest.* **RIGHT**, *Chief Ben is pictured with Neshoba Central High School's Homecoming Court Sophomore Maid Sydney Nickey, daughter of Alyssa Ben of the Pearl River Community, & Junior Maid Onnahili Williams, daughter of Melanie Carson & Grant Williams, all of the Pearl River Community.*

CHC Announces Staff Appointments

The Choctaw Health Center (CHC) announces recent appointments in the executive-level staff.

Dr. Kerry M. Scott was appointed Interim Chief Medical Officer. He began his role on December 1, 2019. Mary (Terri) Smith is the new Women's Wellness Center Coordinator. She began her role on December 9, 2019.

Dr. Kerry M. Scott, DO, MBA, FACOFP

Dr. Scott has been the Director of Primary Care at the CHC since 2015. Prior to accepting this position, he was in a group practice with Meridian Medical Associates, P.A. in Meridian. During this time, he served as Chief of Family Medicine at Anderson Regional Medical Center in Meridian.

Dr. Scott is also active in medical education & was an Assistant Professor of Medicine & an Adjunct Clinical Professor at William Carey University College of Osteopathic Medicine in Hattiesburg. He worked with the Physical Diagnosis course & served as a mentor to medical students & clinical nurse practitioner students.

Dr. Scott spent time working in rural Mississippi at Lumberton Family Health where he was the physician for the town of Lumberton. He was an integral member of the community & served as a role model & mentor for area youth.

LEFT, *Dr. Kerry M. Scott*. **RIGHT**, *Mary Teresa (Terri) Smith*.

Dr. Scott is passionate about men's health & spends a great amount of time educating the community about prostate cancer. In 2016, he wrote a paper entitled, "*Treatment Options for Erectile Dysfunction After Prostate Cancer Therapy*," for which he was inducted as a Fellow of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians earlier this year. He is the fourth physician in Mississippi to receive this prestigious honor.

Dr. Scott received his BS degree from Dillard University in New Orleans, LA. He received his Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degree from the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine in Philadelphia, PA. He recently received his Master's in Business Administration from the Haub School of Business at Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia, PA.

Dr. Scott is Board Certified in Family Medicine & Osteopathic Manipulative Treatment.

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CHOCTAW HEALTH CENTER

Purchased/Referred Care Program (PRC)

Emergency Notification

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? Please see important information regarding Emergency Notifications.

CHC Business Office

Office Hours: Monday–Friday 8:00 am-5:00 pm

Phone: 601-389-4060 ~ **Fax:** 601-389-4061

Emergency Notification

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 their behalf must contact the PRC in the Business Office. The notification is extended to 30 days for the elderly (age 65+) and the disabled.

After a notification, the patient is required to get a copy of the ER record for that visit and bring to the Business Office. It will then be presented to the PRC committee.

During non-working Business Office hours, (after 5:00 PM, weekends and holidays), please leave a message on the Business Office voicemail. We ask that you leave a clear message that includes:

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

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.

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.

If you have more questions regarding the PRC 72-Hour notification requirement, please contact the Business Office.

Give Kids A Smile in February

Submitted by the Choctaw Dental Department

The Indian Health Services (IHS) Division of Oral Health is embarking on an unprecedented campaign.

All IHS, tribal & urban dental programs are able to participate in the American Dental Association's (ADA) 15th Annual Give Kids a Smile® Day to be held on Friday, February 7, 2020.

Give Kids A Smile (GKAS) was launched nationally by the ADA in 2003 & has grown over its 15-year history. For the first time, the dental programs of all American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities will partner with the ADA for this outstanding event that improves the lives & health of all of our communities' children.

Our goals in participating on a nationwide scale are as follows:

1. Change the public perception of dental care that is provided in our IHS/Tribal dental care system.

2. Help in recruitment of dentists & other oral health professionals in IHS & tribal dental programs.

3. Publicize the successes of IHS, such as the decreases in cavities in 1-5 & 6-9 year-old AI/AN children.

4. Improve access to dental care & preventive services for AI/AN children.

Mary Teresa (Terri) Smith

Mary Teresa (Terri) Smith is the new Women's Wellness Center Coordinator. She has been a Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) for over 21 years & a Registered Nurse for over 34 years.

She graduated from the Mississippi University for Women in 1998 with a Master of Science Degree in Nursing & FNP Certification. Her previous education included a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing from the University of Southern Mississippi in 1987 & an Associate Degree in Nursing from Meridian Junior (now Community) College in 1985.

Smith has been certified by both the American Nurses Credentialing Center & the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners since 1998.

Having retired from the State of Mississippi on June 1, 2018, she went to work the same day for East Central Health Network, a rural health clinic & a residency program for family practice physicians. A clinic merger led to the elimination of her position & ultimately to her employment at CHC, which she reported has been a longtime goal for her.

Smith's professional experience includes teaching nursing at Meridian Community College, working in the Medical Clinic of East Mississippi State Hospital, & working with the Infectious Disease Specialist at Anderson Physician Alliance. Her favorite position prior to CHC was her first FNP job—Women's Health provider at Greater Meridian Health Clinic.

Smith & her husband, Tommy, have been married for over 33 years with three grown children. They live in Enterprise where she served on the Town Board for three terms. They are members of Enterprise Baptist Church where Tommy serves as a deacon & they both sing in the choir.

Choctaw Health Center is delighted to have Smith accept this position.

WELLS **continued from page one**

"Tennessee's artistic heritage & culture is some of the richest in the nation. These 12 outstanding recipients are true leaders in the arts & culture in our state, & they help make Tennessee the special state it is," Governor Bill Lee said. "(First Lady) Maria & I congratulate them, & we are so glad they call Tennessee home."

The recipients symbolize the tremendous variety of the arts & culture of Tennessee. The Governor's Arts Awards are presented in three categories — Folklife Heritage, Arts Leadership & Distinguished Artist.

Wells, a member of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians & resident of Smyrna, Tenn., received the Folklife Heritage Award. She is a bead worker, dressmaker, traditional cook, & speaker of the Choctaw language. Her life & work represent a direct link to a deep & rich Native American cultural heritage.

Janice Birchfield of Roan Mountain, Hattie Marshall-Duncan of Jackson, & Sue Williams of Morrison were also recipients of the Folklife Heritage Award.

Other Governor's Arts Awards recipients include:

Arts Leadership Award - Rich Boyd of Nashville, Linda Caldwell of Etowah, Ashley Capps of Knoxville, & the Country Music Hall of Fame & Museum in Nashville;

Distinguished Artist Award - Charlie Daniel of Powell, Joanna Higgs Ross of Nashville, Brenda Lee of Nashville, & Richard Penniman (Little Richard) of Nashville.

Raised on the Choctaw Reservation, Wells spent her childhood in the Bogue Chitto community near Philadelphia, Miss. As one of eight children, she attended the local Indian school system.

Her family then joined a small migration of Mississippi Choctaw seeking agricultural opportunities in West Tennessee. The new Tennessee Choctaw community kept close ties to the Mississippi reservation.

Wells attended the public schools of Lauderdale County, as her family continued to speak the Choctaw language & pass along their culture. At family gatherings, she helped prepare hominy & other Choctaw foods, frequently cooking over an open fire in the traditional manner.

Wells credits her mother for teaching her how to create traditional Choctaw clothing & beadwork. She continues to create art & promote & preserve Choctaw culture.

Wells spent much of her career working for the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Indian Health Service. She is also a founder & board member of the Native American Indian Association, a volunteer role she has held for 37 years.

She serves as Chair of the Arts & Crafts Demonstration Village at the Tennessee Indian Education Pow Wow, Tennessee's largest Native American cultural event, held annually at Long Hunter State Park in Nashville. She ensures all vendors & demonstrators are Native artists practicing authentic art forms.

In 2015, Wells was one of the first master artists chosen to teach in the Tennessee Arts Commission's Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program, an initiative created to support the state's finest tradition bearers as they preserve rare & endangered art forms.

Her apprentice was her granddaughter, Madi Dean, to whom she taught Choctaw beadwork using seed & bugle beads, as well as making traditional Choctaw collar necklaces, earrings, bracelets, & hanging necklaces that go with traditional clothing worn on special occasions.

"This is our life, making jewelry & clothing for our culture, & I pass it on down, what skill I have, in the community & to the children & grandchildren, so they would continue it," said Wells.

In 2019, Wells was chosen as an artist in residence at the Creative Discovery Museum in Chattanooga, where she provided hands-on demonstrations to museum guests. Her work has previously been displayed at the Tennessee Arts Commission gallery.

"Sally's skill is undeniable. She possesses an innate drive to make authentic beadwork reflective of her Choctaw heritage," said Liza Blair, Creative Discovery Museum folklorist.

"She is the kind of artist who understands the need to share ideas & techniques, be that with students during a classroom demonstration, participants attending the Native American Indian Association festival, or members of the community."

USET ACTIVITIES

continued from page one

The Board of Directors Meeting began with a Grand Entry led by the Board of Directors & included a presentation of Tribal Nation flags. The Board & other Tribal representatives were dressed in traditional regalia for this event. Videos, pictures & social media provided further opportunity for Tribal Nations to commemorate the history of USET & share who they are with the world.

On Monday night, all attendees gathered for a welcome reception hosted by the MBCI.

USET honored several important influences during celebrations throughout the week. The four founding Tribal Nations - hosts Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, & Seminole Tribe of Florida - received special recognition throughout the events.

The Earl J. Barbry, Sr. Lifetime Achievement Award, USET's highest honor, were awarded to USET's first president, Joe Dan Osceola (Seminole Tribe of Florida) & Robert Glenn Thrower, Jr. (Poarch Band of Creek Indians).

On behalf of the late Chris Thompson (Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe), Chris' family accepted the Chris Thompson Economic Professional Excellence Award.

In the spirit of acknowledging 50 years of advocacy & collaborations, USET honored many organizations throughout Indian country for their partnership & teamwork throughout the years. USET also recognized their relationship with others for their commitment to justice for USET member Tribal Nations & all of Indian country.

Hobbs Straus Dean & Walker received special recognition as they submitted USET's incorporation paperwork back in 1969.

During the week, Tribal leaders discussed important topics, such as protecting Tribal Nation homelands, building sustainable Tribal Nation economies, constitutionality threats & challenges, & protecting communities through the restoration of Tribal jurisdiction.

During the President's Panel, past USET Presidents discussed their experiences & prospects for the next 50 years for the organization & for Indian country.

The USET/USET SPF Board met through Thursday, Nov. 7, with various events & special experiences for attendees & participants.

Choctaw drummers perform at the Board of Directors Meeting.

Choctaw youth played a Stickball exhibition game for USET attendees & guests at Warrior Stadium on the campus of Choctaw Central High School.

Highlights included the 50th Anniversary Gala on Tuesday evening, Nov. 5, & a Choctaw youth stickball exhibition on Wednesday afternoon, Nov. 6. Also included were tours of the lands of the MBCI, their facilities, & communal offerings that have experienced tremendous growth as a result of their strong leadership.

USET Welcomes Three New Tribal Nation Members

Three Tribal Nations were welcomed as new members of the Annual Meeting of USET & USET SPF. The Tribal Nations are the Rappahannock Tribe, the Chickahominy Indian Tribe, & the Chickahominy Indian Tribe-Eastern Division.

Working together with USET staff, these Tribal Nations will further support the well-being of their Tribal citizens through health, environmental, & economic development programs. USET membership now includes 30 Tribal Nations in the south & eastern U.S.

Once the USET/USET SPF Board approved of the additions, the new Tribal Leaders were seated at the table with current member leadership.

USET/USET SPF Secretary Lynn Malerba, Lifetime Chief of the Mohegan Tribe of Connecticut, commented, "We are so pleased to welcome three new members to our USET family. We believe they will enhance our collective efforts by bringing their own unique experiences, culture, & history to the conversation & our advocacy efforts."

The mission of the Rappahannock is to preserve Rappahannock culture, social structures, & political structures while educating the public on the rich contributions that Rappahannocks continue to make in Virginia & the nation.

The Chickahominy Indian Tribe are an Algonquin people whose lands once stretched from the southeastern coastal plain to near the Arctic Circle. Although sometimes referred to as Powhatan, the Chickahominy were independent people, never under the control of Chief Powhatan.

The Chickahominy Indian Tribe-Eastern Division shares an early history with the Chickahominy Indian Tribe. Then in 1921, they organized as the Chickahominy Indians Eastern Division.

The three Tribal Nations were federally recognized on January 29, 2018, through the Thomasina E. Jordan Indian Tribes of Virginia Federal Recognition Act.

At the Annual Meeting, Tribal leaders discussed important topics such as protecting Tribal Nation homelands, constitutionality threats & challenges, reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, & protecting sovereign immunity in Indian Country.

Tribal leaders & other attendees celebrated 50 years of USET, which was founded on May 27, 1969.

Tribe becomes Rural Certified Community by TVA

The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MBCI) has been named a Rural Certified Community by the Tennessee Valley Authority Economic Development (TVAED) program following a rigorous review of the tribe's business development practice.

The Tribe's economic development program is the first in Mississippi to be certified under the TVA program.

"Achieving this certification is a great accomplishment for our economic development team at Mississippi Choctaw," said Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben.

"This was a tough competition that required us to demonstrate the highest professional standards with our economic development efforts. As the leader of the Mississippi Choctaws, I will continue to work hard & compete aggressively to recruit new economic development projects."

The Rural Certified Communities Program provides third party evaluation & feedback of organizational structure operation & strategic planning efforts to recognize rural economic development organizations who are prepared to compete for job creation & investment.

The MBCI was selected to participate in the program following an initial review by Strategic Development Group, the independent third party consulting firm engaged by TVAED for management of the program.

TVAED serves the seven states that make up the TVA service area—almost all of Tennessee & parts of Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, Virginia, & Kentucky.

"TVA was created to help improve the quality of life in our region, particularly in rural areas & we are proud to further that mission by supporting the Rural Certified program," said Heidi Smith, TVA General Manager, Global Business.

"Communities who are able to differentiate themselves & understand their unique assets will be better prepared for economic success. We are proud to partner with the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians to help further growth in the area."

Through participation, the Tribe received direct feedback of organizational planning from the site selection perspective, including but not limited to:

- SPOT Analysis (Strengths, Problems, Opportunities, Threats);
- Strategic Plan;
- Program of Work;
- Marketing Plan;
- Annual Budget;
- RFI Package;
- Product & Organizational Process; and
- Workforce Readiness.

TVA's Rural Certified Communities Program was established to ensure rural economic development organizations across the region are prepared & able to proactively:

- Retain existing jobs & investment,
- Recruit new jobs & investment,
- Enhance community livability assets, and
- Foster business & community support for economic development.

"We're very pleased with the designation and the recognition," said John Hendrix, director of economic development for the Tribe. "We work daily to insure the self-sufficiency of the Tribe by building an economic environment that is conducive to business."

As one of the country's original first nations, the MBCI is the only federally recognized American Indian tribe living within the State of Mississippi. With over 11,000 members, Choctaw lands cover over 35,000 acres in 10 counties. Providing permanent, full-time jobs for over 5,000 Tribal-member and non-Indian employees, the Tribe is a major contributor to the state's economy.

Thanksgiving Feast Held in Henning, TN

The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians & Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben hosted a Community-Wide Thanksgiving Feast in the Henning, TN community on Saturday, November 16, 2019. Community residents gathered at the Henning Multi-Purpose Building for a day of fellowship & food. A special presentation was made during the program as a new Kubota tractor was unveiled to the community members. Also in attendance were reigning Choctaw Indian Princess Elisah Jimmie, Tribal Council Representatives Vice-Chief Dorothy Wilson & Wilma Simpson-McMillan (Tucker), Ronnie Henry, Sr. & Roderick Bell (Bogue Chitto-Henning), & Timothy Thomas, Sr. (Conehatta).

TRIBAL FEAST ..... continued from page one

"That organization has grown from four tribes to where we stand today at 30 tribes. It's the same significance of our Tribe here as we continue to grow & it's great to see our people come & gather in one room to have a great time as we go into this holiday season. As a Tribe, we're very blessed," said Ben.

Several members of the Tribal Council & representatives from the local municipal & county governments were in attendance as Ben offered his appreciation to them.

"As a tribal government & tribal operation, we operate here on our tribal lands & at the same time we work cooperatively with fellow governments in the local city, county, state, & all the way to the federal level. We are very appreciative of the relationship we are able to have with our neighbors," said Ben.

As we live in an ever-changing world, Ben said we should reflect on the blessings that we have individually & as a Tribe.

"There are many communities that don't have a tight-knit relationship, but I'm very thankful as a Tribe we do. We support each other in so many ways, we are family. We are one & we ought to be very thankful."

Ben announced that he & members of the Tribal Council made an additional $10 million available to the government & enterprise budgets for Fiscal Year 2020. In addition, Tribal government employees received a 3-percent & 5-percent cost of living increase to supplement their income.

Chief Ben presented a $1,000 donation to the Chahta Alla Youth Group for all of their community service projects they have performed for Tribal members at events.

"I thank the working people of the community for the work that you give, day in & day out. I applaud you because without each & everybody's effort, we would not have the operation we have today."

Growing up in the Pearl River Community, Ben acknowledged that guidance from individuals & the support of Tribal leadership has affected not only his life, but the lives of Tribal members. Now he wants the opportuniy to give back.

"You never realize where you're going to make an impact. And to those of you if I never

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2019 WSS Pushmataha Champion - Beaver Dam

2019 WSS Tulli Okchi Ishko Champion - Pearl River

2019 WSS Men's 35-Over Champion - Koni Hata

2019 WSS Women's Champion - Koni Hata Ohoyo

Powtawche Valerino: Supporting NASA's Space Launch System Program

The following interview was posted on NASA.gov in observance of Native American Heritage Month.

TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF. WHAT IS YOUR BACKGROUND/ TRIBAL AFFILIATION/ EDUCATION?

Halito (hello in Choctaw). My name is Powtawche Valerino, & I am a guidance engineer who works for Aerodyne Industries at the NASA-Marshall Space Flight Center. In particular, I support NASA's Space Launch System program on the Engineering & Science Services & Skills Augmentation contract.

Powtawche Valerino

I obtained an undergraduate degree in mechanical engineering from Stanford University, & a masters & doctoral degree in mechanical engineering with a specialty in aero-astronautics from Rice University. I am half African-American & half Native-American (Mississippi Choctaw), & was born in New Orleans, LA.

HOW HAS THIS SHAPED YOU PERSONALLY & PROFESSIONALLY?

I spent my formative years on the Choctaw Indian Reservation in Philadelphia, MS, & in Missoula, MT, where I loved playing outdoors, watching farm animals, & observing everything around me. I believe living in these settings motivated me to explore & respect nature.

I enjoyed reading the stories behind constellations that filled the sky & once dreamed about becoming an astronomer. Even now, I still like to study how various indigenous tribes utilized & interpreted the placement of stars for navigation & seasonal activities.

I completed elementary, middle, & high school in New Orleans,

see NASA, pg. 12

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said thank you, you've made an impact on me. This Tribe has made an impact on my life & I hope this opportunity in your leadership that I will be able to make an impact in your lives or your childrens lives."

As Ben has been visiting & interacting with students & staff at the Choctaw Tribal Schools recently, he says the students are "our tomorrow" & encourages them to don't let anything get into their way to achieve their dreams.

"Let's continue to help each other. Be thankful for each other that we can open the doors & opportunities for our next generation."

With the recent opening of the upper grade building expansion at the Pearl River Elementary School & the purchase of new school buses, Ben said cooperation among leadership will continue to expand & provide opportunities, not only through education, but through services that affect each & every one of our lives.

"We walk different paths, but yet we still continue to walk in one spirit & as one Tribe, blessed by God. I pray that you will have a blessed holidays & we continue to prosper as one people & one band, the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians," said Ben.

A video highlighting accomplishments of the Tribe during 2019 was presented by the Office of Public Information-Choctaw Video.

Volunteers & various organization members assisted Pearl River Resort staff with serving food to individuals at the tables, cutting out the long lines at the buffet serving stations.

Servers included volunteers from the Tribal Government Services, Youth Opportunity Program, Choctaw Central Middle School Jr. Beta Club, Choctaw Day Training Program, Boys & Girls Clubs, Choctaw Elderly Center, CTEC's Future Farmers of America Club, & others.

Door prizes were called out & entertainment was provided by the Chahta Alla Youth Social Dancers as they performed several traditional social dances on stage. After the performance, Chief Ben came back on the stage to present a check to Chahta Alla for $1,000 to assist with activities they have in the future.

"This group of young people here is just a small portion I know of with a great amount of talent we have in our community & our Tribe. These group of kids go & do for others, whether if it's community involvement or just giving a hand, they do it in so many ways," said Ben.

Chief Ben, along with Choctaw Indian Princess Elisah Jimmie & World Series Stickball Commissioner Thomas Ben, presented banners to WSS champions crowned during the 70th Annual Choctaw Indian Fair in July 2019.

Team members & coaches in attendance accepting the banners included: Beaver Dam, Pushmataha Division (ages 10-13); Pearl River, Tulli Okchi Ishko Division (ages 14-17); Koni Hata, Men's 35+ Division; Koni Hata Ohoyo, Women's Division; & Bok Cito, Men's Division.

2019 WSS Men's Champion - Bok Cito

Tribe Hosts Veterans Day Parade

The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MBCI) honored veterans of our proud nation's military and those who are currently serving on active duty during the 17th Annual MBCI Veterans Day Parade on Friday, November 8 in Choctaw.

The parade route began at the Multi-Sports Complex parking lot, traveling down Back Jack Road and concluding at the Choctaw Veterans Memorial, located on the southside parking lot of the Geyser Falls Water Theme Park.

Various organizations offered appreciation to veterans as this year's theme was, "You Are My Superhero." Parade participants were encouraged to dress as their favorite super hero in honor of a true super hero - a Veteran.

Reigning Choctaw Indian Princess Elisah Jimmie served as emcee of the post-parade program and award ceremony.

"Today we recognize those who have protected and continue to protect our way of life. All of our veterans have protected our democracy, our freedom, our way of life. Today we honor and thank them and tomorrow we must continue to honor them," said Jimmie.

"Without our veterans, we wouldn't be where we are today. Without them, we wouldn't be able to reach where we could be tomorrow."

Members of the Choctaw Veterans Color Guard posted the flags of the U.S. and MBCI. Nana Frazier performed the National Anthem in Choctaw and Pastor Thomas Ben offered the invocation.

Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, who along with the Choctaw Veterans Committee hosted the

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Tribal members on active military duty led the parade procession along Black Jack Road in the Pearl River Community.

Powtawche Valerino is a guidance engineer who works for Aerodyne Industries at the NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center, supporting the agency's Space Launch System program. She has worked at four different NASA facilities as an intern & as a full-time employee or contractor at Stennis Space Center, Johnson Space Center, Marshall Space Flight Center & the Jet Propulsion Laboratory. "Without a doubt," she says, "each NASA center's unique mission, personality, heritage, & expertise makes working for NASA profoundly rewarding." (Image courtesy of Powtawche Valerino)

NASA ..... continued from page eleven

LA, where I continued to develop my passion in science, & received encouragement & mentorship from many outstanding teachers & staff. This passion lead me to participate in organizations & activities that promoted the study of science, technology, engineering, & math disciplines.

The interests I developed as a kid definitely influenced the school & work activities I pursued. My earliest memories that I connect to my indigenous heritage include hearing my grandmother speak Choctaw to me (she spoke no English), & dancing at inter-tribal powwows in Montana. I believe it is because of these experiences I can easily relate to the students I talk to during my current outreach activities.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT WORKING FOR NASA?

Fortunately, I have had exposure to four different NASA facilities either through internships or full-time employment (i.e. Stennis, Johnson, Jet Propulsion Laboratory, & Marshall). Without a doubt, each NASA center's unique mission, personality, heritage, & expertise makes working for NASA profoundly rewarding.

I am humbled to be surrounded by the legacy made by my engineering predecessors & peers who've sent space probes to deep space & humans to the moon. I can easily share several prideful moments from each of my assignments.

The engineering challenges & joys that I have experienced at each center are what keeps me working in space industry. I appreciate that NASA encourages outreach because I enjoy sharing these moments with students.

YOUR THOUGHTS ON STEM VERSUS STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) EDUCATION?

While I was in 6th grade, my elementary school organized a school-wide assembly where musicians showcased their instruments to all the students. It was my first time seeing & hearing so many brass, wind, & string instruments up close.

After listening to a musician perform rich low tones so confidently on the cello, I imagined myself playing the cello too. As a result, I started

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first Military Service Appreciation Luncheon earlier in the day at the Spectrum at the Golden Moon Hotel and Casino, said it was great to see and honor many Tribal veterans and their families that gathered. He also told the audience we need to pray and support those that are on active duty as freedom is not free.

"One of the honors I had was walking through Arlington Cemetery, walking upon that hill and watching the guards at the Tomb of the Unknown Solder, knowing there were men and women who ultimately sacrificed for us," said Ben.

"We are thankful that most came home and are with us today. They may have sacrificed time away from family and friends, but they also gave their time to serve each and everyone of you. The honorary moments that are being given, this is for the men and women that serve in the military of the United States of America."

Mississippi Army National Guard Major Reginald Brownlee of the 298th Combat Support Sustainment Battalion served as guest speaker as he recognized all those that are a part of a great brotherhood and sisterhood known as the U.S. Military.

"To our veterans and active duty service members, it is your service and sacrifice that has kept our country safe and free. No matter which branch you served in or how many years you served, raising your hand and committing yourself to service in the armed forces was and is a brave, selfless act," said Brownlee.

All veterans have protected our democracy and our way of life as Brownlee said we must honor them everyday and in every way possible.

"The best way to honor our veterans is to take an active part in maintaining freedom in America. We must teach future generations what it means to be an American and respect all Americans. We must volunteer in our communities, take care of our veterans and their families, vote in elections, and continue to make America the very best that it can be."

This year's parade grand marshals, chosen by the Choctaw Veterans Committee, were Cubert Bell, Sr. of Henning, TN (Marines) and the family of the late Sgt. LeeAnn Simpson (Army National Guard).

Chief Ben & Choctaw Indian Princess Elisah Jimmie presented the Choctaw Warrior's Eagle Feather award to parade grand marshals Wilma Simpson-McMillan & James McMillan (pictured left) on behalf of the late Sgt. LeeAnn Simpson & Cubert Bell, Sr. (pictured center). Pictured right, guest speaker Maj. Reginald Brownlee was presented a Choctaw basket as a token of his appreciation.

see PARADE, pg. 14

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to take the cello lessons that was offered at our school.

Playing the cello in school & community orchestras has allowed me to travel or perform with many people from different backgrounds. For this reason, I am a strong advocate for the education of science, technology, math & the arts in school.

If having access to instruments impacts other students as it did me, kids would have more opportunities to engage with a broader group of people & to gain greater understanding of the world.

Also, art can be used to solve problems or convey ideas, especially in science & engineering. It is very common to meet engineers & scientists who happen to be accomplished musicians & artists as well.

Similarly, my Choctaw heritage has always incorporated art & creativity for tools used in daily activities. For example, the combination of function, art, & use of natural resources are what make hand-woven Choctaw baskets so beautiful & ingenious.

Choctaw baskets are made of swamp or river cane reeds. They can be woven tight enough to be used as corn or flour sifters, & even tighter to hold water.

Several of my relatives are artists or have hobbies in the creative arts (e.g. beadwork, visual art, & music), & I learned to appreciate the creative process by observing them. I discovered that patience & practice are very important in developing a particular skill, so I applied that to my studies in school, as well as my hobby as a cellist.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUNG NATIVE AMERICANS SEEKING A CAREER IN A STEM FIELD?

If you live on a reservation or in a rural setting, finding resources to help you explore the STEM fields can be difficult. In addition, staying focused in STEM subjects can be challenging if you don't have access to family or friends that can assist you with your goals. This is why it is imperative that you seek help from a larger community.

Reach out to teachers & school counselors who can connect you to science & engineering camps. Network with professional science & engineering organizations like AISES, SACNAS, AIAA, & ASME, & attend their meetings or conferences. Talk to professionals about their work & what they did to get there. Try to find mentors to connect with.

Get a solid foundation in math & physics because these are the building blocks for any field in engineering. Don't be afraid if these subjects are hard in the beginning. Ask questions in your classes, & don't be afraid to get help with understanding concepts.

Try to apply for an internship to gain insight on what a particular profession entails. Lastly, don't give up!

Editor: Yvette Smith

Pearl River Resort placed first in the Vehicle Division.

Choctaw Fire Department placed first in the Float Division.

CCHS Visual Arts students placed first in the Walking Division.

PARADE ..... continued from page thirteen

Chief Ben awarded Bell and Simpson's parents, Wilma Simpson-McMillan and James McMillan, the Choctaw Warrior's Eagle Feather award which signifies courage, strength and sacrifice for their service to their respective military branch.

Maj. Brownlee was presented an authentic Choctaw basket by Chief Ben as a token of appreciation for his remarks given at the event.

The Choctaw Veterans Committee sponsored the Veterans Day Parade Poster Contest, which was open to Choctaw Tribal Schools students in grades 7-12. The winner was Choctaw Central High School senior Kendra Allen of the Tucker Community. She was the recipient of a $100 cash award.

Winners of the parade categories included the Choctaw Fire Department (float), Pearl River Resort (vehicle) and Choctaw Central High School's Visual Arts students (walking).

The MBCI Protective Services Unit conducted a 21-gun salute, followed by the playing of Taps to conclude the ceremony.

Choctaw veterans in attendance received a commemorative T-shirt compliments of the Choctaw Veterans Committee, Chief Ben & the Tribal Administration.

CCHS senior Kendra Allen was the winner of the 2019 Veterans Day Parade Poster Contest. Pictured with Allen is CCHS Visual Arts instructor William Mott.

Tribal veterans & those on active duty take a group photo with Chief Ben at the Choctaw Veterans Memorial.

DOECE News

October was a busy month for the Department of Early Childhood Education (DOECE) program as our children participated in several activities!

On October 18, the DOECE hosted its annual Green Corn Festival. This year, the festival was hosted by Pearl River Head Start & Pearl River Day Care & was held at the Pearl River Amphitheater.

The children did wonderfully as they performed traditional Choctaw social dances & dressed in their Choctaw clothing & beadwork. The Elderly Nutrition Program also danced & we always welcome them to participate with us. DOECE provided a traditional meal for all those in attendance after the dancing.

Many thanks to all volunteers & workers who helped make this year's Green Corn Festival a success! Special thanks to Chief Cyrus Ben for his remarks & to Choctaw Indian Princess Elisah Jimmie for serving as emcee. A big THANK YOU to everyone who helped with the food, from the cooks to the fire keepers & servers. Yakoki!

Other activities our children participated in included the Harvest Fest, sponsored by Agriculture & Rural Development, & Healthy Families Fest, sponsored by Family & Community Services.

We have a lot of fun at Early Childhood & we want to provide services to as many children as we can. We still have room for children at Red Water Head Start (601-298-9282), Bogue Chitto Head Start (601-656-7224), & Tucker Head Start (601-389-2053). Please feel free to contact these centers for more information & fill out an application.

Early Childhood is a full-day, full-year program & we provide comprehensive services to our children. We do follow income guidelines; however, children with disabilities, homeless children, & foster children do receive priority for enrollment.

Transportation is provided to & from school for children in Head Start. We encourage anyone with a child 3 years or older to enroll in our program!

BCES Chief's List Students

Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben recently congratulated students from Bogue Chitto Elementary School who were named to the Chief's List (all A's) for the 1st 9-weeks. Included on the list were: (1st grade) Raylynn Amos, Omri Henry, Kyler Hickman, Envy Isaac, Tierra Isaac, Clayson Rush; (2nd grade) Sadie Farve, Reshawn Lewis; (3rd grade) Liyah Baca; (8th grade) Chesney Amos, Shaleah Amos, Amilia Sebastian.

Know Your Rights Workshop Held

The Mississippi Center For Legal Services Corporation & Choctaw Legal Defense hosted a free workshop, Know Your Rights - The People's Law School Choctaw Community Law Day Workshop, on November 13 at the Golden Moon VIP Room in Choctaw. Attendees were presented information regarding issues such as the Violence Against Women Act, Victims of Crime Act, Tribal Law and Order Act, wills (estate) & deeds, SSI & disability rights, elderly scams, substance abuse awareness, debt & bankruptcy, & financial literacy.

REPORT CRIMES ANONYMOUSLY

WeTip inc.

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!

Department of Family & Community Services 1998

PREVENT ELDER ABUSE

Warning Signs
Fear, withdrawal, depression
Shame, anxiety, embarrassment
Unexplained bruises or injuries
Hesitation to talk openly
Isolation by care giver
Inadequate food, clothing, medication
Lack of funds
Elder's bills are unpaid
Disheveled
Poor Hygiene
Confined to bed
Home in filthy condition
Loss of self-esteem
Disappearance of valuables

Report or Refer
Call 911 if there is an emergency

Call to refer Elder Abuse cases to any of these agencies:

Family Violence & Victim's Services	601-650-1774
Office of the Attorney General	601-656-4507
Choctaw Police Department	601-656-5711

Consider asking the Elder:
Is anyone hurting or scaring you? Are you afraid? Who pays your bills? Do you have food and your medicine?
Ask these questions privately where you will not be overheard by the alleged abuser.
Recognizing the warning signs is the key to identifiying and stopping an occurance of elder abuse.

For more information on elder abuse please contact Famiy Violence and Victim's Services at 601-650-1774. Referrals to the Family Violence Program are kept anonymous.

Identify It! ❖ Report It! ❖ Stop It!

HALLOWEEN FUN

Runners Compete at Cross Country Championships

Tribal member athletes recently participated in the 2019 MHSAA State Cross Country Championships at Choctaw Trails in Clinton.

On November 4, Neshoba Central High School competed in the Class 5A championships.

In the girls championship, 8th grader Katelin Williams (#1373) placed 29th overall out of 122 runners with her time of 24:04.06 in the 5K race. The Lady Rockets finished 10th overall out of 17 teams.

Saltillo High School claimed the 5A girls championship.

In the boys championship, sophomore Thomas Saunders (#1379) placed 28th overall out of 129 runners with his time of 19:31.0. Freshman Logan Lyons (#1377) placed 75th with his time of 22:52.6 & freshman Omar Williams (#1380) placed 93rd with a time of 23:51.6. The Rockets placed 9th overall out of 18 teams.

Brookhaven High School won the 5A boys championship.

On November 6, Choctaw Central High School, Leake Central High School & Newton County High School competed in the Class 4A championships.

In the girls championship, Choctaw Central High School junior Sierra Wallace (#62) placed 3rd overall out of 148 runners with her time of 21:14.27 in the 5k race. She was awarded a bronze medal in addition to being named an All-State medalist.

Junior Catelyn Martin (#60) placed 36th with her time of 24:15.70; junior Leilaya McMillan (#61) placed 43rd with a time of 24:34.83; sophomore Justine Isaac (#57) placed 61st with a time of 25:19.27; junior Shantasia John (#58) placed 63rd with a time of 25:22.08; junior Lyleonia Johnson (#59) placed 64th with a time of 25:23.95; & 8th grader Kailyn Willis (#63) placed 86th with a time of 27:15.08 for the Lady Warriors.

Leake Central's Breely Wilson (#926) placed 93rd with a time of 27:44.68. Newton County sophomore Remini Nickey (#448) placed 100th with a time of 28:42.41.

The Lady Warriors finished 6th overall out of 20 teams. Newton County finished 13th.

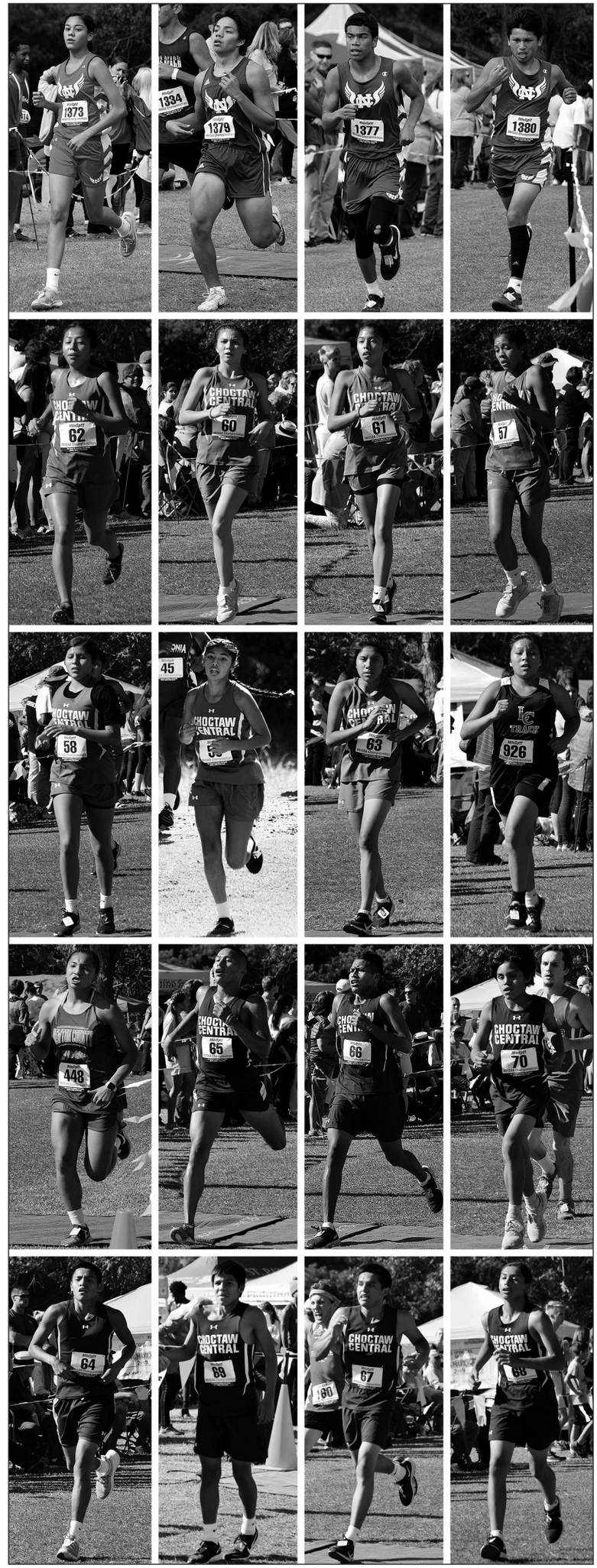
Corinth High School won the 4A girls championship.

In the boys championship, Choctaw Central senior Alonso Henry (#65) placed 8th overall out of 171 runners with his time of 18:00.86 & was named an All-State medalist.

Sophomore Aiden Mckinney (#66) placed 36th with a time of 19:39.21; 7th grader Diontray Tubby (#70) placed 56th with a time of 20:09.80; junior Dewayne Cotton (#64) placed 71st with a time of 20:44.25; 8th grader Jayce Sam (#69) placed 94th with a time of 21:47.10; sophomore Markeleus Mingo (#67) placed 105th with a time of 22:19.43; & 8th grader Peyton Mingo (#68) placed 134th with a time of 24:14.28 for the Warriors as they finished 8th overall out of 25 teams.

Corinth High School won the 4A boys championship.

Pictured from left are All-State Medalists Sierra Wallace & Alonso Henry.



CCHS Hosts Senior Night

Senior Night was celebrated on Friday, October 25 at Choctaw Central High School for members of the Warriors football team, band, cheerleaders, & cross country teams.

During pre-game ceremonies, football players honored by Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben and members of their families included Jaden Alex, Kashden Bell, Jayson Briscoe, Gerald Isom, Deontrae Joe, Azalius Lewis, Colin Martin, Miles Steve, Lonzo Thomas, Sherente Tubby, Graviel Velasco, & Manning Willis.

Members of the All American Skydiving Team made a surprise appearance as they carried the game ball into the stadium from above.

During halftime, band members honored included Bryce Ketcher, Michael Wilson, Malatah Henry, Mercedes Peters, Martina Willis, Kaliyah Tubby, & Hunter Orduno.

Cheerleaders honored included Jaida Bell, Melanian Jimmie, Rayven McMillian, Tia'Rain Saunders, Kelsey Tangle, & Kaliyah Tubby.

Cross country members included Anastasia Ben, Justine Isaac, Dewayne Cotton, Alonso Henry, & Cody Roach.

Neshoba Central Seniors Honored

Senior members of the Neshoba Central Rockets football team, cheer & band program were honored during Senior Night ceremonies on Friday, November 8 at the NCHS Football Stadium. Rocket Seniors honored were Bryce Parkerson, Bryce Thomas, Sunshine Clemmons, & Dinah Jim.

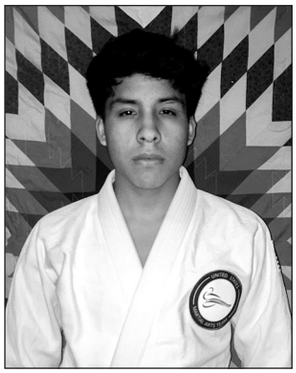
Choctaw Central Softball Seniors Honored

Senior members of the Choctaw Central Lady Warriors slow-pitch softball team & press box announcers were honored during Senior Night ceremonies on Tuesday, October 1 at the CCHS Softball Complex. Lady Warriors honored were Tia'Rain Saunders, Maiya Joe & Melanian Jimmie. Announcers were Alonzo Henry & Bryce Ketcher.

Lady Warriors Sign Letters of Intent

Choctaw Central High School Lady Warrior Softball seniors recently signed letters of intent to continue their collegiate athletic careers at their respective schools. Signing ceremonies were held at the CCHS Softball Complex as family members, teammates, coaching staff, school officials, & friends were in attendance. **LEFT**, *On Friday, November 1, Tia'Rain Saunders signed with the Jones College Bobcats softball program.* **RIGHT**, *On Friday, November 8, Maiya Joe signed with the Meridian Community College Eagles softball program.*

Roach a Medalist at World Martial Arts Games



Braxton Roach

U.S. Martial Arts Team (USMAT) member Braxton Roach of Choctaw, Miss., brought home two silver medals & a bronze as he competed in the 12th World Martial Arts Games in London, England Oct. 24-27, 2019.

This year's Games featured over 1,000 competitors representing 20 countries in division for youth & adult, under belts & Black Belts.

Roach, a 6th Kyu Blue Belt, tried out for the USMAT & Mississippi Coach Thaddeus E. Davis on March 16, 2019. He endured close to six hours of training to show he was capable of competing on the international level.

His physical & mental fortitude was tested in Basics Drilling, Sparring, Kata, & Grappling. Even though he has been training in martial arts briefly, Roach showed Coach Davis & the team captains he had what it takes to be a future world champion.

After his acceptance onto the team, Roach was on strict training regimen as he was required to hit a certain weight & maintain it for his fighting division. He was required to practice his Kata diligently to get it as close to perfect as possible & maintain a strict diet.

His formal training leading up to the World Games included Shotokan Karate on Mondays & Fridays, Grappling on Mondays & Fridays after Shotokan class with open mats on Wednesdays.

Classes were 90 minutes in duration, each session for a total of 3 hours on training days. Many of those days went over the 90 minute mark for fine tuning.

The USMAT was established in 1999 to bring together the country's best traditional martial artists to compete against the world's best in the World Martial Arts Games. They have established itself as a powerhouse in international competition.

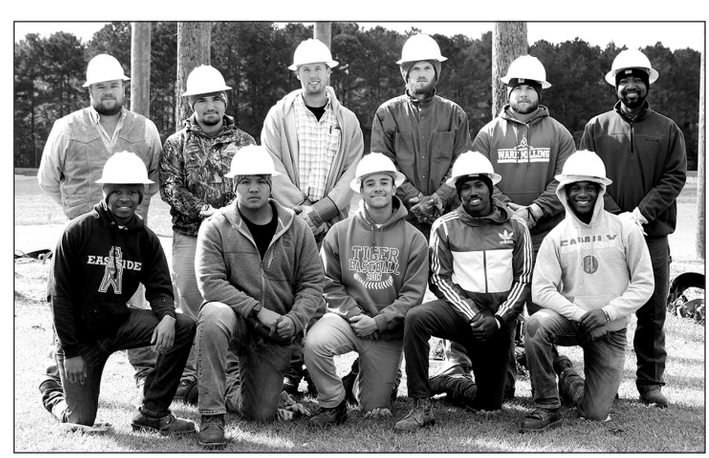
Roach, far left, celebrates with his silver medal.

CTEC Students Tour Facilities

Choctaw Central High School students attending the Career & Technical Education Center (CTEC) recently toured the IKBI Housing Manufacturing Center & the CSI Cyber Security Lab located in Choctaw. For more information or to schedule a tour, please call 601-504-2966.

ABOVE, *Information Technology students Jaylen Bell, Oren Ferris, Kevin Gibson, & Connery Hodges were accompanied by their instructor, Lisa Greenwood, & tour facilitator Vickey Timmons of IKBI, Inc. Students enjoyed using the virtual reality equipment & learning more about the Choctaw Code Talkers.* **BELOW**, *Construction students Nehemiah Solomon, Scottie Bell, Garcia Denson, Cohen Keats, & Kendrick Wesley were accompanied by their instructor, Fred Lyons, & tour facilitator Aaron Bradley of IKBI, Inc. Students enjoyed seeing the stages of a housing construction & the trades involved in building houses.*

ECCC Students Complete Electrical Utility Lineman Course



These students recently completed requirements in East Central Community College's 16-week course in Electrical Utility Lineman & were honored during a ceremony held Thursday, Nov. 21, on the Decatur campus. Pictured are (kneeling, from left) Jaylin McGill of Heidelberg, Hunter Smith of Conehatta, Caleb Chandler of Noxapater, Trace Wallace of Union, Tavarus Jones of Heidelberg; (standing, from left) Will Burton of Mize, Ethan Ferguson of Brandon, Ryan Overby of Toomsuba, Joshua Mitchell of Meridian, & Tanner Bullock of Houston. Also pictured (back row, at right) is instructor Curtis Bradley. (EC Photo)

ECCC Baseball Players Sign With 4-Year Programs

From left, Dakota Kennedy & Tanner Knight. (EC Photo)

Two East Central Community College baseball players signed National Letters of Intent on Nov. 13 to continue their academic & athletic careers at four-year programs.

Sophomore pitcher Tanner Knight signed with Louisiana Tech in Ruston, La. The Bulldogs compete in NCAA Division I & Conference USA.

Sophomore outfielder Dakota Kennedy signed with Mississippi College in Clinton. The Choctaws compete in NCAA Division II & the Gulf South Conference.

Knight, who prepped at Eupora High School, is a 6-5 right-handed pitcher. He appeared in 17 games as a freshman in 2018, starting 11 contests. He finished with a 5-5 record, with four complete games & 51 strikeouts. He was named the Mississippi Association of Community & Junior Colleges Baseball Pitcher of the Week last March after East Central's 3-2 win over No. 2 ranked Parkland College. He gave up two hits, no runs, & struck out 10 batters in five innings of work.

Kennedy prepped at Choctaw Central High School. As a freshman in 2018, he played in all 46 games hitting. 267. For the season, he had 39 hits, including seven doubles, a team-leading four triples, & three home runs. He tied for the team lead in RBI's with 33 & was third in stolen bases with 15.

Kudzu

Submitted by Kaitlyn Ford, MSU Tribal Extension Agent

Kudzu [*Pueraria montana* (Lour.) Merr.], often called "the vine that ate the South," is a perennial, high-climbing vine native to eastern India, China, & Japan. It was introduced into the U.S. in 1876 at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia & was recognized as highly nutritious livestock forage in 1905.

By 1946, an estimated 300,000 acres were planted. In addition to its use as forage, kudzu was also widely planted for soil stabilization in the South. It has been used some as an ornamental & for certain edible & medicinal uses.

It is a noxious weed in Florida, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, Pennsylvania, Texas, & West Virginia. It can be problematic in all southeastern states & in almost all habitats except aquatic. Kudzu can host Asian soybean rust, a potentially serious pathogen in soybeans [*Glycine max* (L.) Merr.]

DESCRIPTION

Vegetative Growth

The genus *Pueraria* belongs to the Pea (Fabaceae or Leguminosae) family. Of the 17 *Pueraria* species native to the tropics & East Asia, only two grow in the U.S., *P. phaseoloides* (Roxb.) Benth. & *P. montana*.

see KUDZU, pg. 24

Upgrade in Skills Lands Promotion

Submitted by the MBCI Office of Economic Development

The Tribe's Office of Economic Development, Choctaw Employment Assistance, & East Central Community College (ECCC)–Integrated Technologies staff have partnered to improve the skills of our current maintenance employees.

The Choctaw Health Center, Choctaw Tribal Maintenance, Choctaw Tribal Schools, & Pearl River Resort employees have completed the core curriculum & Level 1 of the NCCER classes in HVAC & Electrical.

Norman D. Samuel of the Bogue Chitto Community has been attending both classes through ECCC. His immediate supervisor, Pearl River Resort Maintenance Director Gregory Daugherty, saw the job Norman was doing & the effort he puts into his classwork. He was recently promoted from maintenance worker to supervisor.

Norman was hired with the Pearl River Resort Maintenance Department in September 2015 as a Maintenance Engineer Attendant. This position included working on the casino floors & hotel repairs.

He was promoted in October 2016 to Maintenance Engineer as he worked in the HVAC shop assisting with repairs on air handler units, performing PM work on air handlers, primary & secondary circulating pumps, electrical motor replacements, changing filters, & many other tasks.

Norman D. Samuel

Norman developed an interest in this field & when the opportunity came up to take HVAC & Electrical classes toward NCCER certification, he signed up.

His classwork in both classes has been exceptional. With hard work & dedication, Norman gained a tremendous amount of experience & knowledge.

In July 2019, Norman was promoted to Facility Shift Supervisor over the HVAC/Electrical/Plumbing shop. He schedules daily repairs, PM schedules, ordering supplies, & equipment.

Norman works closely with contractors & other departments making sure the work being performed is done correctly & on a timely manner.

Norman thanks his wife, mother, & the Pearl River Resort for believing in him & giving him the opportunity. He also thanks Chief Cyrus Ben & the Tribal Administration.

Norman plans to continue working with the Pearl River Resort after earning his NCCER Certification to become more proficient as a supervisor & further himself in management.

Congratulations Norman on a job well done! For more information about NCCER certification or skills training, contact Sarah Swanner-Medlock, Operations Manager for Economic Development, at 601-663-7585.

How to Prepare for a Winter Storm

Winter storms can cause power outages that last for days. They can make roads and walkways extremely dangerous and also negatively affect critical community services including public transportation, childcare, and health programs. Injuries and deaths may occur from exposure, dangerous road conditions, carbon monoxide poisoning, and other winter storm conditions. Be better prepared this winter, and learn more at ready.gov/prepare.

Now/Prepare

Sign up for local alerts and warnings.

Create and test emergency communication plan(s).

Stock emergency supplies, and install battery-powered or battery backed-up carbon monoxide detectors and smoke detectors.

Winterize your home. Visit **this page** to help you prepare.

Review your property insurance, and safeguard critical documents.

Get trained on specific needs your family may have. Also, consider joining your local Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).

Identify a place nearby where you can safely warm up should you lose heat in your home.

During/Survive

Stay indoors and off the roads. If you must drive, keep emergency supplies in your car.

Close off rooms to consolidate and retain heat.

Dress in layers, and use blankets to stay warm.

Bring pets into a warm place and out of the storm or severe cold.

Never use a generator, camp stove, charcoal grill, or gasoline or propane heater indoors, as these items can start accidental fires, cause electric shock, and/or cause deadly carbon monoxide poisoning.

Never heat a home with a cooktop or oven.

Limit your time outdoors, and stay dry.

After/Be Safe

Only drive if necessary. Remove snow and ice from your tailpipe before starting your car, and check regularly if idling. Clean all snow and ice from your car before driving.

Dress in warm clothing, stay dry, prevent prolonged exposure to cold and wind, and avoid overexertion clearing/shoveling snow. Overexertion can lead to a medical emergency.

Monitor local news and alerts for emergency information and instructions.

Now/Prepare for a Winter Storm

EMERGENCY SUPPLIES

You may not be at home when the storm starts, so it is important to have basic supplies of food and water as well as a way to stay warm without power in several locations such as your workplace, vehicle, and/or school. You can build your supplies over time by adding a few items each week or month. Gather, in advance, the necessary supplies and items you will need to stay safe after the winter storm passes. For a complete list of emergency supplies, visit **www.ready.gov/kit**. Check these supplies off of your Winter Storm Preparedness Checklist once you add them to your emergency kit, which appears at the end of this document.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION

Make sure you have everything you will need to get in touch with your family either through cellular phones or email.

MEDICAL NEEDS

Be equipped to tend to any current or unexpected medical conditions your family members may have. Ask your doctor about storing prescription medication such as at least a three-days' supply of heart and blood pressure medication, insulin for diabetics, and other prescription drugs such as inhalers for those with asthma. Include battery backup power for power-dependent mobility devices, oxygen, and other assistive technology needs.

CRITICAL DOCUMENTS

Place any important documents in a sealed, waterproof container to keep them dry and easily accessible.

TOOLS AND SAFETY ITEMS

Small items like matches, flashlights, a multi-tool, pocket knife, and a whistle (to signal for help) can make a huge difference for your family while weathering a storm.

FOOD/SUPPLIES

Have at least a three-days' supply of non-perishable food and water for your family. Remember to store anything specific to your family's needs.

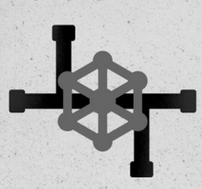
WARM CLOTHING & BLANKETS

Warm clothes and blankets can help prevent hypothermia. Do not forget warm, waterproof, and protective footwear as well as gloves.

Ask yourself, "What would I need for myself and my family if a winter storm struck?" and "What would I or my family require if we did not have access to a grocery store or pharmacy for at least three days?" Add any of these specific items to your Winter Storm Preparedness Checklist.

Now/Prepare for a Winter Storm

ACTIONS THAT REDUCE PROPERTY DAMAGE & PROVIDE PROTECTION



WINTERIZE YOUR HOME

by insulating walls and attics, caulking and weather-stripping doors and windows, and installing storm windows or covering windows with plastic.

INSULATE WATER PIPES.

Also, allow faucets to drip or trickle during unusually cold weather or if the power and heat are out to avoid freezing. When water freezes, it expands, and this can cause water pipes to burst. Know how to shut off water valves if a pipe bursts.

CLEAR RAIN GUTTERS,

repair roof leaks, check your roof to make sure it can handle the extra weight of the snow and ice, and cut away tree branches that could fall on a house or neighboring structure. Keep pathways and driveways clear between storms to avoid buildup of snow piles and icing.

INSTALL BATTERY-OPERATED CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS

or electric detectors with battery backups in central locations on every level of your home. This will provide an early warning of accumulating carbon monoxide, which is a colorless, odorless, tasteless, and potentially deadly gas.

HIRE A CONTRACTOR

to check the structural ability of your roof to sustain unusually heavy weight from the accumulation of snow and/or ice.

KEEP FIRE EXTINGUISHERS ON HAND

and make sure everyone in your home knows how to use them. If your smoke alarms get power from your home's electrical system (hardwired), make sure the backup battery is replaced at least once a year, so your alarms will work during a power outage.

MAINTAIN HEATING EQUIPMENT

and chimneys by having them cleaned and inspected every year by a qualified professional.

Renters, either check with your landlord or property manager to ensure that they have taken care of these necessary building improvements or find out your responsibilities with respect to these actions.

INSURANCE

Insurance claims are an important part of recovering from storm damage. Review your homeowners, renters, or business insurance policies to ensure you have appropriate coverage for your property and personal belongings. Photograph and inventory your property to assist with post-disaster claims.

FLOOD INSURANCE

Most property insurance policies do not cover flood losses, so you will need to purchase separate flood insurance if your property is at risk for flooding due to snowmelt. Talk to your insurance agent about buying flood insurance. Flood insurance is available for homeowners, renters, and business owners through the National Flood Insurance Program in participating communities. Keep in mind that a policy purchased today will take 30 days to go into effect, so act now. Learn how to protect yourself financially from flood damage by visiting **FloodSmart.gov**.

PETS

Don't forget to make a plan for your pet too! To learn more tips, go to **ready.gov/animals**.

During/Survive a Winter Storm

COLD WEATHER DANGERS

If you detect symptoms of frostbite, which is the freezing of the skin and body tissue beneath the skin, in either yourself or another person, seek medical care IMMEDIATELY. Additionally, hypothermia occurs when one's body temperature drops to dangerously low levels, so, before addressing symptoms of frostbite, first determine whether you or someone else is showing signs of hypothermia.

UNDERSTANDING WIND CHILL

As the wind increases, your body is cooled at a faster rate, causing the skin temperature to drop. This is why it sometimes "feels" colder than the actual temperature. Wind chill is the temperature it "feels like" when you are outside. The NWS provides a Wind Chill Chart to show the difference between air temperature, and the perceived temperature, and the amount of time until frostbite occurs.

SIGNS OF HYPOTHERMIA

- Uncontrollable shivering
- Memory loss, disorientation
- Incoherence, slurred speech
- Drowsiness
- Apparent exhaustion

SIGNS OF FROSTBITE

Loss of feeling and white or pale appearance in extremities, such as fingers, toes, earlobes, face, and the tip of the nose.

WHAT TO DO

If you detect symptoms of frostbite:

Cover exposed skin, but do not rub the affected area in an attempt to warm it up. Frostbite results in the formation of ice crystals in the tissue, and rubbing could damage the tissue. Seek medical help immediately. For more information, visit the CDC's page on **frostbite** and **hypothermia**.

If you detect symptoms of hypothermia:

- Get the victim to a warm location.
- Remove wet clothing.
- Warm the center of the body first by wrapping the person in blankets or putting on dry clothing.
- Give warm, non-alcoholic beverages if the person is conscious.
- Take the person's temperature. If it is below 95°, seek medical attention immediately.

WHAT TO WEAR

- **If you must go outside,** wear several layers of loose-fitting, lightweight, warm clothing rather than one layer of heavy clothing. The outer garments should be tightly woven and water-repellent.
- **Wear mittens,** which are warmer than gloves.
- **Cover all of your body.** Wear a hat and a scarf, covering your mouth to protect your face and to help prevent loss of body heat.

KUDZU ..... continued from page twenty-two

Of the two species, only *P. montana* var. *lobata* (Willd.) Maesen & *S. Almeida* (kudzu) are problems in the continental U.S.

Kudzu is a perennial, semi-woody, trailing to highclimbing, twining vine reaching around 80 feet in length. Trailing stems may root when in contact with the soil & produce large, tuberous roots, which are edible & sometimes eaten in Asian countries.

Twining generally occurs around objects less than 4 inches in diameter. Stems are covered with stiff, rust or golden hairs when young &, as they grow, turn brown, semi-woody, & smooth. Stems can grow up to 10 inches in diameter.

Leaves are alternate & trifoliolately compound (**Figure 3**) with leaflets 2–8 inches long. Leaves are covered with hairs & typically lobed (**Figure 3**). Petioles are 6–12 inches long with swollen bases & deciduous, ovatelanceolate stipules.

Flowering

Kudzu flowers August through September. Flower panicles are axillary, 2–12 inches long, & open from bottom to top (**Figure 1**). Flowers are about 1 inch in diameter & occur in twos or threes in a spiral pattern up the main axis.

Lower petals are lavender or violet-purple, & upper petals are similar in color or pinkish with a yellow patch near the base. Flowers are fragrant to attract pollinators.

Clustered fruit are produced from September to January. They are flattened legumes (or pods) 1.2–3 inches long, 0.3-0.5 inch wide, & covered with stiff golden-brown hairs, very similar in appearance to soybean pods.

Seeds are egg-shaped to nearly square & are around 0.1 inch in diameter. Seed viability is variable but generally very poor.

Dispersal

Kudzu spreads primarily by rooting at nodes along stems in contact with soil.

HABITAT

Kudzu is problematic in all habitats except aquatic. It forms dense thickets, quickly shading out trees & relatively drought tolerant & will grow in a wide range of soils. Once established, kudzu is difficult to eradicate.

DISTRIBUTION

Kudzu is widespread throughout the Midsouth, particularly on slopes. Kudzu normally occurs from Maine to Florida & as far west as Nebraska & Texas. It has also escaped in Washington & Oregon. In 2009, kudzu was found near Ontario, Canada.

CONTROL METHODS

Mechanical

Some mechanical methods of kudzu control may be used in areas that can be grazed, mowed, or tilled. Mechanical controls, including hand removal, can be successful for small infestations, but the root must be removed from the soil. Because stems can propagate through fragmentation, be careful to remove all stems.

Chemical

See **Table 1** for recommended herbicides for kudzu control. Metsulfuron can be applied over pines, but it should not be applied on foliage of desirable vegetation. Imazapyr, picloram, aminocyclopyrachlor, aminopyralid, & clopyralid can be absorbed by roots & damage desirable trees & other broadleaf plants.

Do not apply within two times the dripline to avoid injury. Clopyralid can be applied over certain hardwoods with safety. See label for list of tolerant species. Nonionic surfactant should be added with foliar applications.

Biological

Livestock readily graze kudzu. Continuous grazing may result in stand loss.

Table 1. Chemical control for kudzu.

Herbicide	Formulation	Method	Rate
Aminocyclopyrachlor (Method)	2 lb ae/gallon	Foliar	10-18 oz/acre
Aminocyclopyrachlor + Chlorsulfuron (Perspective)	55.2%	Foliar	4.8-11 oz/acre
Aminocyclopyrachlor + Metsulfuron (Streamline)	52.1%	Foliar	9.5-11.5 oz/acre
Aminocyclopyrachlor + Metsulfuron + Imazapyr (Viewpoint)	61.7%	Foliar	16-20 oz/acre
Aminopyralid (Milestone)	2 lb ae/gallon	Foliar	7 oz/acre
Aminopyralid + Triclopyr (Milestone VM)	2 lb ae/gallon	Foliar	64-96 oz/acre
Clopyralid (Transline, Lontrel, etc.)	2 lb ae/gallon	Foliar	21 oz/acre
Metsulfuron (Escort, MSM, etc.)	60%	Foliar	4 oz/acre
Glyphosate (Roundup, Accord, etc.)	3 lb ae/gallon	Foliar	2% solution or 128 oz/acre
Imazapyr + Metsulfuron (Lineage Clearstand)	72.7%	Foliar	25 oz/acre
Picloram (Tordon, Tropper, etc.)	2 lb ae/gallon	Foliar	64 oz/acre

LEFT, *Figure 1. Kudzu grows violet flowers from August through September.* **CENTER**, *Figure 2. Kudzu twines over everything in its path on this rural road in Mississippi.* **RIGHT**, *Figure 3. Kudzu leaves are alternate & trifoliolately compound with leaflets 2-8 inches long.*

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CTLP NEWS

Members of the CTLP staff & an animal character from the Department of Chahta Immi had fun with the children at the Harvest Festival at the Department of Agriculture & Rural Development.

October

The Choctaw Tribal Language Program (CTLP) participated in the annual Harvest Festival, hosted by the Department of Agriculture & Rural Development.

Children from the area Tribal daycares, head starts, & elementary schools met a host of animal characters & learned their Choctaw names, played a language game, & received candy at the CTLP booth.

For Read-Aloud Month, the CTLP staff visited Pearl River Elementary School with Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben. Students were treated with a story in Chahta Annopa, a goodie bag, & a visit with Shawi.

November

CTLP helped facilitate an assessment workshop with Lynn Thompson of the Center of Applied Linguistics under a partnership with the Annopa Tikbishtiya Project/DOS.

The workshop was held to train a new grant staff member & five certified Choctaw language instructors to use the Choctaw ELLOPA (Early Language Listening and Oral Proficiency Assessment). This tool will help track students' proficiency in the Choctaw language & measure future increases.

On-going

Chahta Annopa Ábachi is an in-house language training session with the staff. Fluent staff members teach Chahta Annopa to the non-fluent staff members while encouraging everyday usage of the Choctaw language.

Weekly community language classes are being held at the Conehatta Facility Building during the evening hours from 6:00-7:30. Classes are held on Thursdays until Dec. 19.

The family-oriented community language classes are held to revitalize our Choctaw language & increase the usage of the language by providing opportunities to speak the Choctaw language.

Sessions are in Choctaw & English to accommodate non-speakers. A sample topic with sentences (introduction & greetings) include:

Halíto, Sa hohchifo yat _____. Chishnátoh?

Chi hohchifo yat nátah?

If you are interested in participating in an upcoming class during the spring, contact Peggy Williams at 601-650-7437 for more information.

CTLP's weekly Chahta language development sessions have started for the new year. Every Wednesday, we review & discuss words for the dictionary project, develop new words, and/or translate phrases with several program & community members. We invite you to come join us at the language program trailer.

For more information or language resources, please contact the Choctaw Tribal Language Program at 601-650-7440 or 7436.

"Chahta Annopa Ik Hapi Kaníyoh Kiyah"

LEFT, *CTLP staff members undergo Chahta Annopa Ábachi, a language training session where fluent staff members teach Chahta Annopa to non-fluent staff members.* **RIGHT**, *CTLP holds weekly Chahta language development sessions as they review & discuss words for the dictionary project, develop new words, and/or translate phrases with several program & community members.*

LEFT, *Chief Cyrus Ben & Shawi visits with a class at the Pearl River Elementary School during Read-Aloud Month.*
BELOW, *CTLP members participated in an assessment workshop regarding training to use the Choctaw ELLOPA.*

DEPARTMENT OF CHAHTA IMMI NEWS

Dancing Rabbit Festival

The 33rd annual Dancing Rabbit Festival, held on Saturday, Oct. 5, in Macon, Miss., commemorates the signing of the Treaty of the Dancing Rabbit Creek on September 27, 1830, between the Choctaws & the U.S. Government.

The signing, which took place at the southwest corner of Noxubee County, was the last major land cession treaty signed by the Choctaws ceding 11 million acres in exchange for 15 million acres in Indian Territory, what is now present-day Oklahoma.

For the second consecutive year, Choctaw Tribal members were invited to join in the festivities to share their culture to the citizens of Noxubee County.

Taking part in the celebration were Cultural Affairs Program (CAP) Coordinator Phyllis McMillan & members of her family, Wendy Thompson & her children, Jeremy Billie, Curtis Willis, Jr., Priscilla Williams, & Trudy Jimmie.

Moccasin Making Class

A Moccasin Making Class was held at the Choctaw Hospitality Institute (CHI) for members of the Pearl River Teen Center on Thursday, Oct. 10, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Five students on break from Neshoba Central School attended the class. CAP staff members Trudy Jimmie, Lorena Alex, Casey Bigpond, May McGeisey, Priscilla Williams, & temporary employees Gina Thompson & Stephanie Dixon were instructors for the class.

The teens, with the help of their instructors, completed their moccasins.

Displaying their completed moccasins are Pearl River Teen Center members attending the Neshoba Central Schools District & their instructors. Not pictured are Priscilla Williams & May McGeisey of CAP.

Choctaw Drummers

For ten days, CAP's Casey Bigpond was teaching a select group of Choctaw Head Start students how to beat the Choctaw drum. The small drums used by the drummers were beautifully handcrafted by Bill Farmer. The children showcased their skills at the annual Green Corn Ceremony held at the Pearl River Amphitheater on Friday, Oct. 18.

Casey Bigpond instructs future Choctaw drummers.

Choctaw Days

The Lauren Rogers Museum of Art in Laurel hosted a special event called "Choctaw Days" on Oct. 22. The event was an interactive cultural educational program filled with activities showcasing Choctaw culture.

Jennifer Thomas, of the Bogue Homa Community, & the museum staff, headed by Museum Curator of Education Hillary Steinwinder, coordinated cultural learning experiences for the area schools' fourth grade classes.

May McGeisey, Wauseka York & Priscilla Williams attended "Choctaw Days" to provide support for Thomas & Steinwinder.

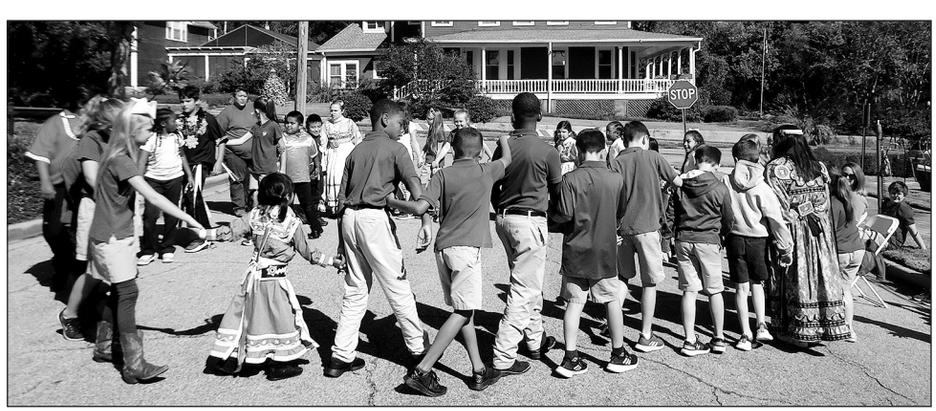
Students were given guided tours & a chance to participate in interactive cultural demonstrations & dance performances.

Shawi Tours with Chief for Read Aloud Month

Shawi, the Department of Chahta Immi's mascot, made several surprise appearances with Tribal Chief Cyrus

...continued next page

"Home Sweet Homecoming" was the theme for Choctaw Central High School's (CCHS) Homecoming on Oct. 4. The Cultural Affairs Program (CAP) staff entered a float in the parade to support their alma mater & the CCHS Warriors football team. Pictured above, from left, are CAP staff members Wendy Thompson, Priscilla Williams, Trudy Jimmie, & 90-Day Program Employee Gina Thompson.



Jennifer Thomas' dance group, the Bogue Homa Social Dancers, performed the Stealing Partner Dance with audience participation on the street at Lauren Rogers Museum of Art in downtown Laurel.

Ben to participate in the Read Aloud campaign at Choctaw Tribal Elementary Schools during the month of October.

The Read Aloud activities afforded the students, Chief Ben & Shawi special times to share with each other.

Students listened to their Tribal Chief read stories as they were also taught Choctaw words & lessons on character traits, such as showing respect & common courtesy.

Phyllis McMillan & May McGeisey of CAP joined the campaign as they also read stories to the Choctaw Tribal Schools students.

Choctaw Clothing for USET

During the last week of October, the CAP staff carried out an arduous but meaningful task of sewing three early 1960's style Choctaw dresses, five Choctaw shirts, & four dress aprons to be worn at the United South & Eastern Tribes (USET) conference, held in Choctaw.

Sewing was done by Trudy Jimmie, Lorena Alex, Casey Bigpond, Priscilla Williams, & May McGeisey of CAP. Also helping out were Gina Thompson, Stephanie Dixon, Cornelius Dan, Diane Thomas, Martha Hall, Joyce Jim, Diane Lutz, & Veronica Steward representing other organizations.

Due to the lack of space at the CAP office, sewing sessions took place at the Manpower Building from Monday, Oct. 28 to Thursday, Oct. 31.

Early in the afternoon of Nov. 1, the staff pieced together all parts for the dresses & shirts. It was a challenge for the staff, due to the small time frame they were given to finish the project.

Diane Thomas holds up one of the completed dresses made for a USET presentation.

Requests

During the month of October, the CAP staff was very busy with presentation requests. November is Native American Heritage Month; therefore, it is anticipated that it will be another busy & exciting month for CAP.

Shawi is hugging a student as Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben hands out cultural education materials to the class.

Call the CAP office at 601-663-7506, or FAX 601-650-1631 for more information on Choctaw culture.

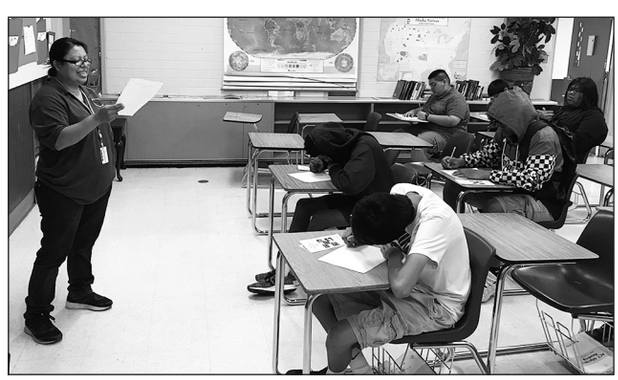
SPECIAL PROJECTS / MEDIA PROGRAM NEWS

CCHS Cultural Presentations

Special Projects/Media Program (SP/MP) staff members Sequita Phillips, Ty Isaac & Eddie Johnson conducted a series of presentations on Choctaw history & culture to Choctaw Central High School's sophomore World History class on Sept. 24-25.

Students were informed about the history of the Nanih Waiya Mound & were given a historical overview of

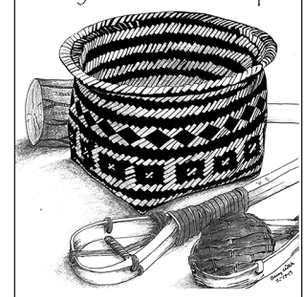
see DCI NEWS, pg. 28



SP/MP staff member Sequita Phillips drills the class with questions regarding the Nanih Waiya Mound.

SP/MP staff members Ty Isaac & Sequita Phillips pose with members of Ms. Johnson's sophomore World History class at CCHS.

CHAHTA IMMI
CULTURAL CENTER
featuring
CHOCTAW EXPRESSIONS
Lifeways of the Choctaw People



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

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

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

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

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

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

ADMISSION

GENERAL ADMISSION	$5
EDUCATION DISCOUNT	$5
MILITARY DISCOUNT	$5
TRIBAL MEMBERS WITH TRIBAL ID	$2
SENIORS (57 AND ABOVE)	FREE
CHILDREN (UNDER 5)	FREE

In Memoriam

Mary Jane Billy

Funeral service for Mary Jane Billy, 61, was held on Monday, October 7, 2019, at the Red Water Community Gymnasium. Deacon Gary Chickaway & 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 Oct. 3 at Regency Hospital in Meridian.

She was a member of the Mt. Zion Choctaw Indian Baptist Church & was employed at Pearl River Resort as a Slot Attendant. She enjoyed being with family & friends, cooking, attending pow wows, being on the phone, & taking care of her dog.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Cephus & Mary Willis Billy; sisters, Nellie John, Shirley Billy, Verlene Billy, & Minnie Pearl Willis; foster sister, Angela Denise Bell; grandparents, 7 aunts & 10 uncles.

Survivors include a nephew she had guardianship over, Taylum Wishork; sisters, Marilyn York, Trescilla Willis & Gina Willis; brothers, Frankie Willis & Darwin Willis; foster children, Antonie John & Ashley John; 3 aunts, 3 uncles, & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

Cathleen Thomas

Funeral service for Cathleen Thomas, 74, was held on Thursday, October 10, 2019, at the Greenhill Methodist Church in Pearl River. Deacons Williamson Isaac, Daniel Tubby & Rev. Travis Willis officiated.

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

Ms. Thomas passed away on Oct. 6 at the Choctaw Residential Center in Choctaw.

She was a member of Canaan Baptist Church but enjoyed attending other churches when invited. She enjoyed doing beadwork, Choctaw social dancing, fishing, playing washers, cooking, & watching Beaver Dam Stickball.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Cleve Thomas & Hazel Tubby; sister, Annie Roe Thomas-Wesley; & brothers, Odie Jim, Arthur Thomas, Sr., Sam Thomas, Sr., & Leon Thomas, Sr.

Survivors include her sister, Addie Marie Thomas; brother, Alvin Thomas; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

Priscilla Ann Clemons

Funeral service for Priscilla Ann Clemons, 48, was held on Saturday, October 12, 2019, at Hope Indian Baptist Church in Pearl River. Rev. Robert Paul Tubby & Rev. Robert Patrick officiated.

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

Ms. Clemons passed away on Oct. 9 at the Choctaw Health Center in Choctaw.

She was a cook at the

...continued next page

DCI NEWS

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mid-20th century sharecropping & homelife of Mississippi Choctaws.

Each class had an opportunity to watch videos on the subjects & engage in a question & answer session with the staff.

Fall Harvest

The SP/MP, along with other Tribal programs, participated in the 2019 Fall Harvest Fest, sponsored by the Department of Natural Resources on Oct. 23.

SP/MP staff member Sequita Phillips & Ron York teamed with CAP staff members Lorena Alex & May McGeisey to provide fun activities & treats to the Department of Early Childhood Education children.

MAC State Arts Conference Presentation

The SP/MP participated in the Mississippi State Arts Conference, held on Thursday, Oct. 24, at the Mississippi State Capitol Building in downtown Jackson.

Program staff members Eddie Johnson & Ty Isaac served on a panel at the conference that focused on documenting Mississippi's stories. They provided a presentation on the Choctaw Tribal Elders Oral History Project to conference attendees.

The 2019 State Arts Conference was hosted by the Mississippi Arts Commission with the aim to provide a chance for people from across the state to share their ideas, network with other artists & professionals, & take part in professional development opportunities.

Sequita Phillips engages with children in the "towwa pilah" activity at the Fall Harvest Festival at the Department of Natural Resources.

Attendees of the Mississippi State Arts Conference in Jackson included, from left, Maria Zeringue, Ty Isaac, Sequita Phillips, Eddie Johnson, Rosemary John, Jasmin Stransberry, Rory Doyle, & Chris "Big Yayo" Mabry.

Choctaw Central High School cafeteria. She enjoyed spending time with family, conversing with her best friend, attending her family's sporting events, cooking, & social dancing at the Choctaw Indian Fair.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Jerry Clemons, Sr. & Betty Ann Bell Clemons; foster parents, Vernon & Elsie Jim; brothers, Johnny Clemons, Sr. & Jerry Clemons, Jr.; & a grandchild.

Survivors include her daughters, Nikiya Cotton, Nadaysha Johnson & Kaymerin Smith; son, Harris Johnson, III; child she loved as her own, Dreydon Tubby; sister, Rose Nell Clemons; brother, Jared Jaye Jim; 6 grandchildren; & a host of relatives & friends.

Joyce Lynn Jimmie King

Funeral service for Joyce Lynn Jimmie King, 61, was held on Tuesday, October 15, 2019, at Hope Indian Baptist Church in Pearl River.

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

Ms. King passed away on Oct. 12 at Anderson Regional Medical Center in Meridian.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Mack Willie Jimmie, Sr. & Nettie Sam Tubby; sisters, Maxine Dixon & Irma Boulley; & brother, Adolph Jimmie.

Survivors include her sons, Alan Reed Jimmie & Treyvin Wayne Bell; sisters, Wanda McMillan & Janis Jimmie; brother, Mack Willie Jimmie, Jr.; 4 grandchildren; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

Bro. Levon Bell

Funeral service for Bro. Levon Bell, 55, was held on Friday, October 18, 2019, at the Bogue Chitto Community Gymnasium. Pastor Curtis Willis, Sr. & Pastor Thomas Ben officiated.

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

Bro. Bell passed away on Oct. 15 at his residence.

He was employed with Pearl River Resort in the maintenance department. He enjoyed preaching in tent revivals by the Jesus New Covenant Church & praying with family & friends. He enjoyed fishing, hunting, playing the guitar, & working on cars.

He was preceded in death by his parents, G.W. Bell & Ann Frazier Bell; son, Thomas Bell; sisters, Juanita Chapman, Junie Cabrera & Lorene Cumberland; & brothers, Elon Bell & Elmer Bell.

Survivors include his daughters, Shanna Ben & Kecia Bell; son, Emanuel Hickman; sisters, Rena Bell, Brenda Bell & Willie Mae Wilson; 5 grandchildren; & a host of relatives & friends.

Edward Wesley

Funeral service for Edward Wesley, 74, was held on Sunday, October 20, 2019, at the Pearl River Community Center. Deacon John Smith & Rev. Travis Willis officiated.

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

Mr. Wesley passed away on Oct. 16 at the Choctaw Health Center in Choctaw.

He enjoyed gardening, fishing & working on vehicles.

He was preceded in death by his parents, John H. Wesley & Minnie Hall Chapman; wife, Annie Roe Wesley; sisters, Minnie Sam, Magaline Hall, Serena Wesley Bell Spears, & Rita Faye Wesley; & brothers, Roger Hall, Carl Hall, Daniel Hall, Edward J. Wesley, Danny Wesley, Silmon Wesley, & Johnny Wesley.

Survivors include his sisters, Betty Hall Tubby, Jane Tubby, Norma Hall, Joanna Ben, & Janice Lewis; brother, Jerry Wesley; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

Joshua Wayne Henry

Funeral service for Joshua Wayne Henry, 40, was held on Monday, October 21, 2019, at the Bogue Chitto Baptist Church. Deacon Kendall Wallace & Rev. Charles Doby Henry officiated.

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

Mr. Henry passed away on Oct. 17 at his residence.

He was a member of the Bogue Chitto Pentecostal Church & formerly the Bogue Chitto Facility Building coordinator. He enjoyed being with his children, drawing, listening to music, playing stickball with Bok Cito, being on social media, & sharing inspirational bible scriptures.

Survivors include his daughter, Kaeleigh Madisyn Henry; son, Leighton Xander Henry; father, Ronnie Henry, Sr.; mother, Velma Sam; sisters, Anne Ashley Henry, Miyah Halbina Henry & Allandra Dunaway; brothers, Bobby Ray Henry, Ronnie Henry, Jr., Ryan Aaron Henry, & Jeremy Heath Henry; & a host of nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, relatives, & friends.

Ida Dixon Billie

Funeral service for Ida Dixon Billie, 84, was held on Friday, October 25, 2019, at the Mt. Zion Choctaw Indian Baptist Church. Rev. Carl Wilson officiated.

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

Ms. Billie passed away on Oct. 18 at Anderson Regional Medical Center in Meridian.

She was a member of Mt. Zion Choctaw Indian Baptist Church. She was retired from American Greetings & enjoyed spending time with family, doing crossword puzzles, & attending stickball games & community events.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Jim & Leona Billy Dixon; husband, John Billie; sons, Henry Dixon, Sr. & Clarence Dixon; sister, Cora Dixon Wilson; & brothers, Earl Billy, James Dixon, Woodrow Dixon, Gene Autry Dixon, Wilson Dixon, Sr., & Frank Dixon, Sr.

Survivors include grandsons, Henry Dixon, Jr. & Dylan Dixon; 10 great-grandchildren; 2 great-great-grandchildren; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

Mark C. Jim

Funeral service for Mark C. Jim, 39, was held on Thursday, October 24, 2019, at the Conehatta Community Gymnasium. Deacon Williamson Isaac & Rev. Robert Paul Tubby officiated.

Burial was in the St. Catherine Catholic Cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.

Mr. Jim passed away on Oct. 18 at Regency Hospital in Meridian.

He was employed with Big G Grocery, Piggly Wiggly & Day Training Program. He

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enjoyed being with family & friends, playing stickball, playing pool, & cooking.

He was preceded in death by his brother, Billy Gene Jim; grandfather, Albert Jim; & a nephew.

Survivors include his daughter, Lakenya Thomas; parents, Claude Jim, Sr. & Patsy Tubby Monk; sisters, Sandra Jim, Sally Frazier, Laurie Monk, Shirley Jim, & Alesha Clair; brothers, Claude Jim, Jr., Thomas Jim, Sr. & Terry Jim; 3 aunts; 4 uncles; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

Vernon Thomas

Funeral service for Vernon Thomas, 62, was held on Saturday, October 26, 2019, at Hope Indian Baptist Church in Pearl River. Deacon Williamson Isaac & Rev. Robert Paul Tubby officiated.

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

Mr. Thomas passed away on Oct. 22 at the Choctaw Health Center in Choctaw.

He was employed with Pearl River Resort. He enjoyed being with his family & friends, making stickball sticks & towa, hunting, fishing, watching football, & playing stickball with Beaver Dam.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Sam Thomas, Sr. & Corine Mingo Thomas; wife, Nancy Charley Thomas; son, Eric Shane Charley; brothers, Myron Thomas, Sr., Guy Thomas, Sr., Sam Thomas, Jr., Charles L. Thomas, & Ivory Thomas; & 2 grandchildren.

Survivors include his daughter, Veronica Thomas Stephens; son, Verdon Lance Thomas; sister, Joanne Hickman; brothers, Ferlin Thomas, Carlton Thomas, Leon Thomas, Jr., & Ronnie Willis; 9 grandchildren; special daughters, Nandrea McMillan & Donya McMillan; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

Jarrit Coleman Gibson

Funeral service for Jarrit Coleman Gibson, 40, was held on Friday, October 25, 2019, at the Bogue Chitto Baptist Church. Deacon Kendall Wallace & Rev. Charles Doby Henry officiated.

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

Mr. Gibson passed away on Oct. 22 at Anderson Regional Medical Center in Meridian.

He was a member of Bogue Chitto Indian Baptist Church & served in several committees. He enjoyed being with family & friends, being a Mississippi State University fan, supporter of Bok Cito Stickball, listening to music, watching videos, & coaching youth basketball.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Sharon Ann Bell & John Lee Gibson; grandparents, Katherine Jackson Bell & Tom "Shorty" Bell, Norma Gibson & Paul Lee Gibson; brother, Tommy Paul Gibson; 8 aunts; 3 uncles; 10 great-aunts; 5 great-uncles.

Survivors include his brothers, Rafael Gibson & Shaukota Gibson; a host of nieces; a goddaughter; 2 aunts; 2 uncles; 2 great-aunts; a great-uncle; & a host of relatives & friends.

Tessa Mae Sanders

Funeral service for Tessa Mae Sanders, 42, was held on Friday, November 1, 2019, at the Pearl River Community Center. Deacon Ricky Edwards & Rabbi Ahmetahee Yeroozedek officiated.

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

Mrs. Sanders passed away on Oct. 28 at the Choctaw Health Center in Choctaw.

She was an office manager at the Choctaw Detention Center. She enjoyed movie marathons, games, listening to music, & being on social media.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Algie M. Steve & Marilyn Billy; grandparents, Smith & Elsie Jim Steve, Greer & Leona Sam Billy; & a nephew.

Survivors include her husband, DeWayne Sanders; sisters, Trisalena Tubby & Tracy Billy; brother, Malachi Steve; & a host of aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

Delores Ann Bell

Funeral service for Delores Ann Bell, 74, was held on Wednesday, November 6, 2019, at the Holy Rosary Catholic Church in Tucker. Father Bob Goodyear, S.T., officiated.

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

Ms. Bell passed away on Nov. 2 at her residence.

She was a cafeteria cook at Tucker Elementary School. She enjoyed playing Bingo, fishing, tending to her rose garden, & spending time with her grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Annie Mitch & Tony Bell; sons, Jerome Steve & Roy Steve; sisters, Rita Faye Denson & Hilda Bell-Sutton; & brothers, Formen Bull, Jr., J.D. Bell, Ives Bell, Grady John, & Homer Bell.

Survivors include her daughter, Christine Bell-Phillips; sons, Danny Steve, McKinley Steve & Nelson John, Jr.; sister, Betty Gibson; & a host of grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

...continued next page

Come and Worship with us

Macedonia Baptist Church
130 Campus Drive
Conehatta, MS 39057

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

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

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

Welcome To

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

Come Join Us...

Spirit of Life Christian Center

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

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

Bernice Frazier

Funeral service for Bernice Frazier, 79, was held on Wednesday, November 20, 2019, at the Bogue Homa Community Gymnasium. Rev. Charles Doby Henry officiated.

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

Ms. Frazier passed away on Nov. 16 at Hospice Ministries in Ridgeland.

She was a teacher's aide for the head start & adult education program & later a CHT for the Bogue Homa community. She enjoyed being with her family, reading, doing crossword puzzles, beading, visiting casinos, & collecting recipes.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Riley & Zonie Thomas Nickey; & brothers, Dorsey Thomas & Olen Thomas.

Survivors include her daughters, Valerie Kaminski & Edna Willis; sons, Wilkie Frazier, Jr. & Paul Frazier; sisters, Vernita Thomas, Imogene Thompson, Berdie Steve, & Marilyn Nickey; brothers, Andrew Thomas & Wayne Thomas; 10 grandchildren; 28 great-grandchildren; 4 great-great grandchildren; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

Jeffery Willis, Sr.

Funeral service for Jeffery Willis, Sr., 54, was held on Thursday, November 21, 2019, at the Hope Indian Baptist Church in Pearl River. Deacon Williamson Isaac & Rev. Charles Doby Henry officiated.

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

Mr. Willis passed away on Nov. 18 at his residence.

He enjoyed being with family & friends, watching football, fishing, working on vehicles, & cooking outdoors.

He was preceded in death by his father, Bill Willis; son, Samuel Ryan Phillips; brothers, Daniel Carl Willis & Bruce Eric Willis.

Survivors include his daughters, Meagan Henry & Trisha Willis; sons, Jeffery Willis, Jr. & Jonah Phillips; mother, Geraldine Mitch; sisters, Lora Orduno, Karon Bryant & Florence Hodges; brothers, Naveon Willis & Alan Willis; 5 grandchildren; & a host of relatives & friends.

Lester Grant Willis

Funeral service for Lester Grant Willis, 40, was held on Wednesday, November 27, 2019, at the Bogue Chitto Community Gymnasium. Pastor Thomas Ben officiated.

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

Mr. Willis passed away on Nov. 22 at the University Medical Center in Jackson.

He enjoyed being with family & friends, fishing, playing dominos, cards, softball, & doing mechanic work.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Laverne Willis; sister, Patricia Willis, brother, Julius Willis; & an aunt & uncle.

Survivors include his companion, Vanessa Cotton; daughters, Tara Dawn Willis, Quintara Willis & Isis Willis; sons, Treundes Willis & Trevon Willis; father, Patrick Willis; sisters, Andrea Willis, Erica Farve, Demetria Morris, Delanie Briscoe, & Kendra Polk; brothers, Tony Willis, Michael Dan & Julian Willis; an aunt; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

Doris Lynn Billie

Funeral service for Doris Lynn Billie, 72, was held on Wednesday, December 4, 2019, at St. Therese's Catholic Church in Pearl River. Father Bob Goodyear, S.T., officiated.

Burial was in the Holy Rosary Catholic Cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.

Mrs. Billie passed away on Nov. 30 at the Baptist Leake Medical Center in Carthage.

She was with the Choctaw Health Center's Behavioral Health Program prior to her retirement. She was also a volunteer to various youth programs & enjoyed cooking for family & friends, beading traditional Choctaw crafts, & social dancing.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Wilburn Isaac & Millie Davis; sisters, Judy Isaac, Cira Isaac & Kathy Isaac; & a brother, Harold Isaac.

Survivors include her husband, Herman Billie; daughter, Priscilla Lilly; foster daughter, Vaneda Wallace; sons, Glen Billie, Brian Billie & Jeremy Billie; sister, Ina Solomon; 10 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; & a host of relatives & friends.

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Saturday 7:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
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COME JOIN US!! A GREAT PLACE FOR A SALE!!
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mark.patrick1136@gmail.com

Slow-Pitch Softball State Champions

ABOVE, *Congratulations to the Neshoba Central Lady Rockets as they claimed the 2019 MHSAA Class II Slow-Pitch Softball State Championship on Oct. 19. They swept Wayne County 10-2 & 6-5 to claim their 8th consecutive state softball championship. Tribal members of the Lady Rockets include, bottom row from left, Jeyda Ben, Nautica Bacon, Annalise Bell, Erica Lyons, Sa'Nya Jackson, Xiomara Fireplace, Allie Williams, & Elleigh Willis; top row from left, Charmayne Morris, TaBaleigh Hickman, Ariel Henry, Mataeya Dixon, Lanaeya Henry, Daylynn Mingo, Lala Morris, Shante Beaulieu, Mya Willis, Hama'ya Fielder, Tenly Grisham, Mauhree Jones, & Chloe Thompson.* **RIGHT**, *Congratulations to the Lake Lady Hornets as they claimed the 2019 MHSAA Class I Slow-Pitch Softball State Championship on Oct. 19. They lost the first game to Houston 5-2, but came back to win 9-2 & 13-3 to claim their first state softball championship. Tribal members on the Lady Hornets include, from left, Alyssa Sockey & Lyric Lay.*

Softball Players Make 2019 All-State List

Tenly Grisham

Hama'ya Fielder

Congratulations to the following Tribal members named to the 2019 All-State slow-pitch softball team, as selected by the Clarion-Ledger in consultation with high school coaches in Mississippi. **ABOVE LEFT**, *First Team selection included Neshoba Central Lady Rocket sophomore Tenly Grisham. She batted .670 with 15 home runs, 25 doubles, two triples, & 56 RBIs to help lead Neshoba Central to their eighth consecutive MHSAA state championship.* **ABOVE RIGHT**, *Lady Rocket sophomore Hama'ya Fielder was named a Second Team selection as she batted .564 with 12 home runs, 16 doubles, one triple, & 69 RBIs to help Neshoba Central to their eighth consecutive MHSAA state championship.* **LEFT**, *Choctaw Central Lady Warrior senior Tia'Rain Saunders batted .553 to lead Choctaw Central to the third round of the MHSAA Class II state tournament.*

Tia'Rain Saunders

Choctaw Community News

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2019

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Happy Birthdays to Trinity Elise & Jesse Thomas on Dec. 2, Malahta Henry on Dec. 4, Latricia Johnson on Dec. 7, Brian LaBatte who turns 20 on Dec. 19, Jody Solomon on Dec. 23, & Jayna Ben on Dec. 24, from everyone who loves you!... Happy Birthdays to Kaylan Gibson on Nov. 8, Janie Williams on Nov. 14, Sandra York on Nov. 15, Judith Wesley on Nov. 21, Hl'ua Bell on Nov. 29, & Josh York on Nov. 30, from everyone who loves you!

Lady Warriors Make 3rd Round, Class II

Congratulations to the Choctaw Central Lady Warriors as they made it to the 3rd round of the 2019 MHSAA Class II Slow-Pitch Softball State Tournament. They were swept by Newton County 12-3 & 8-5. Members of the Lady Warriors include, kneeling from left, Tayla Willis, Leia Phillips, Kylinn Bell, Tori Isaac, Neera Bell, Tia'Rain Saunders, Malaka Morris, & Delaiah Billy; standing from left, Ahnaya Williams, Maiya Joe, Melanian Jimmie, Ciji Vaughn, Mattison Bell, Miley Billie, Kodi Jimmie, Tyra Billy, & Belinda Frazier.