Ground Breaking in Bogue Chitto

On Tuesday, February 21, a groundbreaking for new housing units was held in the Bogue Chitto Community. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, 2022-2023 Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Nickey, Vice Chief Ronnie Henry Sr., Tribal Council Representatives Richard Sockey, Demando Mingo, Loriann Ahshapanek, Wilma Simpson-McMillan, Angela Hundley, Kendall Wallace, Deborah Martin, & Choctaw Housing Authority officials were in attendance to help break ground. There will be six houses built consisting of four 3-bedroom & two handicapped-accessible houses, which are 2-bedroom houses. Willis Engineering from Grenada, Miss., did the infrastructure & house planning. Eric Farmer with Johnny Wynne & Associates, PA of Ridgeland, Miss., was the architect for the design of the houses. IKBI has the contract & construction of the site work. Completion is anticipated to be in the fall of 2023.

Tribal Students Sing National Anthem at Ole Miss Game

The University of Mississippi hosted Native American Heritage Night on Sunday, February 19, 2023, as several elementary school students representing the Choctaw Tribal Schools performed the National Anthem in the Choctaw language during pre-game activities of the Ole Miss-South Carolina women's basketball game in Oxford.

Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians' Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben and 2022-2023 Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Nickey presented stickball sticks and a stickball to Ole Miss Chancellor Glenn Boyce and Athletics Director Keith Carter during a pre-game ceremony.

Chief Ben said he appreciated the opportunity for the Tribe to be recognized and sing the National Anthem in the Choctaw language. He was also thrilled to see Tribal member and Ole Miss student Asa Jimmie of the Pearl River Community serving as one of the Lady Rebels' team managers.

The Lady Rebels sported commemorative warm ups with the official Tribal logo on the front and the phrase "CHAHTA STRONG CHAHTA PROUD" on the back.

Ole Miss took the undefeated, No. 1 ranked South Carolina into overtime before falling 64-57.
Halito!
As we enter into a new year, we continue to progress as a Tribe and encourage our tribal members in their successes.

We have been visiting area high schools and congratulating our seniors as they were honored during their senior nights. These seniors have proven that hard work and dedication are the most valuable tools for success. We wish them the best as they prepare to leave high school and head for college, the workforce or the military.

No matter where our people go or what career they end up choosing for themselves, we will always be supportive of them as they pursue their dreams and succeed.

We are proud of our CCHS Lady Warriors Soccer Team as they made it to the third round of the state playoffs. I have no doubt that our underclassmen will continue to build upon the successes of their senior teammates, and we will soon be state soccer champions in the near future. We look forward to next season!

I offer all of our local schools congratulations on an outstanding basketball season. It takes talent, skill and teamwork to achieve success, and I am proud to say that our Choctaw players have proven themselves to be some of the best basketball players in the state.

Congratulations to Lyric Lay and the Lake High School Lady Hornets as they were the MHSAA Class 2A Girls State Basketball Champions!

Congratulations also to Meloney Thames and Carly Keats and the Jones College Bobcats for winning the NJCAA Region 23 Women's Basketball Tournament. They now advance to the NJCAA National Tournament in Lubbock, Texas. We wish them well as they compete for a national championship!

I want to congratulate all of the players, coaches and fans who participated in the Choctaw Tribal Schools basketball tournament. Thank you to Tucker for hosting the tournament. It was great watching

Chief Ben Attends State of the Union
On February 7, Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben attended the State of the Union address at the U.S. Capitol as the honored guest of U.S. Representative for Mississippi's Third Congressional District Michael Guest. This was President Biden's second State of the Union address to the full Congress. Chief Ben was in the Nation's Capitol for USET Impact Week, February 6-7. Pictured, from left to right, are Speaker of the House Kevin McCarthy (R-CA), Tribal Chief Ben, & Representative Michael Guest (R-MS).

Maxwell New MBCI Attorney General
Congratulations to W. Diane Maxwell as she was confirmed by the Tribal Council & sworn in by Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben as Attorney General for the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians during a regular call council meeting on January 10. Pictured right is Ms. Maxwell with members of her family in attendance for the ceremony.
our youth showing off their skills on the basketball court. Congratulations to the Choctaw Central Middle School Lady Warriors and the Red Water Elementary Braves for their respective championship wins! Congratulations also to girls MVP Shastyn Lewis and boys MVP Braylon Edwards!

I am very proud of the winners and participants of the 29th Annual Choctaw Tribal Schools District-Wide Spelling Bee, held this year at Pearl River Elementary School. It takes not just a great knowledge of spelling out words, but also courage and determination, to stand in front of people and speak out loud and compete for the chance to be spelling bee champion.

Congratulations to our Spelling Bee grade winners: 4th Grade – Jaric Anderson of Standing Pine Elementary School, 5th Grade – Nylah Wilson of Red Water Elementary School, 6th Grade – Ansen McMillan of Standing Pine Elementary, 7th Grade - Westbrook Thompson of Choctaw Central Middle School, and 8th Grade - Fred Comby of Choctaw Central Middle School.

A further congratulations to Ansen McMillan, who was the overall district spelling bee champion! Thank you to the organizers who put on a great program, and to the teachers and all individuals who worked with the students to prepare them for the bee.

I salute the hard work and creativity of the 11 teams who participated in the 20th Annual FIRST LEGO League (FLL) Tournament at the Choctaw Central High School gymnasium. This year’s theme was “Super Powered” as teams learned about different types of energy sources, storage, distribution methods, and ways in which energy is consumed.

After three robot performance rounds, five awards were presented to the following teams: Core Values Award - Native Pines (Standing Pine Elementary School), Innovative Project/Project Presentation Award - The Able Gamers Group II (Pearl River Elementary School), Robot Design Award - Smash Clan (Bogue Chitto Elementary School), Robot Performance Award - Tucker T’Bots (Tucker Elementary School), and the Champion’s Award - Network Robot (Tucker Elementary School).

Congratulations to Network Robot as they advance to the Mississippi FIRST LEGO League Tournament. I thank all of the organizers and volunteers who helped make this a successful tournament!

I offer my congratulations and best wishes to Tribal member Ms. W. Diane Maxwell, who was confirmed by the Tribal Council and then sworn in as Attorney General for the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians at the regular call Tribal Council meeting on January 10th.

Ms. Maxwell has sixteen years of experience working for the Tribal government and Tribal entities. She obtained a Juris Doctorate from the University of Mississippi School of Law, a Master of Science degree in Administration of Justice from Mississippi College, and a Master of Law degree in Indigenous Peoples Law.

Delegation Attends Grand Opening
A tribal delegation - led by Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben & including Vice Chief Ronnie Henry, Sr., MBCI Director of Administration Jason Grisham, 2022-2023 Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Nickey, Director of Development Division Sarah Medlock, Director of MBCI Boys & Girls Club Glen Billie, & Office of Economic Development Operations Manager Anna Denson - attended the grand opening & ribbon cutting ceremony for The New York Blower Company and KDS Windsor Lumber Drying Technologies on Wednesday, February 1, 2023, in Philadelphia, Miss. Joining New York Blower CEO Tim O’Hare & KDS Windsor Lumber Drying Technologies President Dan Young for the festivities were Mississippi Governor Tate Reeves, State Senator Jenifer Branning, State Representative C. Scott Bounds, Neshoba County & City of Philadelphia elected officials, area business & community leaders. This new venture represents an $8 million capital investment for the state & will bring 60 new jobs to the area. This new manufacturing facility will serve the new build & aftermarket sectors for customers seeking service & replacement parts on their existing kilns, ventilation systems & fans.

PICTURED ABOVE RIGHT, from left to right, are Office of Economic Development Operations Manager Anna Denson, MBCI Boys & Girls Club Director Glen Billie, Gov. Tate Reeves, & Chief Ben. PICTURED LEFT, A community contribution was presented to the MBCI Boys & Girls Club. Pictured, from left to right, are KDS Windsor Lumber Drying Technologies President Dan Young, MBCI Vice Chief Ronnie Henry, Sr., 2022-2023 Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Nickey, New York Blower CEO Tim O’Hare, Chief Ben, & MBCI Boys & Girls Club Director Billie.
BIE Director Dearman visits Tribe

The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians had the honor and privilege to host Mr. Tony Dearman, Director of the Bureau of Indian Education and member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma. Director Dearman and members of his delegation visited Choctaw Tribal lands on Thursday, February 23rd, to gain a greater insight of the Choctaw Tribal School System. They met with Tribal and Choctaw Tribal School officials and visited the campuses of Pearl River Elementary School, Choctaw Central Middle School and Choctaw Central High School. The visit concluded with Mr. Dearman throwing out the ceremonial first pitch of the Choctaw Central High School Lady Warriors varsity softball game against the Philadelphia High School Lady Tornadoes.

LETTER ............................................................................................................................................ continued from page three

Law from the University of Oklahoma College of Law. She is also a former United States Marine Corps Reservist. I am proud of her success and know she will serve our Tribe well as Attorney General.

I want to express my heartfelt appreciation and congratulations to our Resort Associates who were recently recognized for 12 months of perfect attendance at Pearl River Resort and Bok Homa Casino.

Our Resort operations are open 24 hours a day, nonstop, and we benefit greatly from the dedicated and hard-working Associates who make every effort to be at work and serve our guests and help us be the success we are. Without our loyal Resort workforce, we would not be the one of the premier resort destinations of the Southeast. So again, I say thank you to our Resort Associates and wish you another great year of success!

Choctaw Housing Authority held the groundbreaking of a new housing subdivision in the Bogue Chitto community on February 21st. Willis Engineering from Grenada, Miss. did the infrastructure and house planning. Eric Farmer with Johnny Wynne and Associates, PA of Ridgeland, Miss. was the architect for the designs of the houses. IKBI will do the construction of the site work to build the six houses. The project is expected to be completed in September 2023.

As mentioned in previous columns, we have numerous projects in planning, some in progress, as well as others near completion. I hope to be able to share more exciting news with you in the upcoming issues of the Community News. Check out our MBCI Facebook page for the latest news and events.

Thank you for your support of me and of our great Tribe. Together, we have and can continue to make great progress for all of our Chahta People! May God keep His favor upon our people.

Chi Yakokilih,

Cyrus Ben, Tribal Chief

Tribal Members Participate in Parade

The annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Parade was held in downtown Philadelphia, Miss., on Saturday, Jan. 14. Community members came out to honor & remember the legacy of Dr. King. Among the parade participants were 2022-2023 Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Nickcy, Princesses & Braves from Tucker Elementary School, & a few Choctaw youth in the Neshoba Central Band. Thank you to Princess Cadence & our Choctaw youth for representing the Tribe!
Voter Registration for Tribal Election

The Tribal Election Committee has released the following information regarding Tribal Election on Tuesday, June 6, 2023.

NEW VOTER:
- You must be 18 years old or older and a member of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians.
- You will need a Photo I.D. with your current address. If your I.D. doesn’t have a current address, then you can use mail or junk mail with your name and current address on it, along with your Photo I.D.

TO TRANSFER:
- You must have maintained residency within the geographical boundaries of one of the Choctaw Communities for at least 6 months prior to the date of June 6, 2023 election, which would have been December 6, 2022.
- You will need a Photo I.D. with the issue date as of or on December 6, 2022. If your I.D. doesn’t have current information, then you can use mail or junk mail dated on or before December 6, 2022, with your name and address.

TO CHANGE YOUR LAST NAME:
- You will need a marriage certificate or divorce papers indicating a name change and your Photo I.D. with current address. If marriage certificate or divorce papers aren’t available, a current Photo I.D. or Social Security card with your current last name can be used.

For more information, please contact:
Mavis Hickman, Voter Registration Coordinator, at (601) 650-1507; Stella Willis, Election Coordinator, at (601) 650-7468; and Berdie John, Election Chairperson, at (601) 650-7475.

Schedules for Registration Drive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMUNITY</th>
<th>DATES</th>
<th>TIMES</th>
<th>PLACE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bogue Chitto</td>
<td>Monday, March 13, 2023</td>
<td>1:30 pm-4:00 pm</td>
<td>CERF Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC-Henning, TN</td>
<td>Saturday, March 18, 2023</td>
<td>1:30 pm-4:00 pm</td>
<td>MBI Henning (New) CERF Bldg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bogue Homa</td>
<td>Wednesday, May 15, 2023</td>
<td>11:00 am-1:30 pm</td>
<td>CERF Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connetta</td>
<td>Tuesday, April 25, 2023</td>
<td>1:30 pm-4:00 pm</td>
<td>CERF Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crystal Ridge</td>
<td>Monday, May 22, 2023</td>
<td>1:30 pm-4:00 pm</td>
<td>CERF Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearl River</td>
<td>Thursday, March 23, 2023</td>
<td>9:30 am-12:00 pm</td>
<td>Tribal Election Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Water</td>
<td>Thursday, March 16, 2023</td>
<td>1:30 pm-4:00 pm</td>
<td>CERF Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standing Pine</td>
<td>Tuesday, May 23, 2023</td>
<td>1:30 pm-4:00 pm</td>
<td>CERF Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tucker</td>
<td>Tuesday, April 12, 2023</td>
<td>1:30 pm-4:00 pm</td>
<td>CERF Building</td>
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New location for Registration Drive will be at the New Covid Emergency Relief Facility (CERF).

TRIBAL CANDIDATE REQUIREMENTS
- Any enrolled member of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians may become a candidate for Tribal Council to be filled by tribal election who:
  - has at least 30 years of age at the time of the election;
  - has not been convicted of, or pled guilty to, any felony offense occurring at any time in any jurisdiction, unless such felony conviction has been pardoned;
  - has a minimum of a high school diploma or a GED; or a twelfth grade equivalency;
  - is a resident of the Choctaw community in which she or he resides to represent for at least 12 months prior to the date of the election;
  - is registered to vote in the Choctaw community in which she or he resides to represent;
  - must submit the endorsement signature from one standard nominating Petition Form on the Tribal Election Office of the Tribe Chairperson on or before April 6, 2023, and all signatures on the petition are registered to vote in tribal elections in the community of which she is eligible to represent; and
  - shall pay a filing fee of $50.00 to the Office of Finance and shall then present a copy of the petition to the Chairperson of the Tribal Election Committee.

TRIBAL CANDIDATE RESPONSIBILITIES
- Shall submit the endorsement signature from one standard nominating Petition Form on the Tribal Election Office of the Tribe Chairperson on or before April 6, 2023, and all signatures on the petition are registered to vote in tribal elections in the community of which she is eligible to represent; and
- Shall pay a non-refundable filing fee of $50.00 to the Office of Finance and shall then present a copy of the petition to the Chairperson of the Tribal Election Committee.

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- Shall submit the endorsement signature from one standard nominating Petition Form on the Tribal Election Office of the Tribe Chairperson on or before April 6, 2023, and all signatures on the petition are registered to vote in tribal elections in the community of which she is eligible to represent; and
- Shall pay a non-refundable filing fee of $50.00 to the Office of Finance and shall then present a copy of the petition to the Chairperson of the Tribal Election Committee.

For more information, please contact the Tribal Election Committee at one of the following numbers: (601) 650-7475, (601) 650-8049, or (601) 393-2252. You may also contact the Committee by writing to:
Office of Tribal Election
Myriad Building of Choctaw Indians
P.O. Box 6652 (For mailing) or
151 Industrial Road (Physical Address)
Chattahoe, MS 39090

Chairpersons of the eight (8) Local Election Committees, who are officially appointed to conduct elections in your respective communities, may also be contacted. The Choctaw Election Office is available at the MBI website at: www.chocnews.net.
REGULAR CALL
MEETING
JANUARY 10, 2023

ORDINANCE NO. 81-C, approving & enacting the “Tribal Employment Code” as Chapter Two in Title XXXVI of the Choctaw Tribal Code, was ENACTED - 16 YES (L. Ahschanek, M. Briscoe, C. Eaves, N. Gibson, R. Henry, Sr., A. Hundley, R. Isaac, S. Johnson, D. Martin, W. McMillan, D. Mingo, H. Nickey, G. Shoemake, R. Sockey, T. Thomas, Sr., K. Wesley); 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: The Tribal Employment Code provides a general prohibition against hiring or rehiring anyone who has previously committed theft or any form of theft-related offense against the Tribe but includes an exception to the general prohibition depending on the amount of time that has passed & based on the amount of loss to the Tribe. For more information, please contact the Office of Human Resources.

RESOLUTION CHO 23-019(B), acknowledging a relinquishment of membership in the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: The Resolution approves one (1) absolute relinquishment of membership in the MBCI for R.M. (DOB:05/28/1971). In accordance with Title XXII—Tribal Enrollment Code §22-4-1, any adult MBCI Tribal member may voluntarily relinquish their MBCI Tribal membership provided that both the Tribal Enrollment Committee & the Tribal Council approve the relinquishment. For more information, please contact the Office of Tribal Enrollment.

RESOLUTION CHO 23-020(B), approving an increase in blood degree & a name change for a previously enrolled Tribal member, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: In accordance with Title XXII—Tribal Enrollment Code §22-2-8, a person may submit an application for change in blood quantum calculation based upon new or additional information about paternity or maternity. The Tribal Enrollment Committee previously approved an increase in blood degree & name change for one (1) previously enrolled Tribal member. For more information, please contact the Office of Tribal Enrollment.

RESOLUTION CHO 23-021(B), enrolling Tribal members, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: The Resolution approves Tribal Enrollment for forty-four (44) persons beginning with the name K. Alex-Wilson & ending with M. Wishork. With the adoption of the Resolution, there are 11,049 enrolled Tribal members in the MBCI. For more information, please contact the Office of Tribal Enrollment.

RESOLUTION CHO 23-022, approving an affiliation agreement for clinical experience between the University of Alabama & the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians’ Choctaw Health Center, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: The ongoing authority to enter into Service Line Agreements will expedite the process of supplying buildings with electricity, water, sewer, gas, internet access & other utilities. For more information, please contact the Realty Program.

RESOLUTION CHO 23-025(B), authorizing the Tribal Chief to enter into certain Service Line Agreements on an ongoing basis, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: The Field Affiliation Agreement is to provide clinical field experience in social work. The Choctaw Health Center will provide field supervision for any Tribal member or Choctaw Health Center employee pursuing social work degree programs including graduate level studies. For more information, please contact the Choctaw Health Center.

RESOLUTION CHO 23-023, authorizing the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians to apply for an Indian Housing Block Grant—Competitive Grant Program from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: The MBCI’s Choctaw Loan Program will use IHBG grant funding for the development of a multi-unit apartment complex at a selected construction site on Frog Level road in the Pearl River community. For more information, please contact the Choctaw Loan Program.

RESOLUTION CHO 23-024(B), authorizing the Tribal Chief to approve certain rights-of-way on an ongoing basis, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: The ongoing authority to approve rights-of-way will expedite the process of supplying electricity, water, sewer, gas, internet access, or other utilities to facilities located on MBCI Reservation lands. For more information, please contact the Realty Program.

RESOLUTION CHO 23-027, confirming the appointment of members to the Tribal Enrollment Committee, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: The following individuals listed below are appointed to the Tribal Enrollment Committee: Gilbert Thompson, Chairperson, term expires January 2027; Wille Thomas, term expires January 2027; Celestine Steve, term expires January 2026; Rebecca Steve, term expires January 2026; Linda Williams, term expires January 2026. For more information, please contact the Policy & Legislative Office.

RESOLUTION CHO 23-028, confirming the appointment of members to the Tribal Enrollment Committee, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: The following individuals listed below are appointed to the Tribal Enrollment Committee: Gilbert Thompson, Chairperson, term expires January 2027; Wille Thomas, term expires January 2027; Celestine Steve, term expires January 2026; Rebecca Steve, term expires January 2026; Linda Williams, term expires January 2026. For more information, please contact the Policy & Legislative Office.

RESOLUTION CHO 23-029, confirming the appointment of members to the Tribal Enrollment Committee, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: The following individuals listed below are appointed to the Tribal Enrollment Committee: Gilbert Thompson, Chairperson, term expires January 2027; Wille Thomas, term expires January 2027; Celestine Steve, term expires January 2026; Rebecca Steve, term expires January 2026; Linda Williams, term expires January 2026. For more information, please contact the Policy & Legislative Office.

RESOLUTION CHO 23-030, confirming the appointment of members to the Tribal Enrollment Committee, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: The following individuals listed below are appointed to the Tribal Enrollment Committee: Gilbert Thompson, Chairperson, term expires January 2027; Wille Thomas, term expires January 2027; Celestine Steve, term expires January 2026; Rebecca Steve, term expires January 2026; Linda Williams, term expires January 2026. For more information, please contact the Policy & Legislative Office.

continued next page
Personnel Grievance Panel, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** The following individuals listed below are appointed to the Tribal Personnel Grievance Panel: Stanley Johnson, Chairperson, term expires October 2027; Melannie Carson, term expires October 2027; Julia Lindsay, term expires October 2027; Rhonda Bell, term expires October 2026; Joshua Weaver, term expires October 2026; Roberta Taylor, Alternate, term expires October 2027. For more information, please contact the Policy & Legislative Office.

**RESOLUTION CHO 23-030,** confirming the appointment of members to the Tribal Credit Committee, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** The following individuals listed below are appointed to the Tribal Credit Committee: Connie Deon, Chairperson, term expires October 2027; Brittany Bell, term expires October 2027; Kendall Wallace, term expires October 2026; Edward Rangel, Alternate, term expires October 2026; Demando Mingo, term expires October 13, 2026. For more information, please contact the Policy & Legislative Office.

**RESOLUTION CHO 23-031,** confirming the appointment of members to the Tribal Election Committee, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** The following individuals listed below are appointed to the Tribal Election Committee: Amy Pauls, Member, term expires October 13, 2026; Melanie Benn, Alternate, term expires October 13, 2026; Dania Willis, Alternate, term expires October 13, 2026. For more information, please contact the Policy & Legislative Office.

**RESOLUTION CHO 23-032,** confirming the appointment of members to the Tribal Center Enterprise Board of Directors, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** The following individuals listed below are appointed to the Tribal Center Enterprise Board of Directors: Peggy Crawford, term expires October 2026; Jimmy Shannon, term expires October 2026. For more information, please contact the Policy & Legislative Office.

**RESOLUTION CHO 23-033,** confirming appointments to the Choctaw Residential Center Enterprise Board of Directors, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** The following individuals listed below are appointed to the Choctaw Residential Center Enterprise Board of Directors: Hilda Nickey, term expires November 2027; Angela Hundley, term expires November 2027; Nigel Gibson, term expires November 2027. For more information, please contact the Policy & Legislative Office.

**RESOLUTION CHO 23-034,** confirming appointments to the Choctaw Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** The following individuals listed below are appointed to the Choctaw Housing Authority Board of Commissioners: Hilda Nickey, term expires January 31, 2026; Lornia Ahshapanek, term expires January 31, 2026; Kent Wesley, term expires January 31, 2026; Christopher Eaves, term expires January 31, 2026; Kendall Wallace, term expires January 31, 2026; Richard Isaac, term expires January 31, 2027; Michael Briscoe, term expires January 31, 2027; Demando Mingo, term expires January 31, 2027. For more information, please contact the Policy & Legislative Office.

**RESOLUTION CHO 23-035,** confirming appointments to the Chahta Enterprise Board of Directors, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** The following individuals listed below are appointed to the Chahta Enterprise Board of Directors: Hilda Nickey, term expires November 2027; Angela Hundley, term expires November 2027; Nigel Gibson, term expires November 2027. For more information, please contact the Policy & Legislative Office.

**RESOLUTION CHO 23-036,** confirming appointments to the Choctaw Shopping Center Enterprise Board of Directors, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** The following individuals listed below are appointed to the Choctaw Shopping Center Enterprise Board of Directors: Timothy Thomas, Sr., term expires October 2027; Deborah Martin, term expires October 2027; Kendall Wallace, term expires October 2027. For more information, please contact the Policy & Legislative Office.

**RESOLUTION CHO 23-037,** appointing Tribal Council Sergeant at Arms, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** The Resolution confirms the appointment of James D. Willis as Sergeant at Arms of the Tribal Council. For more information, please contact the Policy & Legislative Office.

**SPECIAL CALL MEETING**  
**FEBRUARY 27, 2023**

**RESOLUTION CHO 23-038,** authorizing settlement of all claims against JUUL Labs, Inc., was ADOPTED - 14 YES (L. Ahshapanek, M. Briscoe, N. Gibson, R. Henry, Sr., A. Hundley, R. Isaac, S. Johnson, W. McMillan, H. Nickey, G. Shoemaker, R. Sockey, T. Thomas, Sr., K. Wallace, & K. Wesley); 0 NO: 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT (C. Eaves, D. Martin, & D. Mingo).

**SUMMARY:** Previously, the Tribal Council adopted Resolution CHO 21-019 which authorized litigation of claims relating to electronic cigarettes manufactured & marketed by JUUL Labs, Inc. The MBCI received the terms of settlement offered by JUUL Labs, Inc. which adequately addresses all claims & the MBCI has agreed to fully resolve all claims against JUUL Labs, Inc. For more information, please contact the Office of the Attorney General.

**RESOLUTION CHO 23-039(B),** approving a Land Use Permit for Serena Chapman in the Bogue Chitto Community, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO: 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** The Resolution approves a one year Land Use Permit for Serena Chapman to build a single-family home in the Bogue Chitto Community. For more information, please contact the Office of Economic Development.

**RESOLUTION CHO 23-040(B),** approving a Land Use Permit for Becky Hickman Richarte in the Bogue Chitto Community, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** The Resolution approves a one year Land Use Permit for Becky Hickman Richarte to build a single-family home in the Bogue Chitto Community. For more information, please contact the Office of Economic Development.

**RESOLUTION CHO 23-041(B),** approving a Land Use Permit for the McMillan Family in the Bogue Chitto Community, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** The Resolution approves a one year Land Use Permit for the McMillan Family to build a single-family home in the Bogue Chitto Community. For more information, please contact the Office of Economic Development.

**RESOLUTION CHO 23-042(B),** approving a Land Use Permit for the Kickapoo Family in the Bogue Chitto Community, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** The Resolution approves a one year Land Use Permit for the Kickapoo Family to build a single-family home in the Bogue Chitto Community. For more information, please contact the Office of Economic Development.

**RESOLUTION CHO 23-043(B),** approving a Land Use Permit for the Quapaw Family in the Bogue Chitto Community, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** The Resolution approves a one year Land Use Permit for the Quapaw Family to build a single-family home in the Bogue Chitto Community. For more information, please contact the Office of Economic Development.
USDA Takes Steps to Support Food Sovereignty with MBCI

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) announced on January 26, 2023, it has signed a cooperative agreement with the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MBCI) under the Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement Program (LFPA). Through LFPA, the tribe seeks to purchase and distribute locally grown, produced, and processed food from underserved producers.

“USDA is excited to partner with Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians to promote economic opportunities for farmers and producers and to increase access to locally sourced, fresh, healthy, and nutritious food in underserved communities,” said USDA Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs Jenny Lester Moffitt.

“The Local Food Purchase Cooperative Agreement Program will improve food and agricultural supply-chain resiliency and increase local food consumption around the country.”

With the LFPA funds, MBCI will contract with Choctaw Fresh Produce (CFP) to purchase fresh produce. This will lead the MBCI Produce Purchase and Distribution program to purchase fresh healthy produce and have it distributed among the tribe’s underserved communities while utilizing community-based marketing and outreach methods/activities to promote it.

“We express our thanks to the USDA in their support of our Tribe’s work. Through programs such as the LFPA, our Tribal communities and agricultural ventures like Choctaw Fresh Produce are empowered to produce locally grown and sourced food products for our people and others in the local supply chain,” said Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben.

“Proudly, our Choctaw agricultural history runs deep. It is only natural that our lands produce the food, cultivated by Choctaw hands, to sustain and enrich our families and communities.”

USDA’s Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement Program provides up to $900 million through non-competitive cooperative agreements to enable state, territory, and tribal governments to support local, regional and underserved producers, and maintain or improve food and agricultural supply chain resiliency through the purchase of food produced within the state or within 400 miles of delivery destination.

Funding for the program comes from the American Rescue Plan and the Commodity Credit Corporation.

AMS looks forward to continuing to sign agreements under this innovative program that allows state and tribal governments to procure and distribute local and regional foods and beverages that are healthy, nutritious, and unique to their geographic area.
Dental Proclamation Signed

On Friday, February 3, Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben visited the Choctaw Health Center Dental Department & signed a proclamation declaring February 3-10, 2023, as Give Kids A Smile Week & the month of February as Children’s Dental Health Month. Staff from the CHC Dental Department, as well as the reigning Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Nickey & Choctaw community youth, witnessed Chief Ben sign the proclamation. Thank you to the CHC Dental Department for all that you do to encourage good dental health for our children!

National Nutrition Month

On Wednesday March 1, Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben signed a proclamation declaring March 2023 as National Nutrition Month on the Choctaw Reservation & March 8, 2023, as National Registered Dietitian Nutritionist Day. All Tribal members are encouraged to participate in healthful eating habits & daily physical exercise to promote fitness & good health. Seated, from left to right, are Natalie Byram RDN, LD Director of Nutrition & Dietary, Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, Mary Harrison, Interim Health Director; Standing, from left to right, are Shannon Morrow MS, RDN, LD Dietitian & Food Service Coordinator, Lindsey Sims RDN,LD, Penny Dickerson MS, RDN, LD, & Anna Singelton RDN, LD.

of Tribal Funds, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: The Resolution authorizes a distribution of Tribal funds in the amount of $600.00 per Tribal member on July 1, 2023. For more information, please contact the Office of Tribal Distribution.

RESOLUTION CHO 23-050, approving the 2023-2024 School Calendar for Choctaw Tribal Schools, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: For more information, please contact the Department of Schools.

RESOLUTION CHO 23-051(B), approving increases in blood degree for previously enrolled Tribal members, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: In accordance with Title XXII—Tribal Enrollment Code §22-2-8, a person may submit an application for change in blood quantum calculation based upon new or additional information about paternity or maternity. The Tribal Enrollment Committee previously approved an increase in blood degree for seven previously enrolled Tribal members. For more information, please contact the Office of Tribal Enrollment.

RESOLUTION CHO 23-052(B), enrolling Tribal members, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: The Resolution approves Tribal Enrollment for 11 persons beginning with the name T. Baca & ending with C. Lewis. With the adoption of the Resolution, there are 11,033 Tribal members enrolled with the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians. For more information, please contact the Office of Tribal Enrollment.

To request a copy of the Resolution and/or attachment, please fill out a request for a Resolution/Ordinance form and submit it to the Policy & Legislative Office at krystina.thompson@choctaw.org. Requests for attachments to Tribal Enrollment Resolutions will not be honored due to confidentiality rules.
Ansen McMillan, a sixth grade student at Standing Pine Elementary School, was the grand champion speller of the 29th Annual Choctaw Tribal Schools District-Wide Spelling Bee. This year’s contest was held at the Pearl River Elementary School Gymnasium on Friday, January 27, 2023. McMillan outlasted 43 other local spelling bee winners representing grades 4th-8th from outlying schools within the Choctaw Tribal Schools system. Participants from their respective schools and grades are listed below.

Bogue Chitto Elementary School (BC) - Kyler Hickman, 4th; Landry Henry, 5th; Jazmine Lewis, 6th; Kamryn Hundley, 7th; Delanie Wallace, 8th.

Conehatta Elementary School (C) - Colton Hickman, 4th; Rodgrick Anderson, 5th; Timothy Thomas & Cedric Williams, 6th; Dathian Williamson, 7th; Delanie Wallace, 8th.

Choctaw Central Middle School (CCMS) - Justice Thomas, Deann Comby, Mayhia Nickey, Beauwy Bell, Westbrook Thompson, 7th; Callie Tubby, Kelly Williams, 8th.

Pearl River Elementary School (PR) - Kady Hickman, Traih’sin John, Natanya Allen, Truin Dixon, 4th; Kaecetyn Williams, Jacob Henry, Amaya Isaac, Jaycelynn Bell, 5th; Sherman Billie, Nikolai Denison, Amee Stell, Rainen Willis, 6th.

Red Water Elementary School (RW) - Serena Tubby, 4th; Nylah Wilson, 5th; Ashlyn Killingsworth, 8th.

Standing Pine Elementary School (SP) - Jaric Anderson, 4th; Daislin Isaac, 5th; Ansen McMillan, 6th.

Fred Comby, Sedney White, Ansley Shoemake, 8th.

Choctaw Tribal Schools Presented Check

The Citizens Bank of Philadelphia recently made a check presentation to the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians & Choctaw Tribal Schools officials. Proceeds were distributed from the bank’s School Stash Debit Card Rewards Program which allows account holders carrying the bank’s VISA Debit Card to contribute to their local school of choice for every qualified transaction. Every time a School Stash card is used, the bank will donate $0.05 to that customer’s selected school system. Pictured, from left to right, are Tucker Elementary School Principal Greg Carlyle, Tribal Council Tucker Representative Demando Mingo, Mark Taylor, SVP & COO, Citizens Bank, Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, Stacy Brantley, President & CEO, Citizens Bank, Jackie Hester, VP/Marketing Officer, Citizens Bank, & Director of Schools Dr. Randy Grierson.

Grade winners included, from left to right, Fred Comby (8th grade), Westbrook Thompson (7th grade), Ansen McMillan (6th grade/overall winner), & Jaric Anderson (4th grade). Not pictured is Nylah Wilson (5th grade).
The Choctaw Tribal Schools held the 20th Annual FIRST LEGO® League (FLL) Tournament on Saturday, January 28, 2023, inside the Choctaw Central High School Gymnasium.

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

Eleven teams comprised of over a hundred students from elementary & middle schools representing the Choctaw Tribal Schools participated in this wonderful & exciting event. This year’s theme was “Super Powered” as teams learned about different types of energy sources, storage, distribution methods, & ways in which energy is consumed.

During the opening ceremony, the Choctaw Veterans Color Guard posted the American & Tribal flags as Deidre Tubby sang the National Anthem. Pastor Thomas Ben offered the invocation & reigning Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Nickey welcomed all in attendance.

Director of Schools Dr. Randall Grierson & Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben offered remarks encouraging the teams to do their best in this competition. Eliah Jimmie served as mistress of ceremonies as she introduced the judges, referees, & participating teams.

Every fall, FLL releases a challenge based on a real-world scientific topic. Each challenge has four parts: the Robot Game, Robot Design, Innovative Project, & Core Values. Teams program their autonomous robot (Robot Design) to score points on a themed playing field (Robot Game), developing a solution they have identified (Innovative Project), all guided by the FLL Core Values.

This season’s game is about collecting energy units from different sources around the field & distributing them to where the energy will be stored or consumed. Points are scored for releasing energy units from the models & delivering energy units to target destinations.

Teams, comprised of up to 10 students along with a coach & mentor, compete in at least three 2.5-minute matches, with their highest score counting towards their final standing. At the conclusion of three robot performance rounds, the following awards were presented to the following teams listed below.

The Robot Performance Award was presented to Tucker Elementary School’s Tucker T’Bots representing Tucker Elementary School. Their robot achieved the best score on the competition field.

The Robot Design Award was presented to River Elementary School’s The Innovation Project. The award recognizes a team that designs a mechanically sound robot that is durable, efficient & highly capable of performing challenge missions.

The Champions Award. The team utilizes outstanding programming principles, including clear, concise & reusable code that allows their robot to perform challenge missions autonomously & consistently. Solid engineering principles & a well-developed strategy is used to design & build an innovative, high performing robot.

The Innovation Project Award was presented to Pearl River Elementary School’s The Able Gamers Group II for their

see FLL TOURNEY, pg. 12

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CCHS Hosts 20th Annual FLL Tournament

FLL teams engage in highly competitive rounds to acquire as many points utilizing programmed autonomous lego robots on a themed playing field with various challenges to win the top prize, The Champions Award.

McMillan, 6th.

Tucker Elementary School (T) - Mylah Gibson, 4th; Kaidence Thompson, 5th; Centarain “CT” Black, 6th; Braeson Sam, 7th; Kanyon Tubby, 8th.

In the opening round, spellers competed in their respective grade contests, with winners advancing to the overall final competition. Grade winners were Jaric Anderson (SP), 4th; Nylah Wilson (RW), 5th; Ansen McMillan (SP), 6th (overall winner); Westbrook Thompson (CCMS), 7th; & Fred Comby (CCMS), 8th.

Spelling bee staff included Andy Hardy serving as pronouncer, and Allen Peoples, Amy Pauls and Kendall Grisham serving as judges. LeAnn Boswell was the spelling bee coordinator.

Local spelling bee coordinators were Tina Wright (BC), Joshua Sheehan (C), Susie Henry (CCMS), Donna Crawford (PR), Madonna Watkins (PR), Leigh Chandler (SP), & Pam Breland (T).

Chickaway Wins MAIS Overall Spelling Bee

Congratulations to 7th grader Tayshaun Chickaway of Kemper Academy as he won the MAIS (Midsouth Association of Independent Schools) Overall State Spelling Bee, held on January 20 at Hartfield Academy in Jackson.

The Robot Performance Award was presented to Tucker Elementary School’s Tucker T’Bots. Team members included (in no order) Colsen Stell, Kanyon Tubby, Bryceton McMillan, Braeson Sam, Logan Denson, Madelyn Henry, Leim McMillan, A’ria McMillan, & Coach Jennifer Bounds.
utilization of diverse resources to formulate an in depth & comprehensive understanding of the problem they identified. The team’s solution is exceptionally well considered & creative, with good potential to solve the problem researched. This award recognizes a team that effectively communicated the problem & their proposed solution to both judges & other potential supporters.

The FIRST LEGO League Core Values Award was presented to Standing Pine Elementary School’s Native Pines. This award celebrates a team that is empowered by their FLL experience & displays extraordinary enthusiasm & spirit. They are able to accomplish more together than they could as individuals through shared goals, strong communication, effective problem solving, & excellent time management. This team’s members show each other & other teams respect at all times. They recognize that both friendly competition & mutual gain are possible, on & off the playing field.

The Champion’s Award was presented to Tucker Elementary School’s Network Robot. This award recognizes a team that embodies the FLL experience, by fully embracing our CORE Values while achieving excellence & innovation in both the Robot Game & Project.

The Network Robot represented the Choctaw Tribal Schools at the FLL Mississippi Championship in Pearl on February 25.

continued next page
Choctaw Tribal Schools Release Honor Roll

The Choctaw Tribal Schools recently announced students named to the second nine-weeks honor roll for the 2022-2023 school year. Students recognized on the Chief’s List (all A’s) & Principal’s List/Honor Roll (all A’s & B’s) are listed below.

CHOCTAW CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL
CHIEF’S LIST
(9th Grade) - Ryleigh Anderson, Aniston Billy, Caitlyn Bounds, & Yuriana Crosby.

PRINCIPAL’S LIST

Proclamation Signed at C-TEC
On Thursday, February 2, Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben visited the Career and Technical Education Center (C-TEC) & signed a proclamation declaring February 1-28 as Career & Technical Education Month. C-TEC Administrator Sherry Tubby discussed the ongoing goal of linking C-TEC students with the opportunities growing in the new industries moving into the surrounding area. Choctaw Central High School technical honor students read the proclamation prior to the signing. Pictured above, seated from left to right, are C-TEC Administrator Sherry Tubby & Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben; standing, from left to right, students Jaleann Sockey, Deshaylee Tubby, Delycia Cunningham, Director of Schools Dr. Randy Grierson, Haygen Anderson, Catherine Jim, & Abram Cotton.

**CHOCTAW CENTRAL MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**CHIEF’S LIST**

(8th Grade) - Gracie Butler.

**PRINCIPAL’S LIST**

(7th Grade) - Beauwy Bell, Kylie Bell, Anabella Farve, Jayshaun Hardy, Dracetin Isaac, Eliyah Jimmie, Jalaya Routh, Alaysia Steve, Westbrook Thompson, NiLeyah Williams, & Brylas Willis.


**CONEHATTA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

**CHIEF’S LIST**

(1st Grade) - Brays Bell, Da'Nylie Ben, Hannah Crosby, Cheri Hicks, Desanaye Isaac, Bryten Jefferson, Tobias John, April Lewis, Espyn Stephens, & Gracie Wilson.


(4th Grade) - Colton Hickman.

(6th Grade) - Konley Anderson & Alexis Smith.

(8th Grade) - Lillian Hickman & Joshua McMillan.

**PRINCIPAL’S LIST**


(2nd Grade) - Aneilissa Bell, Kashay Charlie, Deanalyn Chickaway, Davaeya Christie, Kari Hicks, Duean Isaac, Zayson Lasarge, Ryan Shumake, Jr., Peyton Wesley, Kealene Willis, & Kyllyse Yazzie.

(3rd Grade) - Teyshoni Farmer, Jacelyn Lewis, Jayzyn Shoemaker, Ori Stevens, Charlaya Steve, Kyden Thomas, & Trever Thomas.

(4th Grade) - Nadaleigh Chickaway, Shyne Chickaway, Macie Jefferson, Alistair King, Makiya Logan, Zaydrian Reynolds, Jay Shoemaker, Jr., & Randalin Wilson.

(5th Grade) - Rodgreek Anderson.

(6th Grade) - Zahyce Bell, Carson Jimmie, Jaycee Shoemaker, Kinsley Thomas, Tailyn Tubby, Anayah Wesley, Jes'siaas Williams, & Justamia Wilson.

(7th Grade) - Lihalya Logan, Shanshia Mingo, & Traviona Wilson.

(8th Grade) - Taylor Jefferson, Taijah Kessinger, & Tiari Kessinger.

**PEARL RIVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

**CHIEF’S LIST**


(2nd Grade) - Kaycsin Clemons, Hamaya Morris, Jaylon Williams, Kyler Willis, Koffochunk "Padmae" Billie, Braylon Clemons, Kylus John, Mylee Ben, Tamatoo Bald Eagle, Khyrri Cantrill, & Jayce Isaac.

(3rd Grade) - Rainee Billy, Yevanah Dixon, & Hazelin Joe.

(4th Grade) - Kady Hickman, A'mi Clemons, Anzaeirius Hudleston, Laiya Willis, & Dawson Tubby.

(5th Grade) - Lai'rydenn Cotton, Beth Lewis, Adriel Mitch, Anakin Mitch, Taurasi Sardina, Napoleon Tubby, Josie Wallace, Kaleyah Denson, Kasey Nickey, Calvin Willis, Chase Clemons, Javen Frazier, Crimson Robinson, & Oliver Carr.


(7th Grade) - Sai'jye'Yann Bell, Oskomichay Kyree Bell, Zaine Bell, Naijali Cuellar, Lyla Tubby, Alice Ferris, Kolvin Isaac, Madalynn Jimmie, Jayzin Shoemaker, Hazzen Thomas, Liliana Thompson, Brydan Lewis, Mariah McBeath, Elilee Steve, Adelynn Daniel, Shohmalali Dixon, Cayzrea Stolby, Neilani Thompson, Anna'Laiya Tubby, Myree Tubby, Eva Willis, & Kawhi York.

(8th Grade) - D'Ananlyn Bell, Kasden Ben, Andym Bigpond, Paeton Gibson, Jordiana Polk, Dezmond Willis, Ladarrian Bell, Kamari Cantrell, Peyton Eaves, Kahlano Edwards, Traih'sin John, Iylah King, Payton Meely, Felicianna Orduño, Colton Thomas, Jaciryn Vaughn, Aloni Dan, Deonte Isaac Carter, Hunter John, Alicia Stell, Manali'i Bald Eagle, Jayzn Dixon, Chacenlon Shoemaker, & D'Anthony Willis.

(7th Grade) - Caybrianna Hickman, Karyton Hudson, Chaysnder Jones, Kacectyn Williams, Chashon Dixon, Taven Tubby, Tav'n Wesley, Amaya Isaac, Kaylene Willis, Jaicyeclynn Bell, & Paizley Dixon.

(6th Grade) - Sherman Billie, Wyatt Chickaway, Kairyn Dixon, Khanezzle Richardson, Nikolai Denson, Nizhoni McMillan, Ameec Stell, Summer Tubby, Sez Willis, & Rainer Willis.

**TUCKER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

**CHIEF’S LIST**

(1st Grade) - Necie Charlie, Kayzle McMillan, & ClfffWillis, Jr.

(2nd Grade) - Keilani Gibson, Cooper Jefferson, Eve Lewis, & Rhyus York.

(3rd Grade) - Arialynd Henry & Carter York.

(4th Grade) - Mylah Gibson & Karsyn Thomas.

(5th Grade) - Leim McMillan, Kaidence Thompson, & Elliana Tubby.

(6th Grade) - Vashunti McMillan.

(7th Grade) - Bryceton McMillan, Marshall Mingo, Braeson Sam, Esiason Willis, & Tamiyah York.

(8th Grade) - Brodie McMillan, Eric Shumake, Colsten Stell, & Kanyon Tubby.

**PRINCIPAL’S LIST**

(2nd Grade) - Taylia Henry & Dominic Willis.

(3rd Grade) - Nathaniel
Amos, Karson Bell, Kaleb Farmer, Ja’asia Henry, Savion King, Keianna Lewis, James Polk, Liam Thomas, Jacaious Willis, & Raijen Willis.

(4th Grade) - Paycen Comby, Braydon Farmer, Gabriel Hilario, A’Ria McMillan, Crisney Perry, & Bella Steve.

(5th Grade) - Greatone Ben, Madelynn Henry, Lindraya King, Esmaralda Mingo, Damari Thomas, & Claire Willis.

(6th Grade) - Logan Denson, Cameron Gibson, Reyana Robinson, Damarii Sam, Kollier Thomas, & William Willis.

(7th Grade) - Roman Charlie.

(8th Grade) - Annabelle Anderson, Jyles Dixon, Jerinell Jefferson, Devin Johnson, & Jacoby Willis.

CCHS Lady Warriors Soccer Ends in Class 4A Playoffs
The Choctaw Central Lady Warriors faced the New Albany Bulldogs in the quarterfinals of the 2023 MHSAA Class 4A State Soccer Tournament at Choctaw on Saturday, January 28. Choctaw Central once held a 3-1 lead, but New Albany came back with 3 unanswered goals to take a 4-3 victory. CCHS concluded their season with an overall 10-7 record (7-4 region). Members of the 2022-2023 soccer team were Catherine Jim, Zaiya Bell, Audrianna Billy, Kaniya Frazier, Delaysia Cunningham, Fantasia Lewis, Lexi Rodriguez, Rayna Mendez, Cambee Johnson, Hunter Farve, Marlena Rains, Natalee Eaves, Miley Billie, Aaliyah Clemmons, Lacy Alex, Mandy Proctor, Yazzlyn Alex, Destini Tubby, Roslyn Bohannon, Desiny Hickman, Kailynn Perry, Onyx Bobo, & Emaliyah King.

SUCCESSES ON THE COURT
Congratulations to Choctaw student-athletes on their recent successes in this year’s basketball seasons at their respective schools. We commend the players for displaying their skills, determination, sportsmanship, & a desire to be victorious as they contended for their respective championships.

Congratulations to the Choctaw Central Middle School Lady Warriors & Red Water Elementary School Braves as they claimed the 2022-2023 Choctaw Tribal Schools’ 7th/8th Grade Basketball Championships. The CCMS Lady Warriors defeated the Bogue Chitto Elementary School (BCES) Lady Braves 55-17. Shastyn Lewis was named girls MVP. The RWES Braves defeated the Bogue Chitto Braves 53-40. Braylon Edwards was named boys MVP. The finals were held at the Tucker Community Gymnasium on Thursday, Jan. 19. All-Tournament Team selections were: (Girls) Milee Thomas, Conehatta Elementary; Elizabeth Lewis, BCES; Elora Ben, RWES; Tai’lyn Wesley, CCMS; (Boys) Brodie McMillan, Tucker Elementary; Brayson Jefferson, Conehatta Elementary; Connor Hickman, BCES; Jermechail Stewart, RWES; & Jamearan Wallace, CCMS.

PICTURES CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

Participates in Bowling Qualifier
Congratulations to all the Choctaw student athletes who competed in the Region 2 Class II Bowling qualifier at Depot Bowling in Philadelphia on Jan. 25. In the girls’ qualifier, the Choctaw Central Lady Warriors placed 4th. In the boys’ qualifier, the Neshoba Central Rockets placed 1st & the Choctaw Central Warriors placed 3rd.

CCHS Lady Warriors Soccer Ends in Class 4A Playoffs
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The **Choctaw Central Warriors** concluded their season in the 2nd round of the Class 4A playoffs with a 66-50 loss to Clarksdale on Feb. 18. Warriors team members included Peyton Mingo, Jeriah Jimmie, Johnny Vaughn, Koie Williams, Taiton Stokes, Abram Cotton, Kaden Edwards, Alan John, Jayce Sam, Iverson Wallace, Keyshawn Ben, Zylier Clemons, Zyler Thomas, Gannon Vaughn, & Amzie Anderson.

The **Choctaw Central Lady Warriors** concluded their season in the 2nd round of the Class 4A playoffs with a 55-53 loss to Tishomingo County on Feb. 17. Lady Warriors team members included Jocelyn Bell, Kylinn Bell, Tori Henry, Rayleigh Perry, KeShahn Wallace, Mattison Bell, Almera Charlie, Ashlynn Stephens, Braycie McMillan, Chesney Amos, Malaya Morris, Tyra Billy, Natasha Willis, & Tayla Willis.

The champion **RWES Braves** included Jermichael Stewart, Jeryn Lewis, Braylon Edwards, Payton Hernandez, Julius Willis, Zahe Wilson, Bryant Jim, Delontaee Reed, Axxel Willis, Brady Farve, Josiah Wishork, & Hunter Lewis. Coaches were Jeannette Barnes & Christine Wilson.

The **Neshoba Central Lady Rockets** concluded their season in the 2nd round of the Class 5A playoffs with a 58-56 loss to Lafayette on Feb. 17. Lady Rockets team members included Mataeya Dixon, Erica Lyons, Shaylynn Hunter, Kyli Truss, Jakaylin York, Kailyn Willis, Lailah Henry, Zaria Leftore, Katelin Williams, Jiar Henry, Ariel Henry, Breyonce Jim, Aaliyah Tahahwah, Natasha Jones, Atiya Allen, Lanayah Henry, Shanna Ruffin, Zantoriya Clemens, Melissa Williams, & Jaliyah Lewis.

The **Newton County Lady Cougars** concluded their season in the 2nd round of the Class 4A playoffs with a 43-33 loss to Pass Christian on Feb. 17. Lady Cougars team members included Malayah Evans, Sheteri Nickey, Malafi Ben, Kelcei Thomas, Zahayliah Bell, Felisia King, Jayda Torgusson, Taelyn Nickey, Dazlie Tubby, Shallasse Jimmie, Ariel Hurst, Hannah Reilly, Haven Dixon, Adrianna Hunter, & Maddison Dawkins.
The RIVERSIDE INDIAN SCHOOL LADY BRAVES won their district & regionals & made their first appearance in the OSSAA Class A State Tournament in Oklahoma City, Okla. They made it to the semifinals but were defeated by Caddo 49-45 on March 3. MBCI tribal members on the team included Mahle Jim, Sydney Frazier, Nevaeh Dixon, CeAnna Willis, & Sereney Anderson. Remaining team members included Day Whitehawk, Ma-Yia Haumpy, Karlley Parker, Angel Coriz, Alexis Parker, Tyuana Haumpy, Newakis Goombi-Toles, Bobiey Parker, Nevaeh Nibbs, Terayna Jones, Perriana Brown, & Tanil Susanyatame... The RIVERSIDE INDIAN SCHOOL BRAVES won their district & regional consolation but lost in the Class A playoffs to Rattan 64-42 on Feb. 24. MBCI tribal members on the team included A’leron Lewis, McKinsley Isaac, & Landon Davis. Remaining team members included Michael Littleghost, Jeyren Ramirez, Davain Prentiss, Delos Lonewolf, Darien Sundust, Derry Ducheneaux, Jaxson Roden, Cheyem Cortier, Lawrence Littleghost, & Brendan Running Horse.

The LEAKE COUNTY LADY GATORS concluded their season in the 1st round of the Class 1A playoffs with a 35-25 loss to Lumberton on Feb. 13. Lady Gators team members included Tayen Morris, Kaitlyn Chapman, & Taylor Vaughn... The LEAKE COUNTY LADY WARRIORS saw their season come to an end on Feb. 13 as they were defeated by Heidelberg 58-53 in the 2nd round of the Class 2A playoffs. Lady Wildcats team member included Rodezah Smith.

PICTURED LEFT ROW, from left to right, the LEAKE COUNTY LADY GATORS concluded their season in the 1st round of the Class 4A playoffs with a 56-33 loss to Bay High on Feb. 18. Cougars team members included Zarius Johnson, Dasan King, Keaton Gray, Sebastian Johnson, Chaz Tubby, Roby Billy, Dresen Jimmie, Stephen Moore, Jaylen Torgusson, Satchel Oliphant, Jaysi Torgusson, Byron Pruitt, Cameron Bell, LJ Cole, & Cashton Smith.

PICTURED BOTTOM ROW, from left to right, the LEAKE CENTRAL LADY GATORS concluded their season on Feb. 13 with a 49-43 loss to South Pontotoc in the first round of the Class 4A playoffs. Lady Gators team members included Taylor Tiger, Jamee Wright, Lania Willis, & Keynan Wilson... the FOREST LADY BEARCATS advanced to the Class 3A championship game, but were defeated by Booneville 58-33 on March 4. Lady Bearcats team roster included Haiden Anderson... the LEAKE ACADEMY REBELETTES saw their season end as they were defeated by Madison-Ridgeland Academy 58-43 in the semifinals of the Midsouth Association of Independent Schools (MAIS) Overall Tournament on Feb. 27. Rebelettes team roster included McKinley Peoples.
CCHS Soccer Senior Night
On Wednesday, Jan. 18, Choctaw Central High School celebrated Senior Night for the Warriors & Lady Warriors Soccer Teams. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben & Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Nickey joined families, friends, & coaches to help celebrate their recognition. Among the seniors honored were: (Lady Warriors) Audrianna Billy, Delycia Cunningham, Hunter Farve, Catherine Jim, Emaliyah King, & Mandy Proctor; (Warriors) Arral Frazier, Jaeon Johnson, Mathias Johnson, Aison Jim, Ruben Mendez, Haygen Anderson, & Kookie Thompson-Steve; & managers, Brydon Wesley & Grant Ben, Jr. Congratulations & best wishes for success in your future endeavors!

SENIOR PICS CONTINUED NEXT PAGE
CCHS Hosts Senior Night
On Thursday, January 26, Choctaw Central High School celebrated Senior Night for the Lady Warriors & Warriors bowling, cheerleading & basketball teams. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, his wife TaRita, & reigning Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Nickey were in attendance to celebrate with the seniors, coaches, family, & friends. Among the seniors honored were: (Bowling) Cheyanne Weeks, Thomas Ben, Ethan Naneto; (Cheerleading) Nataya Anderson; & (Basketball), Tyra Billy, Malaka Morris, Keshahn Wallace, Amzie Anderson, Abram Cotton, Jeriah Jimmie, James Steve (manager), Taiton Stokes, Gannon Vaughn, & Johnny Vaughn. Congratulations to all the seniors & best wishes for success in your future endeavors!

SENIOR NIGHTS 2023

Newton County Soccer Senior Night
On Tuesday, Jan. 10, tribal member Loriann Vaughn was honored during Senior Night for the Newton County Soccer Team. Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Nickey & Asa Jimmie from the Office of the Tribal Chief presented Loriann a gift on behalf of Chief Ben. Congratulations Loriann & best wishes on the rest of your senior year!

Neshoba Central Soccer Senior Night
On Tuesday, Jan. 10, tribal member Omar Williams was honored during Senior Night for the Neshoba Central High School Soccer Team. Mrs. TaRita Ben was in attendance to present Omar a gift on behalf of Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben. Congratulations & best wishes on your senior year.
Leake Academy Senior Night
Senior Night for Leake Academy basketball was held on Friday, Jan. 13. Choctaw community member McKinley Peoples was among the seniors recognized. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben & his wife, Tarita, were on hand to celebrate with McKinley & her family. Congratulations & best wishes in your future endeavors.

Senior Night for Neshoba Central
Neshoba Central High School held Senior Night for boys basketball on Friday, Jan. 20. Among the seniors recognized were Choctaw community members Patsden Williams & William Dreifuss. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, his wife, TaRita, & Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Raine Nickey presented gifts to the seniors. Congratulations & best wishes for more success in the future!
Neshoba Central Senior Night
Neshoba Central High School held its Senior Night for girls basketball on Tuesday, Jan. 24. Among the seniors recognized were Choctaw community members Aaliyah Tahahwah, Mataeya Dixon, Shaye Lynn Hunter, & Mylena Isaac. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben & his wife, TaRita, presented gifts to the seniors & congratulated them on their accomplishments & offered best wishes for their future successes.

Leake County Senior Night
Leake County High School hosted Senior Night for basketball on Friday, Jan. 20. Choctaw community member Tayen Morris was among the seniors recognized. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Nickey, & Standing Pine Tribal Council Representative Loriann Ahshapanek celebrated with Tayen & her family & friends. Congratulations & best wishes on your senior year & future endeavours.

Kemper County Hosts Senior Night
Senior Night for the Kemper County High School basketball program was held on Friday, Jan. 27. Among the seniors honored was Choctaw community member Rodezah Smith. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben & wife, TaRita, were on hand with family & friends to celebrate her recognition. Congratulations & best wishes for more success in the future!

Newton County Hosts Senior Night
Newton County High Schools hosted Senior Night activities on Tuesday, Jan. 31. Honored were Lady Cougars basketball team members Haven Dixon & Taelyn Nickey; Cougars team members Roby Billy, Dresen Jimmie, Sebastian Johnson, Zarius Johnson, & Chaz Tubby. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben & wife, TaRita, congratulated the seniors on their accomplishments & presented gifts & celebrated with family & friends.

Senior Night at Nanih Waiya
Nanih Waiya Attendance Center held its Senior Night for basketball on Tuesday, Jan. 24. Among the seniors recognized was Choctaw community member Angel Clemmons. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben presented Angel with a gift as she was joined by her family & friends. Congratulations & best wishes for your future success!
Senior Night at Leake Central High School was held on Tuesday, Jan. 31. Choctaw community members Taylor Tiger & Jamae Wright were among the basketball seniors honored. Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Nickey & MBCI Director of Administration Jason Grisham, on behalf of Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, presented gifts & offered best wishes on their senior years & future endeavors.

Riverside Hosts Senior Night
Riverside Indian School in Anadarko, Okla., held Senior Night for the basketball program on Tuesday, Feb. 7. Among the seniors honored were CeAnna Willis & Mahle Jim. The two Lady Braves received congratulatory gifts from the Office of Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben. Congratulations & best of luck for the rest of your senior year & future endeavors!
Lady Warriors, Warriors Honored

Congratulations to members of the Choctaw Central Lady Warriors & Warriors who recently received post-season basketball honors. Representing the Lady Warriors on the Region 4-4A All District Tournament Team were (pictured above, left to right) Malaka Morris, Raiyleigh Perry, & Kylinn Bell. For the Warriors, named to the Region 4-4A All District Tournament Team were (pictured below, left to right) Johnny Vaughn, Taiton Stokes, Koie Williams, & Peyton Mingo. Abram Cotton was named tournament MVP.

Shantashia John of Belhaven University's Women's Basketball team was named the Collegiate Conference of the South's (CCS) Player of the Year following her stellar debut campaign for the Blazers.

She was also named a First Team All-Conference selection. All honors were selected and decided upon following a vote by the conference's head coaches.

The freshman had a first year to remember, leading the conference in scoring with a 20.0 point per game mark while finishing among the top two in Field Goal Percentage, Three-Point Percentage and Free Throw Percentage.

Shantashia John of Belhaven University's Women's Basketball team was named the Collegiate Conference of the South's (CCS) Player of the Year following her stellar debut campaign for the Blazers.

Shantashia is a 2021 graduate of Choctaw Central High School & former member of the Lady Warriors basketball program.

John marked her arrival in a big way when she scored 38 points in a win over rival Millsaps which tied the 5th-most points scored in a single-game for the Blazers.

She went on to score in double-figures all but two games the rest of the season leading a Belhaven team that finished the regular season 16-8 and 10-6 in conference play.

Throughout the year, John made it a habit of pulling in recognition being named the conference's Rookie of the Week a CCS-high eight times and being named Player of the Week on three occasions. Additionally, John was named to the D3Hoops Team of the Week once as she made her mark in the Green & Gold.
Destination Lubbock: Bobcats bring home 7th straight region crown

Jones College (25-3) withstood a fourth quarter rally Sunday afternoon (March 5) at A.E. Wood Coliseum to knock off rival Pearl River, 59-51, & punch its ticket to the NJCAA Division I Tournament for an unrivaled seventh straight season.

"To win 19 straight games, the MACCC & Region 23 is such an incredible accomplishment," head coach Missy Bilderback said. "I'm just really thankful & proud of every single player on this team & the sacrifices they make. They stayed focused under pressure & with a target on their backs. We are loaded with talented players, but it's the unselfishness & commitment to winning that tells a lot about who they are."

Pearl River (24-3) scored the game's first six points but would never lead again. Jones scored 10 straight & 19 of the next 21 to take control of the game.

Carly Keats scored the first five points for the Bobcats & would finish with a game-high 11 in the half. Her back-to-back 3s midway through the second quarter gave the Bobcats a 25-11 advantage. Jones led 31-23 at half & 45-31 after three quarters.

PRCC outscored Jones 13-4 to open the fourth quarter & quickly got within five with under three minutes to play. J'mani Ingram, who started the game 0-for-16, hit three straight buckets in the period.

Tierra Simon's three-pointer cut it to 53-49 with 49 seconds left before En'Dya Buford scored Jones' final six points. Her steal in the front court & ensuing layup with 35 seconds left put the game on ice.

Buford finished with 19 to lead all scorers. Keats had all 11 of her points in the first half, Sakyia White had 10 points & 15 rebounds & Meloney Thames 10 points. Tasionna McDowell chipped in eight points, 10 rebounds & five assists.

Jones shot 32 percent as a team compared to 27 percent for PRCC.

The national tournament is set for March 22-27 at the Rip Griffin Center on the campus of Lubbock Christian University in Lubbock, Texas.

Jones made the program's first-ever Final Four last season & was the first team in nearly 40 years to make it that far from Mississippi.

"We are ecstatic that this team gets to go to Lubbock & compete with the best teams in the country," Bilderback continued. "We are going to go have fun & see what happens."

Thames, Keats named to All-MACCC team

Meloney Thames & Carly Keats were among four Jones College Bobcats named to the 2022-2023 First-Team All-MACCC. Head coach Missy Bilderback was named Coach of the Year for the MACCC & Region 23 champions. En'Dya Buford & Sakyia White were also named to the First-Team as White was named the league's Player of the Year.

The eighth-ranked Bobcats are currently 25-3 & headed to the NJCAA Division I Tournament, beginning March 22 in Lubbock, Texas.

Thames, a 5-foot-8 sophomore guard from Choctaw Central, averages 16.0 points & 4.5 rebounds per game. She shoots 73 percent (64-of-88) from the free throw line & 36 percent (69-of-194) from beyond the arc. She scored 31 points, including the game-winning shot at the buzzer, in Jones' 69-67 OT win over Shelton State (Alabama) on Nov. 10. She scored a career-high 35 points in an 86-78 OT loss to then third-ranked Trinity Valley (Texas) on Nov. 5.

As a freshman, Thames was an NJCAA Honorable Mention All-American, NJCAA All-Star & named to the NJCAA All-Tournament Team. She was also a First-Team All-MACCC & All-Region 23 performer. She has already signed with Mississippi State University.

Keats, a 5-foot-8 freshman guard from Neshoba Central, averages 10.0 points, 3.6 assists & 3.6 rebounds per game. She shoots 70 percent from the free throw line & 36 percent (54-of-149) from the three-point line.

Keats had a season-high 21 points in a 78-63 win over Mississippi Gulf Coast on Jan. 9 & a season-high nine assists in an 87-58 victory over Copiah-Lincoln on Jan. 19. She has already signed with Arkansas.

Bilderback has compiled a 197-32 record (.860) in eight years as Bobcat head coach. In the MACCC, Bilderback owns a 100-11 mark (.900). She has been named Region 23 Coach of the Year seven times & led Jones to seven consecutive region championships. Last season, Bilderback guided Jones to its first-ever Final Four appearance at the national tournament.
Wilson Signs with MDCC
Neshoba Central High School Senior Dekiren Wilson recently signed a letter of intent to continue his academic & athletic career as part of Mississippi Delta Community College’s Trojans football program in Moorhead. Pictured, seated from left, are DeKiren & his mother Tashina Wilson. Pictured, back row from left to right, are Neshoba Central Rockets coaching staff, Coach David Huffman, Coach Brian Anderson, Coach Shannon Ruffin, Head Coach Patrick Schoolar, Coach Curtis Blackburn, Coach Daryl Carter, & Coach Jacob Johnson.

Joe Signs with ECU
Hugo High School Senior Noah Joe recently signed a letter of intent to continue his academic & athletic career as part of East Central University’s Tigers football program in Ada, Okla. Noah, standing at 6’2” & weighing 285 lbs., was an offensive lineman for the Hugo Buffaloes this season. He is the son of Keith Joe & Becka Ludlow, & the grandson of the late Dale Phillips, Sr. & the late Mattie Bell. Congratulations & good luck on your future endeavours!

Wilson Places 1st at Classic
Congratulations to Nylah Wilson, Red Water Elementary School 5th grader, as she recently placed 1st All-Around in her division at the 25th Annual Presidential Classic in Orlando, FL. Her scores for the competition were: Vault - 9.375 (1st); Bars - 9.050 (3rd); Beam - 9.250 (3rd); Floors - 9.150 (6th). The Courthouse Gymnastics Co. Level 4s, which Nylah is a member, placed 2nd at the Classic.
The Choctaw Wildlife and Parks Department hosted the 2023 Youth Rabbit Stick Hunt on Saturday morning, February 25.

The event, held annually at the Attala County property off Highway 35 North near Kosciusko, brings Tribal members, especially the youth, to participate in the revival of traditional hunting practices of the Choctaw utilizing rabbit sticks.

Hunting dogs were used to follow the rabbit scents as hunters tracked their movements through heavy thickets and wooded areas. Seasoned hunters were on-hand to provide assistance and explain hunting methods to the youth and first-time hunters.

At the conclusion of the hunt, a lunch was provided. The first 50 participants to register on-site received T-shirts. Door prizes donated by various businesses and organizations were awarded to youth and adults in attendance.

Special thanks to the following who donated items for door prizes: Office of Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben; Tribal Council for gift cards; Pow Wow for gift cards; Pearl River Resort for complimentary meals at Stats; Yates for a gift bag; Neshoba Co-Op for fishing poles; Northside Animal Clinic for a gift card; Willis Engineering for gift cards; Beem's Pawn & Gun for gift cards & items; Philadelphia Gun & Pawn for gift certificates; Merchant Foods for folding chairs; Weavers for a monetary prize; & Canal Place Cinema for movie passes.

Special thanks also to K&M Portable for providing a portable & eye wash station, Jimmy & Chief Ben for providing two gallons of hominy, Williams Bros. for providing water & Gatorade, Brandon Chickaway of Conehatta for making an abundant supply of rabbit sticks for hunters that didn't have sticks, & to all the cooks who volunteered their time to provide a delicious lunch for all the participants.

Thank you to the Choctaw Wildlife and Parks staff and other volunteers for helping to organize this wonderful event that promotes our cultural traditions to our future generations!
NAKEYA SHUNTA WILLIS-AMOS

Funeral service for Nak eya Shunta Willis-Amos, 27, was held on Friday, January 6, 2023, at the Red Water Community Gymnasium. Pastor Thomas Ben officiated.

Burial was in Red Water Community Cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.

Mrs. Amos passed away on January 1 in Philadelphia, MS. She enjoyed being with family & friends, playing softball, stickball, basketball, volleyball, & beading.

She is preceded in death by her grandparents, Marion Willis & Robin Willis, Sr.

Survivors include her parents, Latonya Willis, Trisilla Willis, & Robin Willis, Jr.; husband, Nathaniel Amos, Sr.; daughters, Denalih Amos & Denanzlee Amos; sons, Na’Ljah Amos & Nathaniel Amos, Jr.; sisters, Kaitlyn Edwards, Nikilete Jim, Ahinha Jim, Catherine Jim, & Arabella Jim; brothers, Shawn Willis, Montero Willis, Robin Willis, III, Gavine Frazier, Hunter Edwards, & McKinley Jim; grandparents, Emma Sam & Edmond Sam, Sr.; 5 aunts, 2 uncles, & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

BRANDON GENE FRAZIER

Funeral service for Brandon Gene Frazier, 32, was held on Wednesday, January 11, 2023, at Bogue Chitto Baptist Church. Deacon Randy Jim & Rev. Charles Doby Henry officiated.

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

Mr. Frazier passed away on January 6 at University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson.

He was a member of Jesus New Covenant Church & was employed with Pearl River Resort as a table games dealer. He enjoyed photography, drawing, listening to music, cooking, & being with family.

He was preceded in death by his father, Bobby Gene Frazier; grandparents, Frank Frazier, Lorena Jackson Solomon, Bronson Solomon; & a niece, Mya Frazier.

Survivors include his mother, Karen Solomon; brothers, David Keith Frazier & Joshua Keith Frazier; grandmother, Mary Hickman Frazier; & a niece, host of nephews, relatives, & friends.

LOLA MAE THOMAS JACKSON

Funeral service for Lola Mae Thomas Jackson, 69, was held on Wednesday, January 11, 2023, at Bogue Chitto Baptist Church. Deacon Randy Jim & Rev. Charles Doby Henry officiated.

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

Mr. Allen passed away on January 12 at his residence.

He was a fan of the New Orleans Saints, MSU Bulldogs & Chicago Cubs. He was employed with Pearl River Resort, Canal Barge Company, Choctaw Transit, Choctaw Tribal Schools, & Choctaw Health Center. He enjoyed being with family & attending concerts.

He is preceded in death by his father, Donald Allen; grandparents, Maggie Allen, Roger

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& Audie Mae Willis; an aunt & 5 uncles.
Survivors include his mother, Rita Allen; daughter, Raziya Cumberland; companion, Tonya Billie; sisters, Renita Willis & Kristina Robinson; brother, Marcus Allen; 3 nieces, 3 nephews, a great-niece, a great-nephew, an uncle, & a host of relatives & friends.

**Dayna Shawn Nickey**

Funeral service for Dayna Shawn Nickey, 28, was held on Thursday, January 19, 2023, at Pearl River Community Center. Bro. Lee Farmer officiated.

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

Ms. Nickey passed away on January 13 at the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson.

She enjoyed being with family, fishing, beading, reading, telling jokes, & taking trips.
She is preceded in death by her father, Gregory A. Nick- ey; grandparents, Nevaline & Raphel Billy, Martha Jim & John C. Lewis; a great-aunt, two uncles, two aunts, a cousin, & companion, Sky A. Shu- make.

Survivors include her son, Ryan Thomas, 41, was held on Sunday, January 22, 2023, at Stone- wall Baptist Church in Conehatta. Bro. Gabe Swann & Bro. Robert Patrick officiated.
Burial was in Conehatta Community Cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Ser- vices was in charge of arrangements.

Ms. Denson passed away on January 17 at her residence.
She was a teacher’s aide with Early Childhood, then a housekeeper before becoming a homemaker. She enjoyed sewing, cooking, going to yard sales, & being with family.
She is preceded in death by her husband, Harold Denson; parents, Bennie Wesley & Alice Cotton Clemons; sisters, Dianne Clemons, Lillie Joe, & Cissie Cotton; & brothers, Egbert Cotton, Clay Wesley, Sr., Winston Clemons, Lynn Clemons, Bob Clemons, & Jerry Clemons.

Survivors include her daugh- ters, Torrie Denson, Elena Den- son, & Shunta Clemons; sons, Chris Denson, Ashley Denson, & Mason Mingo; sisters, Fran- ces Clemons, Gloria Clemon- sons, Maxine Thomas, Earline Willis, Sammie Lou Cotton, & Geraldine Jeanguneat; broth- ers, Prentice Clemons, Jr., Bill Clemons, Sr., Edward Clemons, Tommy Clemons, Benjie Wesley, & Joseph Wesley; 24 grandchildren, 8 great-grand- children, & a host of relatives & friends.

**Elaine Denson**

Funeral service for Elaine Denson, 70, was held on Sunday, January 22, 2023, at Stone- wall Baptist Church in Conehatta. Bro. Gabe Swann & Bro. Robert Patrick officiated.
Burial was in Pine Bluff Baptist Cem- etery. John E. Stephens Chap- el Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.

Ms. Isaac passed away on January 18 at her residence in Cincinnati, OH.
She was born in Mississippi but moved to Ohio when she was in her 20’s.
She is preceded in death by her parents, Kelly & Callie Tubby Wickson; & sisters, Ethel Tubby Willis & Martel Wickson Steve.
Survivors include her daugh- ters, Kira Happy & Jamie Hood; son, Christopher Hood; sister, Catherine Tubby Benn; 7 grandchildren & a host of relatives & friends.

**Frank "Butch" Morris Steve, Jr.**

Funeral ser- vice for Frank "Butch" Morris Steve, Jr., 61, was held on Wednesday, February 1, 2023, at Pearl River Baptist Church. Bro. Ricky Edwards & Rev. Carl Wilson officiated.
Burial was in Phillips Ceme- tery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.

Mr. Steve passed away on January 26 at Anderson Re- gional Medical Center in Meridian.
He was employed with MBCI Landscaping. He en- joyed hunting, playing stickball with Beaver Dam, watching his grandchildren participate in their activities, & being a fan of the Mississippi State Bulldogs & New England Patriots.

**Zachary Ryan Thomas**

Funeral service for Zachary Ryan Thomas, 41, was held on

He is preceded in death by his father, Frank Steve, Sr.; mother, Benedicta St. John Steve; sister, Stephanie Steve; & brothers, Sean Steve & Lee McMillian.
Survivors include his daugh- ter, Courtney Steve; son, Grantham Steve; a step-daugh- ter, Sunni Mingo; step-sons, Adrian Wesley & Isiah Mingo; a brother, Tony Steve; 17 grandchildren, 1 great-grand- son, 6 nieces, 3 nephews, & a host of relatives & friends.

**Ruth Sockey Williams**

Funeral service for Ruth Sockey Williams, 86, was held on Friday, February 3, 2023, at John E. Stephens Chapel in Philadelphia. Rev. Robert Pat- rick officiated.
Burial was in Conehatta Community Cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel was in charge of arrangements.
Ms. Williams passed away on January 29 at Choctaw Re- sidential Center in Choctaw.
She was a member of Hopewell Baptist Church & en- joyed gardening, attending social gatherings, making friends, & talking to people.
She is preceded in death by her husband, Carter Williams; parents, Mike Sockey & Ne- phus Amos Sockey; sisters, Va- larie Sockey, Reba Jim, Dora Johnson, Delores Sockey, & Baby Girl; brothers, Enoch Sockey, Odell Sockey, & Elvin Sockey.
Survivors include daugh- ters, Linda Williams & Dinah Williams; sister, Sadie Wil- son; brother, Clyde Sockey; 2 granddaughters & a host of relatives & friends.

**Gail Hickson Isaac**

Funeral service for Gail Hickson Isaac, 62, was held on Friday, January 27, 2023, at Pearl River Community Center. Bro. Jack Sharp & Rev. Travis Willis offici- ated.
Burial was in Pine Bluff Baptist Cem- etery. John E. Stephens Chap- el Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.
Ms. Isaac passed away on January 18 at her residence in Cincinnati, OH.
She was born in Mississippi but moved to Ohio when she was in her 20’s.
She is preceded in death by her parents, Kelly & Callie Tubby Wickson; & sisters, Ethel Tubby Willis & Martel Wickson Steve.
Survivors include her daugh- ters, Kira Happy & Jamie Hood; son, Christopher Hood; sister, Catherine Tubby Benn; 7 grandchildren & a host of relatives & friends.

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

Mr. Thomas passed away on February 1 at his residence.

He enjoyed being with family & friends, playing softball, fishing, hunting, going to the casinos, & learning Choctaw culture & history. He was a Florida Gators & Miami Dolphins fan.

He is preceded in death by his father, Randy Daland Thomas; & grandparents, Corrine Billy, Mazola Thomas & Newman Thomas.

Survivors include his mother, Ailene Thomas; sisters, Cecile Lopez & Shelby Reed; brother, Joshua Thomas; companion, Natasha Jefferson; special niece & nephew, Amryrah Reed & Caleb Guerra; nephews, Jacon Thomas & Malackai Thomas; 7 nieces, 6 nephews, & a host of relatives & friends.

Christine Joe

Funeral service for Christine Joe, 67, was held on Wednesday, February 8, 2023, at the Pearl River Community Center. Rev. Charles Doby Henry officiated.

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

Ms. Joe passed away on February 3.

She enjoyed being with her sister, talking, listening to country music, going to the casino & yard sales.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Billy Joe, Sr. & Mary Starr Joe; sisters, Mavis Joe Ramos, Virginia Mary Joe, & Rose Catherine Joe; brothers, Billy Joe, Jr. & Charles Joe.

Survivors include her sons, Michael Shaffer, Richard Irizzary, & Wilson Irizzary; sister, Patty Ann Joe; 7 grandchildren, 15 great-grandchildren, 7 nieces, 7 nephews, & a host of relatives & friends.

DEMANUEL LASHANE WILLIS

Funeral service for Demanuel Lashane Willis, 24, was held on Thursday, February 9, 2023, at the Conehatta Community Gymnasium. Bro. Brian Parkman officiated.

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

Mr. Willis passed away on February 4 at his residence.

He enjoyed playing basketball & stickball, being with family & friends, fishing, & telling jokes.

He is preceded in death by his mother, Mary Jefferson.

Survivors include his mother, Latonya Willis; sons, Sydus Willis & Amari Willis; fiancé, Amner Smith; sister, Aleshia Wahwasuck; brothers, Elray Willis, Shaunrey Jefferson, Lee A. Willis, Alvin Isom, Brylei Chickaway, Morrison Willis, & Lee D. Willis; & a host of relatives & friends.

ROSE MARIE MACARIO-TOMAS

Funeral service for Rose Marie Macario-Tomas, 43, was held on Friday, February 10, 2023, at her home, 151 Big Spring Creek Road in Bogue Chitto. Bro. Marco Patrick & Rev. Mark Patrick officiated.

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

Mrs. Macario-Tomas passed away on February 5 at her residence.

She enjoyed being with her children, baking, & cooking.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Glenn & Junice Thompson Bell; & brothers, Larry Thomas Bell & Jerry Lee Thompson.

Survivors include her husband, Eduardo Macario-Tomas; sons, Elian Macario-Tomas, Corbin Seth Macario-Tomas, & Luis Macario-Tomas; sisters, Anna Marie Bell & Cynthia Renee Bell; brothers, James Ray Bell, Cecil Christopher Thompson, & Alexander Keith Coley; & a host of relatives & friends.

FREDRICK DIXON, SR.

Funeral service for Fredrick Dixon, Sr., 54, was held on Saturday, February 11, 2023, at the Red Water CERF Building. Bro. Gordon Sam & Bro. Shelly Peoples officiated.

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

Mr. Dixon passed away on February 7 at Anderson Regional Medical Center in Meridian.

He was with Choctaw Tribal Schools Maintenance from 1997-2022. He also repaired small engines & enjoyed hunting, being with family & friends, riding through the community, telling jokes, & being a Dallas Cowboys fan.

He is preceded in death by his wife, Sequita Williams Dixon; parents, Woodrow Wilson Dixon & Mildred Sockey Dixon; sister, Linda Wesley; brothers, Michael Dixon & Howard Dixon; a niece & a nephew.

Survivors include his daughter, Trista Bell; sons, Fredrick Dixon, Jr., Redmond Dixon, Nicholas Dixon, Nathan Smith, Scott Smith, Coby Smith, & Hunter Smith; brothers, Danny Dixon & Eric Dixon; 20 grandchildren; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

ROBERT LEE CHICKAWAY

Funeral service for Robert Lee Chickaway, 60, was held on Thursday, February 16, 2023, at the Tucker CERF Building. Father Darnis Selvanayakam officiated.

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

Mr. Chickaway passed away on February 8 at the Choctaw Residential Center in Choctaw.

He enjoyed watching detective & western movies, professional wrestling, football, listening to music, & being with family & friends.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Clement & Lurlene McMillan Chickaway; a sister, Earline Flores; & brothers, Hayward McMillan, Sr., Christopher Chickaway, & Silmon John.

Survivors include his sister, Mary Theresa Chickaway; continued next page
brothers, Billy Charlie Chickaway, John Lee Chickaway, & Lee Roy Chickaway; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

**Charles Ray Jefferson, Jr.**

Funeral service for Charles Ray Jefferson, Jr., 43, was held on Friday, February 17, 2023, at the Conehatta Community Gymnasium. Bro. Ricky Thomas officiated.

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

Mr. Jefferson passed away on February 11 in Conehatta.

He enjoyed being with family & being a Florida State Seminoles fan.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Charles Jefferson, Sr. & Julie Jefferson; a sister, Gail Jefferson; a brother, Sidney Chapman; 5 aunts & 7 uncles.


**Cornelia W. Willis**

Funeral service for Cornelia W. Willis, 74, was held on Thursday, February 16, 2023, at the Pearl River Community Center. Bro. Eddie Johnson officiated.

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

Ms. Willis passed away on February 12 at Anderson Regional Medical Center in Meridian.

She was a member of Grace Fellowship Baptist Church & retired from Pearl River Resort’s Food & Beverage Department after many years of service. She enjoyed traveling with her son, watching TV, doing word puzzles, & singing church hymns.

She is preceded in death by her husband, Earl Willis, Sr.; parents, Ollie Wickson & Irene Billy; sister, Betty Wickson; & brother, Steven Wickson.

Survivors include her son, Fred Willis; sister, Brenda Wickson; brother, Harry Wickson; & several nieces & nephews.

**Infant Kyzleigh Brielle Charlie**

Funeral service for Kyzleigh Brielle Charlie, 4 month old infant, was held on Wednesday, March 1, 2023, at the Tucker CERF building. Bro. Leonard Jimmie, Jr. & Bro. Eddie Johnson officiated.

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

Infant Charlie passed away on February 15 at Neshoba General Hospital in Philadelphia.

She was deeply loved & brought immense joy to those around her.

She is preceded in death by her grandparents, Bruce Jackson & Cynthia Bell; great-grandparents, Laurine John Jackson, Coburn Charlie, Sr. & Gloria Davis Charlie; & an infant cousin.

Survivors include her parents, Jaiden Jackson & Devin Charlie; brother, Kaiizden Charlie; grandparents, Rahika Brescia & Coburn Charlie, Jr.; great-grandmother, Janis Jimmie; 7 aunts, 2 uncles, & a host of cousins & extended family.

**Donald Williamson**

Funeral service for Donald Williamson, 68, was held on Monday, February 20, 2023, at Macedonia Baptist Church in Conehatta. Deacon Billy Smith & Rev. Robert Patrick officiated.

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

Mr. Williamson passed away on February 16 at his residence.

He was a U.S. Marine Corps Veteran & member of Hope Indian Baptist Church. He enjoyed being with family & friends.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Arnold & Anna Mae Williamson; son, Stanley Johnson, Jr.; sisters, Joanne Marie Reyes, Suzy Lane (James), & Amy Williamson; son, Stanley Johnson, Jr.; sister, Susie Martinez; 8 grandchildren, 8 great-grandchildren, several nieces & nephews, & her fur baby, Muffin.

**Maria Fisher Johnson**

Funeral service for Maria Fisher Johnson, 78, was held on Wednesday, February 22, 2023, at John E. Stephens Chapel in Philadelphia. Father Darnis Selvanayakah officiated.

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

Ms. Johnson passed away on February 18 at her residence in Petal.

She lived most of her life in the Conehatta community & was a member of St. Catherine Catholic Church. She enjoyed planting flowers.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Clay Oliver Fisher & Juanita Rodriguez; sisters, Guadalupe Fisher, Rosa Rodriguez, Mary Helen Fisher, Mary Jane Munn, & Consuelo Fisher; brothers, Roberto, Oscar & Clay Fisher; & special companion, Donald Williamson.

Survivors include her daughters, Joanne Marie Reyes, Suzy Lane (James), & Amy Williamson; son, Stanley Johnson, Jr.; sister, Susie Martinez; 8 grandchildren, 8 great-grandchildren, several nieces & nephews, & her fur baby, Muffin.

**Tyler Lane Amos**

Funeral service for Tyler Lane Amos, 32, was held on Friday, February 24, 2023, at Bogue Chitto Community Gymnasium. Pastor Thomas Ben & Rev. Charles Dobry officiated.

Burial was in the Bogue Chitto Community Cemetery.
Mrs. Luis passed away on February 26 at Merit Health Hospital in Flowood.

She enjoyed cooking, baking, listening to music, dancing, enjoying coffee, watching movies, traveling, & being with family & friends. She also loved the Halloween & Christmas holidays, her fur babies, & being an MSU Bulldogs fan.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Hildreth Carl Tubby & Elvira Thin-Elk Tubby; brother, Sean Tubby; grandparents, Hudson & Estelline Tubby, Aloysius Thin-Elk & Vivian Brave; & father-in-law, Israel Luis, Sr.

Survivors include husband, Israel Luis; sons, Donte Decoteau & Brennan Luis; brother, Gall Tubby; 4 grandchildren; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

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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
DID YOU KNOW the University of Southern Mississippi (USM) is the only college campus with a southeastern native plant Medicine Wheel Garden in the country? Dr. Tammy Greer, along with others, developed the Medicine Wheel Garden in 2005 to highlight plants used by the indigenous peoples of this area & promote awareness of the rich histories & cultures of Southeastern Native Americans.

The Center of American Indian Research and Studies is partnering with the Mississippi Humanities Council, WECAN (Women's Earth & Climate Action Network) & the Telenutrition Center to present four events at our Medicine Wheel Garden, located on USM campus behind the Liberal Arts Building.

- February 18: Plant-Based Cordage with Jeanette Stone
- April 1: Shell-Carving with Alex Alvarez
- September 23: Plant-Based Pigments with Robin Whitfield
- November 11: Plant Medicine with Jenna Mae

All events begin at 1:00 p.m., at the Medicine Wheel Garden & are free & open to the public. Snacks will be provided at each event. For more information about the events, the Medicine Wheel Garden or Native American history/culture, please contact Dr. Tammy Greer at tammy.greer@usm.edu.

What is Teen Dating Violence?
Teen dating violence is a type of violence that happens between two young people in a relationship. The nature of the harmful and aggressive behavior can be physical, emotional, sexual or technological abuse:

- **Physical** – For example, when a partner is pinched, hit, bit, shoved or kicked.
- **Emotional** – This action can involve threatening a partner or harming a partner’s sense of self-worth. Some examples include name-calling, shaming, bullying, embarrassing on purpose, or keeping the partner away from friends and family.
- **Sexual** – This is forcing a partner to engage in a sex act when he or she does not or cannot consent. Unhealthy relationships can start early and last a lifetime. Dating violence often starts with teasing and name calling. These behaviors are often thought to be a “normal” part of a relationship. But these behaviors can lead to more serious violence like physical assault and rape.
- **Technological** – Using social media to harass, stalk, bully, shame, embarrass or humiliate

**STATS ON NATIVE TEENS IN RELATIONSHIPS**

- Nearly 1 in 11 female & approximately 1 in 15 male high school students report having experienced physical dating violence in the last year.
- About 1 in 9 female violence, including intentional injuries, homicide and suicide, account for 75% of Native youth deaths.
- 1 in 36 male high school students report having experienced sexual dating violence in the last year.
- 92% of American Indian girls who reported having sexual intercourse have been forced against their will.
- More than 40% of children experience two or more acts of violence by the age of 18.
- Nearly 1.5 million high school students nationwide experience physical abuse from a dating partner each year.