

CHOCTAW COMMUNITY NEWS

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CHOCTAW, MISSISSIPPI 39350

MARCH/APRIL 2023



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

Candidates Announced for June 6 Tribal Election

A total of 61 Tribal members were certified as qualified candidates by the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians' Tribal Election Committee (TEC) for the upcoming Tribal Election on Tuesday, June 6, 2023.

Candidates are vying for the position of Tribal Chief and eight seats on the Choctaw Tribal Council, with four-year terms expiring in 2027. An official candidate list was released on Tuesday, April 11.

The following candidates in their respective races include:

TRIBAL CHIEF (3 candidates) - Phyliss J. Anderson, Tarina Kay Anderson, and incumbent Cyrus L. Ben.

TRIBAL COUNCIL - BOGUE CHITTO (3 candidates, 1 position) - incumbent Ronnie Henry, Sr., Natasha
see CANDIDATES, pg. 5

CRDE Breaks Ground for Travel Plaza in Louisville

Choctaw Resort Development Enterprise (CRDE) held a groundbreaking ceremony on Wednesday, April 12, for a new travel plaza to be located on South Church Street in Louisville, Miss.

The 18,000-square-foot facility will have 150 slot machines, a Sportsbook

lounge, 3,000 square feet of retail space, a family-friendly restaurant, and fueling stations for commercial and passenger vehicles.

"This project has been discussed for some time, and today it is great to see it come to fruition as we

break ground," said Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben. "This is a new project for CRDE that represents business growth for our Tribe. I am excited for both the Crystal Ridge community nearby and for the Winston County/City

see LOUISVILLE, pg. 7



Officials with the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians and Pearl River Resort break ground for the Louisville Travel Plaza project on Wednesday, April 12. The target opening is slated for the Summer of 2024.

Choctaw Indian Fair Entertainers Announced

The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians proudly announces the 73rd edition of the Choctaw Indian Fair on July 12-15, 2023, in Choctaw, Miss. Taking the Main Stage at this year's festivities are featured Tribal events, as well as top Country, Rock and Contemporary Christian music artists.

On Wednesday, July 12, the fair begins with Opening Ceremonies with Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, followed by the 68th Annual Choctaw Indian Princess Pageant.

On Thursday, July 13, there will be Choctaw Social Dancing performances, followed by Jeremy Camp in concert.

On Friday, July 14, Choctaw Social Dancing will open the festivities, followed by concerts with Bret Michaels and special guest Firehouse.

On Saturday, July 15, Closing Ceremonies with Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben will be followed by Choctaw Social Dancing and



Jeremy Camp

Bret Michaels

FireHouse

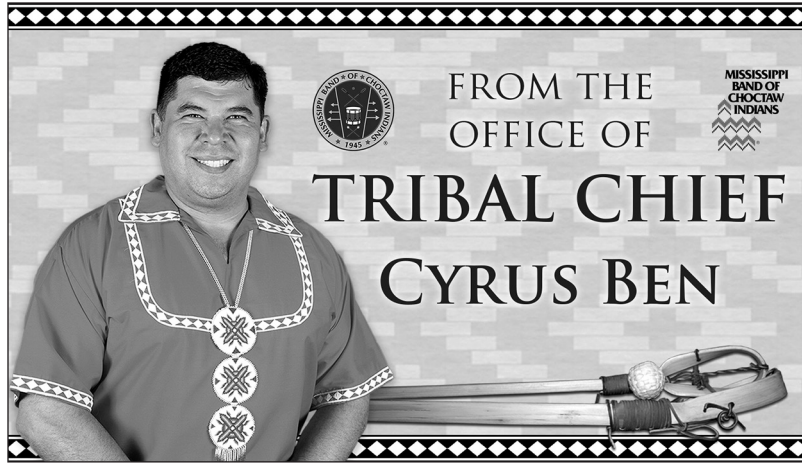
Chase Rice

a special Tribal band feature. Following that will be Chase Rice in concert.

Make plans now to celebrate four days of fun, social celebrations, cultural activities, arts and crafts demonstrations, stickball tournaments, and professional nightly entertainment

in beautiful Choctaw, Miss. Competitions such as Iron Warrior, Cornhole, and REZ RUN are back this year too!

Follow and like Choctaw Indian Fair on Facebook for updates or visit www.ChoctawIndianFair.com.



Halito!
 Spring has arrived and the temperatures the last few weeks have already been unseasonably spring-like. While the warmer weather has been a welcome change, there have been instances when the higher temperatures have created an environment for severe storms that have impacted our region.
 Some areas of our state are still recovering from the devastating effects of these powerful storms. Please, always be

weather-aware and have a plan of action prepared in case severe weather becomes a threat to you and your loved ones.
 I want to offer my thanks to our area colleges for their recent recognitions of Native American heritage and especially for honoring our outstanding athletes.
 The University of Mississippi (Ole Miss) recognized Native American heritage on Sunday, February 19th (before their basketball game against South Carolina) and on Saturday, April 8th (before their softball game against Kentucky).

On Tuesday, April 4, 2023, Chief Ben traveled to Oxford, Miss., as part of his Tribal education & awareness tour. He visited the University of Mississippi (UM) Law School & met with the faculty of the Center for Air & Space Law & provided an overview of the Tribe & discussed how indigenous traditions & cultures could be important to the sustainable future for humanity on Earth & in space. While on campus, Chief Ben met with UM Chancellor Glenn Boyce (pictured left) & tribal member Kara Edwards (pictured right) of the Standing Pine community. She is currently a law student & part of the Air & Space Law program & first recipient of the Indigenous Air & Space Law scholarship at Ole Miss. Kara will receive an award for the "Flight Path" program she is currently in to earn her LLM (Master of Laws) on top of her JD (Juris Doctorate) degree. An LLM is a prestigious degree on top of a JD degree & with this degree, Kara will become the world's first indigenous space lawyer. Chief Ben ended his tour with a visit to The Rotary Club of Oxford to discuss the history, culture, & government of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians.

Mississippi State University (MSU) made their recognition during pre-game activities on

Saturday, March 18th, prior to their softball game against South Carolina.

Also, I was honored to attend East Central Community College's (ECCC) softball game

CHOCTAW COMMUNITY NEWS

The Choctaw Community News is available at no charge upon request. Donations to help cover the cost of printing, mailing are welcomed. Correspondence should be addressed to:

**COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM
 P.O. BOX 6010
 CHOCTAW, MS 39350
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Communications Photographer

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Communications Photographer

Items of interest to the local & Native American community are welcomed. Letters to the editor should be signed; we reserve the right to edit material.





DOECE March Madness Winners

Congratulations to Conehatta Head Start's Room 6 "Lil Giants" (left) as they defeated the Pearl River Head Start's Room 6 "Sonic All-Stars" 12-10 to win this year's Department of Early Childhood Education (DOECE) March Madness Basketball Tournament

championship on Friday, March 24, at the Pearl River Community Gymnasium. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben & 2022-2023 Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Nickey were on hand to congratulate the teams & present them with their trophies & medallions.

against Co-Lin on Wednesday, March 29th to throw out the first pitch.

It was awesome to see some of our Choctaw youth who are a valuable part of their college's sports teams be recognized --- Asa Jimmie, Ole Miss girls basketball manager; Aspen Wesley, MSU Softball; Shante Beaulieu, ECCC Softball; Leia Bell, Co-Lin Softball; and Tenly Grisham, Ole Miss Softball. Jalia Lassiter, a member of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians, was also recognized at the Ole Miss pre-game activities.

I'm thankful to our Choctaw Tribal Schools students who attended the Ole Miss and MSU recognitions and sang the National Anthem in our native Choctaw language. Thank you to everyone who helped us make these recognition programs a success!

Congratulations to our area high school softball, baseball, powerlifting, golf and track seniors on a job well done in their respective sports. Participating in any type of sport takes commitment, hard work, and teamwork. These athletes shine brightly because they have pushed back against challenges, criticism, and even at times self-doubt, and they have so much passion for what they do. Congratulations again on a

job well done! My congratulations to CCHS Powerlifting Lady Warrior Jamie McCarty on earning second place in her division at the State Championships, and CCHS Powerlifting Warrior Andrew Cotton on earning fourth place in his division. These two athletes represented their team, coaches, school and

Tribe well. We are very proud of you, Jamie and Andrew! Congratulations also goes to our Choctaw Central High School Winter Guard. They are the 2023 Mississippi Indoor Association Bronze Medalists. They have truly earned this high honor as it takes a lot of long hours, practice and dedication to learn the movements

and work as a team. Pearl River Resort recently held the Grand Reopening of Dancing Rabbit Inn and the Dancing Rabbit Golf Clubhouse. The Dancing Rabbit Inn was temporarily closed for renovations last fall. Renovations included completely

see **LETTER**, pg. 4



We offer our appreciation to Choctaw Fire/Rescue CFD members (Gabriel Bell, Choctaw Fire & EMA Director; Chris Simpson, EMA; Sgt. Bracey Bell; Sgt. Glen Dixon; & Firefighter Peyton Bell) who traveled to Rolling Fork as part of the Mississippi Task Force 2 team to assist with the aftermath of the EF-4 tornado on Friday, March 24, 2023. Pearl River Resort also generously donated pallets of bottled water to the Rolling Fork area. The CFD (Liaison Officer Marco Patrick & Probationary Firefighter Chayton York) also transported two pallets of drinking water from the Pearl River Resort to Amory, Miss., as part of an ongoing effort to assist victims.

LETTER continued from page three

remodeling the lobby and 140 guestrooms and suites, adding stylish furnishings, Tribal inspired décor, new flooring, plush carpeting, and modern light fixtures throughout the Inn.

The Dancing Rabbit Golf Clubhouse also received an extensive facelift, with new exterior paint, wood decking, and fresh landscaping. Inside the clubhouse, guests will find everything from refreshed men’s and women’s locker rooms, to an updated kitchen, bar, restaurant, second-floor commons, and eight guest suites.

The Dancing Rabbit Clubhouse and Dancing Rabbit Inn officially reopened on Monday, April 3rd.

Congratulations to two of our own young Tribal members, Lexi Rodriguez and Destinee Williams, who recently competed at the Miss Mississippi Teen USA Pageant at Pearl River Resort.

I also would like to extend my best wishes to two other young Chahta Ohoyo and former Choctaw Indian Princesses Shemah Crosby and Alice Keats, who participated in the Miss Indian World Pageant at the Gathering of Nations Pow Wow in Albuquerque, New Mexico. I am proud to see our Tribal members following their

dreams beyond our Tribal borders.

The 73rd edition of the Choctaw Indian Fair is shaping up to be one of the best ones yet. We were excited to announce our nightly Main Stage entertainment recently. As Tribal Chief, I host opening and closing ceremonies, on Wednesday, July 12th and Saturday, July 15th, respectively. As is tradition, we will have the annual Choctaw Indian Princess Pageant on Wednesday night after opening ceremonies.

Our concert series begins with Jeremy Camp on Thursday, July 13th and continues with Bret Michaels and Firehouse on Friday, July 14th. We close our series with a Special

Tribal Band Feature and Chase Rice on Saturday night. We will have more details to come, so please check out our website at www.choctawindianfair.com or like our Choctaw Indian Fair Facebook page for the latest information.

Despite all of the accomplishments throughout our tribal lands that we are seeing, there is still more to be done. Despite the Pandemic we were able to achieve many things and lay the groundwork for much more. In the past year that groundwork is allowing more to come to fruition.

We will have some upcoming ground breakings on projects that will focus on our infrastructure needs. One of those

projects, the Louisville Travel Plaza project, we will break ground for in order to open up new streams of revenue for our Tribe. For the latest updates on projects and events coming soon, please visit our Tribal Facebook page (Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians).

Thank you all for your support, prayers and encouragement. The Tribe’s continued success is our success, so let us all continue the work of moving our Tribe forward together.

Chi Yakokilih,

Cyrus Ben, Tribal Chief

CHA Breaks Ground for Tucker Housing Units

The Choctaw Housing Authority (CHA) held a groundbreaking for five new housing units in the Tucker community on Tuesday, April 11, 2023. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, Tribal Council members Vice Chief Ronnie Henry, Sr., Kent Wesley, Wilma Simpson-McMillan, Loriann Ahshapanek & Deborah Martin, 2022-2023 Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Nickey, Director of Administration Jason



Grisham, Development Division Director Sarah Medlock, CHA Executive Director Gary Ben & project partners were on hand to celebrate. Project contractor is IKBI, Inc., with site work being done by Willis Engineering. Johnny Wynne & Associates, P.A. is the architect. Project completion is expected in the Fall of 2023.

Ground Broken for TES Parking Space Addition

Ground was broken for the expansion of parking space adjacent to the Tucker Elementary School (TES) entrance on Tuesday, April 11, 2023. The expansion will greatly alleviate parking overflow issues during normal school hours, as well as during events such as the annual spring festival. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, Tribal Council members Vice Chief Ronnie Henry, Sr., Wilma Simpson-McMillan, Loriann Ahshapanek & Deborah Martin, 2022-2023 Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Nickey, TES Principal Dr. Greg



Carlyle, TES Princesses & Braves Zeitler Farmer, Ava Gibson, A’Ria McMillan, Dominic Willis, Greatone Ben & Cameron Gibson, Director of Administration Jason Grisham, Development Division Director Sarah Medlock, project partners, TES staff & community members gathered together to break ground for the expansion.



CHOCTAW TRIBAL COUNCIL RESOLUTION REVIEW

**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. Hundle, 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 con-*

tact 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 Addie Love in the Pearl River Community, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Resolution approves a one year Land Use Permit for Addie Love to develop a CBD business in the Pearl River Community. For*

see **RESOLUTIONS, pg. 6**

CANDIDATES continued from page one

John, and Davita McClelland.

BOGUE HOMA (4 candidates, 1 position) - incumbent Michael Briscoe, Kimo McCombs, Vernandall Nickey, and Berdie M. Steve.

CONEHATTA (9 candidates, 1 position) - Rodgrick Anderson, Eric Billy, Sr., Troy Chickaway, Rockky Isom, Roddy Nickey, Henry L. Shumake, Sr., Jesse Thomas, incumbent Timothy Thomas, Sr., and Wilburn Williamson, Jr.

PEARL RIVER (20 candidates, 1 position) - Norma Bacon, Melinda M. Ben, Robert D. Ben, Kevin Briscoe, Oretta Conrad, Robert Garcia, Jr., incumbent Nigel Gibson, William Daniel Isaac, Jimmy Jim, Alan Jimmie, Kyle John, James R. Johnson, Robert Dean Martin, Lola McMillan Parkerson, Austin Tubby, Lakeishia C. Wallace, Barbara Wesley, Christopher Lee Willis, Joshua T. Willis, and Raymond Willis, Jr.

RED WATER (11 candidates, 2 positions) - Ricky L. Anderson, Sr., Teri Anderson, Darian Blake Edwards, Tia Grisham, incumbent Richard T. Isaac, Samuel John, Randall Shane Shumake, Anthony Steve, Jr., Valarie Lynn Sutton, Jeremy Wesley, and Michael A. Willis.

STANDING PINE (5 candidates, 1 position) - Jaric Anderson, Sr., Jonathan Denison, Benjamin Farve, Ashley Primer, and incumbent Richard Sockey.

TUCKER (6 candidates, 1 position) - Brian Davis, incumbent Wilma Simpson-McMillan, Layla Terese Taylor, Kevin Taylor, Sr., Ashland Nicole Willis, and Dorothy Bell Wilson.

Registered Tribal voters will cast their ballots on Tuesday, June 6, from 8:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. This year, the new location for each community polling site will be at their respective COVID Emergency Relief Facility (CERF) building.

Tribal members 18 years of age or older who have not yet registered to vote may register at the Tribal Election Office. See Mavis H. Hickman. If you do not register to vote on or before 5:00 p.m., Friday, May 5, 2023, you cannot vote in the June 6 election. If you have already registered to vote, you do not need to register again, unless you have moved to another community since the day of your registration.

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

Request for mailed absentee ballots must be submitted in writing to the Tribal Election Committee at the Tribal Election Office no later than 12:00 noon on Wednesday, May 17, 2023. Requests for mailed

absentee ballots received after this date and time will not be honored.

Walk-in absentee ballot requests shall be submitted in writing to the Tribal Election Committee at the Tribal Election Office starting on Thursday, May 18, 2023, through 12:00 noon on the day before the election. Document of proof supporting the walk-in absentee ballot request is mandatory.

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

For more information, please contact the Tribal Election Committee (Berdie John, Chairperson; Wonda McMillan, Member; or Amy Pauls, Member) at one of the following numbers: 601-650-7475, 601-650-7468, 601-650-1507; or FAX 601-389-2252. You may also contact the committee by writing to:

Office of Tribal Election
Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
P.O. Box 6052 (for mailing) or
101 Industrial Road (physical address)
Choctaw, MS 39350

Chairpersons of the eight Local Election Committees, who are officially appointed to conduct elections in their respective community, may also be contacted. The Choctaw Tribal Election Code is available at the MBCI website at www.choctaw.org.

RESOLUTIONS continued from page five

more information, please contact the Office of Economic Development.

RESOLUTION CHO 23-042(B), approving a Land Use Permit for Brandon Mitch in the Tucker Community, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Resolution approve a one year Land Use Permit for Brandon Mitch to build a single-family home in the Tucker Community. For more information, please contact the Office of Economic Development.*

RESOLUTION CHO 23-043(B), approving a Land Use Permit for Sonya Monk & Delvin Monk in Henning, Tennessee, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Resolution approves a one year Land Use Permit for Sonya & Delvin*

Monk to build a single-family home in Henning, Tenn. For more information, please contact the Office of Economic Development.

RESOLUTION CHO 23-044(B), approving a Land Use Permit for Randy Anderson in the Conehatta Community, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

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

RESOLUTION CHO 23-045(B), approving an Agricultural Lease in the Conehatta Community, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Resolution approves a one year agricul-*

tural lease for Randy Anderson to develop a vegetable garden in the Conehatta Community. For more information, please contact the Office of Economic Development.

RESOLUTION CHO 23-046(B), approving a Land Use Permit for Shannon Keats in the Pearl River Community, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Resolution approves a one year Land Use Permit for Shannon Keats to develop a garden in the Pearl River Community. For more information, please contact the Office of Economic Development.*

RESOLUTION CHO 23-047(B), approving a Land Use Permit for Shannon Keats in the Pearl River Community, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

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

RESOLUTION CHO 23-048, authorizing the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians to apply for treatment as a State for the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act & Safe Drinking Water Act to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, was ADOPTED- 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *Indian Tribes that are treated as States for the purpose of the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act & Safe Drinking Water Act have authority to regulate air quality, water quality & public water systems & are eligible to receive Federal funding to develop & implement their regulations. For more information, please contact the Office of Environmen-*

tal Protection.
RESOLUTION CHO 23-049, authorizing a Distribution 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*

continued next page



WORLD SERIES STICKBALL
MISSISSIPPI CHOCTAW

EXHIBITION GAMES

FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IN THIS YEAR'S
NORTH vs. SOUTH
WOMENS 35-OVER & MENS 50-OVER
EXHIBITION GAMES,
PLEASE SEE AMANDA BELL AT THE CHAHTA IMMI CULTURAL CENTER (CHOCTAW TOWN CENTER) TO SIGN UP WITH YOUR RESPECTIVE TEAM.

NORTH TEAM CONSISTS OF:
PEARL RIVER, RED WATER, BOGUE CHITTO, & CRYSTAL RIDGE COMMUNITIES

SOUTH TEAM CONSISTS OF:
STANDING PINE, CONEHATTA, TUCKER, & BOGUE HOMA COMMUNITIES

DEADLINE TO SIGN UP IS **MONDAY, JUNE 5, 2023!**

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT
WSS COMMISSIONER THOMAS BEN AT 601-504-3249

Tribe Announces \$19 Million in USDA Rural Grant Funding

CHOCTAW, Miss. - On Thursday, April 13, 2023, Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben welcomed U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Under Secretary for Rural Development Xochitl Torres Small and State Director for USDA Rural Development Dr. Trina N. George to discuss issues affecting the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (Tribe), including the importance of having safe drinking water in all Tribal communities.

Highlighting Tribal, State and Federal shared commitment to addressing such needs, Chief Ben was pleased to announce the Tribe's receipt of an important \$19 million grant award from USDA to construct a new water treatment facility in the Pearl River Community.

"Clean water is an essential resource to sustain healthy, thriving communities. Sources of clean water must be accessible, trustworthy and durable for citizens of all ages and generations. Our Tribe in rural, east central Mississippi, is reliant upon the necessary infrastructure available in modern, well equipped water treatment facilities, and we gratefully ac-

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.

knowledge and receive the Federal grant award from USDA to build upon and improve our communities' clean-water infrastructure," said Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben.

"Safe and reliable access to water is a key component of healthy rural communities," said Dr. George. "Tribal communities have a rich history in the state of Mississippi, and this investment represents the Biden-Harris Administration and USDA's ongoing commitment to ensuring they have access to the resources needed to improve the quality of life in their communities and have access to future economic opportunities. We're thrilled that we were able to provide this assistance and look forward to continuing the great relationship we have with the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians."



Pictured, from left to right, are Nichole Barnes, USDA Rural Development Deputy State Director; Keith Heard, Tribal Lobbyist; Sarah Medlock, MBCI Development Division Director; Dr. Trina George, USDA Rural Development State Director; Under Secretary Xochitl Torres Small, USDA; Tribal Chief Ben; Reggie Shumaker, MBCI Public Works Director; & Ricky Cook, MBCI Utilities - Management & Engineering Director.

The new facility will include a 1,400-gallon-per-minute water treatment plant, two 1,400-gallon-per-minute wells, and a 500,000-gallon elevated

water storage tank.

The newly planned facility will replace the Tribe's existing water treatment plant and two of its existing wells.

LOUISVILLE continued from page one

of Louisville community. We have a wonderful working relationship and as Tribal Chief for the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, it is a great moment for me that we can work together to collectively better provide for our people."

In addition to Tribal dignitaries, representatives from the City of Louisville, Gov-

ernor Tate Reeves' office, and Congressman Michael Guest's office were in attendance.

The Louisville Travel Plaza is a preliminary project name only. Chief Ben announced a Tribal-wide contest to give a permanent name to the new facility.

The 24/7 travel plaza will be

set on 18 acres of Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians reservation land, the Crystal Ridge community, located in the city limits of Louisville.

The \$25 million dollar project is expected to employ approximately 100 people. The target opening is the Summer of 2024.



Pictured above is a rendering of the Louisville Travel Plaza project.

Pearl River Resort Completes Two Remodel Projects

Pearl River Resort, owned and operated by the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, held two reopening ceremonies on Friday, March 31, 2023. The celebrations surrounded the remodel and reopening of Danc-

ing Rabbit Inn and The Dancing Rabbit Golf Clubhouse.

The Dancing Rabbit Inn temporarily closed for renovations in the Fall of 2022. Employees were reassigned to the Golden Moon and Silver Star hotels

while the work was completed.

Renovations included completely remodeling the lobby and 140 guestrooms and suites, adding stylish furnishings, Tribal inspired décor, new flooring, plush carpeting, and modern light fixtures throughout the Inn.

The Dancing Rabbit Golf Clubhouse also received an extensive facelift. The new exterior paint, wood decking, and

fresh landscaping will greet visitors to the clubhouse.

Inside the clubhouse, guests will find everything from refreshed men's and women's locker rooms, to an updated kitchen, bar, restaurant, second-floor commons, and eight guest suites.

The Dancing Rabbit Clubhouse and Dancing Rabbit Inn reopened and welcomed guests beginning Monday, April 3rd.



Tribal Chief & Choctaw Resort Development Enterprise Chairman Cyrus Ben, Tribal Council members, Resort & other Tribal officials, & the 2022-2023 Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Nickey were on hand to celebrate the reopening of the two properties on Friday, March 31.

Ground Broken for Bok Homa Casino Expansion

On Thursday, March 9, 2023, Bok Homa Casino and Tribal officials broke ground on a new expansion project. Bok Homa Casino will be expanded by 7,000 square feet, which will feature a new dine-in restaurant called Red Creek, with a capacity to

serve 60 patrons, and a larger Sportsbook location in the planned Timeout Lounge. Tribal Chief and Choctaw Resort Development Enterprise Chairman Cyrus Ben shared remarks and congratulated the casino on a great opportunity for the Bogue Homa community. Reigning 2022-2023 Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Raine Nickey and Tribal Council members were in attendance to witness this monumental occasion for the Bok Homa Casino. Officials say construction is expected to take 10 months and hope to be completed and ready in time for the 13th anniversary celebration of its initial opening.



Bok Homa CASINO EXPANSION STARTING 2023

CHC Adds New Ambulance

The Choctaw Health Center (CHC) recently added a new ambulance to the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) fleet. The ambulance is one of two vehicles ordered to help replace older fleet vehicles. The new ambulance is customized and, like the other fleet models at CHC, marks significant improvement with automatic stretcher lifts, making it easier for EMTs to lift patients in & out of the ambulance. The vehicle has new features that will benefit both patients & EMS personnel. The ambulance is a 2022 Type 2 FR Conversion Dodge RAM 25000 Promaster. This new style van Type 2 ambulance will be utilized primarily as a Non-Emergency EMS Transport vehicle. The second ambulance on order is another frontline Type 1 ambulance, like in the current CHC EMS fleet. Pictured, from left to right, are: Ryan Chickaway, Paramedic; Daniel Connelly, Paramedic; George



Meaders, EMT; Michael Addy, EMT; Tod Harrison, CHC Training Coordinator/Paramedic; Larry Parks, EMT, Chris Watkins, CHC EMS Supervisor; & Mary Harrison, Interim CHC Director.



SDPI Hosts 2 Mile Walk/Run

The 18th Annual Spring Into Fitness 2-Mile Fun Walk/Run was held on Saturday, March 18, 2023, at the parking lot of Geyser Falls Water Theme Park and on Blackjack Road in the Pearl River Community. This annual event was hosted by the Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI). Despite the cold temperature, participants came out to run, jog, or walk their two miles in support of a healthy lifestyle. Thank you to the SDPI staff & volunteers who put together this great event!

Dixon Retires from CHC

Angeline Dixon recently celebrated her retirement after 17 years of service to the Choctaw Health Center (CHC) as a Rural Health Clinic Clerk at the Red Water Clinic.



During a reception, she was presented gifts from the CHC Administration as family, friends, and staff congratulated her & wished her well in her future endeavours.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT (HIM)

Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
601-389-4180 or 601-389-4187

At your next visit to CHC, please provide to HIM:

- Certificate Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) or
- Tribal ID or
- Tribal Descendant Documentation

We are working to update information in our system and we would sincerely appreciate your cooperation concerning the matter.

We continue to value you as our patient and we strive to provide the best health care service possible for you.

We are delighted to announce CHC will be incorporating a new Electronic Health Record system in the near future. This transition to CERNER will enable our users a more dynamic platform that will evolve as our healthcare industry needs change.

COMING SOON!
IN OCT. 2023

MORE DETAILS TO COME

Mosquito Spraying Schedule Released

The Choctaw Health Center Environmental Health Services department will be conducting monthly Ultra Low Volume (ULV) mosquito spraying in the Tribal communities during the hours of either 5:00 a.m.-8:00 a.m. (dawn) or 5:00 p.m.-

8:00 p.m. (dusk). Please do not attempt to contact the driver directly.

Community-wide mosquito sprayings will be in operation from May through September of 2023. Schedule is subject to change due to adverse weather

conditions and unforeseen events.

SCHEDULE

- 1st Tuesday - Pearl River A) North of Highway 16 - Blackjack Road, Tribal Complex Road, Industrial Drive, James Billie Road, Frog Level Road, Goat Ranch Road, York Road, Roger Bell Road, & Isaac Lane.
- 1st Thursday - Pearl River B) South of Highway 16 - Oswald Road, Willis Road, Ball Park


Road, Lewis Road, Cemetery Road, Wolf Trail, Park Place, & Rolling Hills.

- 2nd Tuesday - Red Water.
 - 2nd Thursday - Tucker.
 - 3rd Tuesday - Bogue Chitto & Crystal Ridge.
 - 3rd Thursday - Conehatta.
 - 4th Tuesday - Standing Pine.
 - 4th Thursday - Bogue Homa.
- For more information, contact Jeremaine Jim or Joshua M. Weaver, Ph.D., at the CHC Environmental Health Services department at (601)389-4142.

Choctaw Health Center

Wound Care Clinic

Dr. Robert Foose, Dr. Nathan Randall, and Kimberly Eldridge, FNP



CHC is pleased to announce the arrival of the MolecuLight wound imaging system.

This system uses state of the art technology to identify and quantify the types of bacteria within a wound as well as accurately measure the size of the wound.

The MolecuLight DX


Uses an advanced digital camera that allows the user to map a wound accurately. This is important for documentation as well as for understanding the progress of a specific wound.

The camera has a florescent mode that shines a safe violet light on the wound causing over 29 different types of bacteria to light up. That information can be used by your provider to select and start antibiotics earlier and with greater success.

This all means healing wounds quickly with less complications and avoiding the horrible complications of amputations and long term hospitalization.

For more information, please call:
601-389-4304 / 4313

Monday-Friday
8:00am - 4:30pm



CTS Release Honor Roll

The Choctaw Tribal Schools recently announced students named to the third 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.

Arlando Bigpond, Kaleyah Denson, Hayden Dixon, Khalani Isaac, Hushtoposhik McMillan, Kleilali Dixon, Zayelynn Nickey, Ayame Jim, Alston Meely, & Kemper Stafford.

CHOCTAW CENTRAL MIDDLE SCHOOL CHIEF'S LIST

Gracie Butler, Anslee Shumake, Callie Tubby, Kelli Williams, & Nalayna Willis.

PRINCIPAL'S LIST

(7th Grade) - Beauwy Bell, Osi Chapman, Devion Davis, Cadrian Gibson, Jayshaun Hardy, Dracetin Isaac, Dacey Jefferson, Elijah Jimmie, Jalaya Routh, Ashton Stephens, Jayzee Wesley, & Brylas Willis.

(2nd Grade) - Kaycson Clemons, Kodchakron Billie, Braylon Clemons, Teyana Clemons, Jalanna Dixon, Kylus John, Ashlynn McMillan, Riley Isaac, Kaylee McMillan, Tamatoa Bald Eagle, Khyrii Cantrell, Jayce Isaac, Bryson John, Lane Willis, & Maydream York.

(3rd Grade) - Jaiyce'Yann Bell, Zaine Bell, Rainee Billy, Neyalih Dixon, Hazelin Joe, Shohmalali Dixon, & Neilani Thompson.

(4th Grade) - Kamarri Cantrell, A'mi Clemons, Kahlon Edwards, Anzaerius Huddleston, Traih'sin John, Iylah King, Payton Meely, Layla Willis, & Dawson Tubby.

(8th Grade) Mileena Bell, Hiahni Denson, Asante Johnson, Shastyn Lewis, Kailyn Perry, Bonnie Spivey, & Nakota Willis.

(5th Grade) - Kaylene Willis.

PRINCIPAL'S LIST

(1st Grade) - Piper Isaac, Beth Lewis, Adriel Mitch, Taurasi Sardina, Josie Wallace, Ethan Hickman, Remington Isaac, Zendaya Jefferson, Ashmariah McMillan, Za'liyah Moncriease, Kasey Nickey, Calvin Willis, Keyon Willis,

PEARL RIVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHIEF'S LIST

(1st Grade) - Jayden Anderson, Danario Bell, Kysen Dixon, Brooke Nickey, Kaison Thomas, Zayvier Wesley-Gamarra, Carly Baker,

continued next page

Are You Misusing Antibiotics?

Often times, people mistake viral infections for bacterial infections. Antibiotics are NOT effective at treating viral infections, including:



- Cold or runny nose
- Flu (Influenza)
- Bronchitis
- Upper respiratory infections
- Stomach flu
- COVID-19
- Whooping cough

Antibiotics can be lifesavers.

But if misused, they can cause serious harm and might not be useful in the future. They can strip your body of good bacteria, and also lead to antibiotic resistance. This means infections in your body can withstand antibiotic medication, making it difficult to treat.

Precautions to prevent antibiotic misuse

- Confirm with your doctor that your infection is bacterial before starting antibiotics
- Antibiotics should only be taken exactly as prescribed- never share or take leftover medication

CTS District Lower Science, Engineering Fair Winners Announced



CLASS I WINNERS • GRADES K-3RD

Tucker Elementary School hosted the Choctaw Tribal Schools' Lower Science & Engineering Fair on Friday, March 10, 2023. One hundred seven projects were entered representing Conehatta (CES), Pearl River (PRES), Tucker (TES), & Standing Pine Elementary Schools (SPES).

First through third place winners will advance to the Region V Lower Science & Engineering Fair, to be held at Mississippi State University in Starkville on Wednesday, April 26. The following winners from their respective grades & categories

are listed below.

CLASS I KINDERGARTEN GROUPS

1st place, Charlotte Willis (SPES); 2nd place, Sydney Isaac (PRES); 3rd place, Elijah Holi-field (PRES); Honorable Mention, Kayden Flores (CES).

FIRST GRADE

Biochemistry - 1st place, Josie Wallace (PRES); 2nd place, Ethan Hickman (PRES).

Inorganic Chemistry - 1st place, Jashayen Bell (SPES); 2nd place, Grayson Billy (TES); 3rd place, Garilayne Willis (SPES).

Earth & Environmental Sciences - 1st place, Malante York, (PRES).

Plant Sciences - 1st place, Jayston Fields-Amos (TES); 2nd place, Anakin Mitch (TES).

SECOND GRADE

Biochemistry - 1st place, Rhyus York (TES);

Inorganic Chemistry - 1st place, Riley Isaac (PRES); 2nd place, Kaylee McMillan (PRES); 3rd place Mylee Ben (PRES); Honorable Mention, Hunter Sam (SPES).

Organic Chemistry - 1st place, Keilani Gibson (TES).

Earth & Environmental Sci-

ences - 1st place, Jayce Isaac (PRES); 2nd place, Caylea Frazier (PRES).

Physics & Astronomy - 1st place, Dominic Willis (TES); 2nd place, Kodchakom Billie (PRES).

THIRD GRADE

Inorganic Chemistry - 1st place, Gabrielle Nixon (SPES); 2nd place, Carter York (TES).

Organic Chemistry - 1st place, Madelynn Jimmie (PRES); 2nd place, Adelyn Daniel (PRES); 3rd place, Daivian Hickman (PRES).

see **SCIENCE FAIR, pg. 12**

Chase Clemons, Crimson Robinson, Semaycelynn Bell, Oliver Carr, Everly Evans, & Amariann Wishork.

(2nd Grade) - Kinya Bell, Xaiden Leach, Hamaya Morris, Kaiseton Shell, Jaylon Williams, Kyler Willis, Baylan Buffalomeat, Braycen Clemons, Tyson Gibson, Kason Isaac, Kaeden Marshall, Isaiah Mingo, Mylee Ben, Dakaizlee Clemons, Ahlaric Hernandez, Christopher Barojas, J'Hazlyn Bell, Garrett Johnson, & Krymsen McMillan.

(3rd Grade) - Okshomichi Kyree Bell, Najsali Cuellar, Chayo Dixon, Saniyah Nick-ey, Lyla Tubby, Rudell Cotton, Alice Ferris, Kolvin Isaac, Madalynn Jimmie, Hazzen Thomas, Charlee Wallace, Bryden Lewis, Mariah McBeath, Elilee Steve, Nolan Willis, Adelyn

Daniel, Cayzrea Stoliby, Anna'Laiya Tubby, Dreynic Williams, Eva Willis, & Kawhi York.

(4th Grade) - Kazden Ben, Andym Bigpond, Paeton Gibson, Kady Hickman, Ladarian Bell, Peyton Eaves, Felicianna Orduno, Jaciryn Vaughn, Natanya Allen, Aloni Dan, Jaythan Dixon, Deonte Isaac-Carter, Hunter John, Alicia Stell, Manali'i Bald Eagle, Chance-ton Shoemake, Annaleigh Tubby, & D'Anthony Willis.

(5th Grade) - Caybrianna Hickman, Karyton Hudson, Kaecetyn Williams, Sanaeya Martin, Taven Tubby, Chase Bell, Amaya Isaac, Aryanna Mitch, Jaiycelynn Bell, Paizley Dixon, Tylasia Hughes, & Mylan McCallum.

(6th Grade) - Sherman Billie, Wyatt Chickaway, Kairyn

Dixon, Trinity Frazier, Braely Isaac, Khanzlee Richardson, Riley Meely, Ameer Stell, Ja'Leiah Vaughn, Trina Wilson, Arizona Willis, & Sez Willis.

TUCKER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHIEF'S LIST

(1st Grade) - Necie Charlie, Kayzlee McMillan, & Cliff Willis, Jr.

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

(3rd Grade) - Carter York.

(4th Grade) - Paycen Comby, Mylah Gibson, Gabriel Hilario, & Crisney Perry.

(5th Grade) - Madelynn Henry, Lindraya King, Leim McMillan, Kaidence Thompson, & Elliana Tubby.

(7th Grade) - Bryceton McMillan, Braeson Sam, & Esia-

son Willis.

PRINCIPAL'S LIST

(2nd Grade) - Kennedi Fields, Taylia Henry, & Faithlyn Mingo.

(3rd Grade) - Nathaniel Amos, Arialyn Henry, Ja'sia Henry, Keianna Lewis, Liam Thomas, & Raijen Willis.

(4th Grade) - Braydon Farmer, A'Ria McMillan, Bella Steve, & Karsyn Thomas.

(5th Grade) - Greatone Ben, Arianna Charlie, Taylee Charlie, Pepper Jones, Esmaralda Mingo, Damari Thomas, & Claire Willis.

(6th Grade) - Logan Denson, Vashunti McMillan, Damarii Sam, & Kollier Thomas.

(7th Grade) - Marshall Mingo & Tamiyah York.

(8th Grade) - Colsen Stell & Canyon Tubby.

Students Participate in Region V Science, Engineering Fair

Nineteen students from the Choctaw Tribal Schools participated in the Region V Upper Science & Engineering Fair at Mississippi State University in Starkville on March 7, 2023.

Students who placed 1st-3rd place in grades 7-12 advanced to the 2023 Mississippi Science & Engineering State Fair on March 31, at the University of Mississippi in Oxford.

The following students placed in the Region V Upper Science & Engineering Fair.

Biochemistry, 7th grade - 1st place, Tamiyah York, Tucker Elementary School (TES);

Inorganic Chemistry, 7th

grade - 3rd place, Osi Chapman, Choctaw Central Middle School (CCMS);

Earth & Environmental Sciences, 6th grade - 1st place, Vashunti McMillan, (TES);

Biomedical & Health Sciences, 8th grade - 3rd place, Marlee Chino, (TES);

Physics & Astronomy, 6th grade - 2nd place, Miley Flores, Conehatta Elementary School;

7th grade: 1st place, Emma Thomas, (TES);

Engineering Mechanics, 8th grade - 2nd place, Annabelle Anderson, (TES), 3rd place, Jerinell Jefferson, (TES);

Math & Systems Software,

6th grade - 1st place, Cameron Gibson, (TES), 2nd place, Kollier Thomas; 7th grade - 1st place, Xanaeya Chapman, (TES);

Emma Thomas (TES) was the recipient of a special award from the Association for Women Geoscientists.

The following students ad-

vanced to the 2023 Mississippi Science & Engineering State Fair: (TES) Tamiyah York, Marlee Chino, Emma Thomas, Annabelle Anderson, Jerinell Jefferson, Xanaeya Chapman, & (CCMS) Osi Chapman.

Congratulations to our winners!

BETA Club Members Place at State Convention

Members of the Choctaw Tribal School's Elementary & Junior Beta Clubs attended the 31st Annual Junior Beta Convention at the Mississippi Coast Coliseum & Convention Center in Biloxi, March 7-9,

2023. Congratulations to Tribal students who placed in their respective categories in the elementary or junior division,

continued next page

SCIENCE FAIR continued from page eleven

Earth & Environmental Sciences - 1st place, Mariah McBeath (PRES); 2nd place, Kamea Mitch (PRES).

Math & Systems Software - 1st place, Kaleb Farmer (TES).

Animal Sciences - 1st place, Hazelin Joe (PRES).

Biomedical & Health Sciences - 1st place, Renaya Farmer (TES).

Microbiology - 1st place, Keianna Lewis (TES).

Physics & Astronomy - 1st place, Jacaius Willis (TES); 2nd place, Kayden Thomas (CES).

Engineering Mechanics - 1st

place, James Polk (TES).

Class I Best of Fair - Gabrielle Nixon (SPES).

CLASS II

FOURTH GRADE

Inorganic Chemistry - 1st place, I'zden Charlie (SPES); 2nd place, Paycen Comby (TES); 3rd place, Bella Steve (TES); Honorable Mention, Milayla Shomo (SPES).

Organic Chemistry - 1st place, Jaciryn Vaughn (PRES).

Earth & Environmental Sciences - 1st place, Kahlon Edwards (PRES).

Biomedical & Health Scienc-

es - 1st place, A'Ria McMillan (TES); 2nd place, Mylah Gibson (TES).

Engineering Mechanics - 1st place, Anzaerius Huddleston (PRES); 2nd place, Karsyn Thomas (TES).

Mathematics & Systems Software - 1st place, Braydon Farmer (TES).

Robotics & Intelligent Machines - 1st place, Crisney Perry (TES).

FIFTH GRADE

Inorganic Chemistry - 1st place, Melody Frazier (SPES); 2nd place, Kaecetyn Williams (PRES); 3rd place, Caybrianna Hickman (PRES); Honorable Mention, Elvira Hickman (PRES).

Organic Chemistry - 1st place, Amaya Isaac (PRES).

Earth & Environmental Sciences - 1st place, Aymeri McMillan (TES).

Biomedical & Health Sciences - 1st place, Jay'ce Chickaway



From left, Best of Fair winners Gabrielle Nixon (Class I) & Jay'ce Chickaway (Class II), both of Standing Pine Elementary School.



CLASS II WINNERS • GRADES 4TH-5TH

(SPES); 2nd place, Elliana Tubby (TES).

Microbiology - 1st place, Pepper Jones (TES).

Physics & Astronomy - 1st place, Nevaih Garcia (PRES).

Engineering Mechanics - 1st place, Bella Millsaps (PRES).

Robotics & Intelligent Machines - 1st place, Leim McMillan (TES).

Plant Sciences - 1st place, Jalaia Joe (PRES); 2nd place, Greatone Ben (TES).

Class II Best of Fair - Jay'ce Chickaway (SPES).



Members of the Bogue Chitto Elementary BETA Club.



Members of the Conehatta Elementary BETA Club.

making them eligible for national competition. They are listed below.

Nylah Wilson, Red Water Elementary School (RWES), placed 1st in Black & White Photography (Elementary), 3rd in Fiber Arts (Elementary) & 2nd in Mixed Media (Elementary).

Konely Anderson, Conehatta Elementary School (CES), placed 2nd in Black & White Photography (Junior).

Jayden Hardy, Standing Pine Elementary School (SPES), placed 2nd in Digital Art (Elementary) & 5th in Painting (Elementary).

Ansen McMillan, SPES, placed 4th in Digital Art (Junior) & 5th in Hand Drawn Anime (Junior).

Carson Jimmie, CES, placed 1st in Fiber Arts (Junior).

Avery Hardy, SPES, placed 4th in Hand Drawn Anime (Elementary).



Members of the Pearl River Elementary BETA Club.

Ashlyn Killingsworth, RWES, placed 4th in Hand Drawn Anime (Junior).

Laiya Willis, Pearl River Elementary School (PRES), placed 4th & Raenise Jefferson, SPES, placed 5th in Jewelry (Elementary).

Ameryn Robinson, Bogue Chitto Elementary School (BCES), placed 2nd in Jewelry (Junior).

Zoei Grisham, RWES, placed 3rd in Onsite Art Painting (Elementary), 4th in Poetry (Elementary), & 3rd in Pottery (Elementary).

Nylah Wilson & Serena Tubby, RWES, placed 3rd in Performing Arts - Solo, Duo, Trio Vocalist (Elementary).

Standing Pine Elementary placed 4th in Portfolio (Elementary).

Delanie Wallace, BCES, placed 3rd in Quilling (Junior).

Pearl River Elementary School (Anzaerius Huddleston, Kamarii Cantrell, D'Anthony Willis, Kahlon Edwards) placed 4th in the Quiz Bowl Ele-

mentary Oral. Zuri Flint, RWES, placed 5th in Recyclable Art (Elementary) & 3rd in Sculpture (Elementary).

Josiah Wishork, RWES, placed 3rd in Recyclable Art (Junior) & 3rd in Woodworking (Junior).

Serena Tubby, RWES, placed 4th in Social Studies (4th Grade).

Red Water Elementary placed 3rd & Standing Pine Elementary placed 5th in Three Dimensional Design (Elementary).

Red Water Elementary placed 3rd in Three Dimensional Design (Junior).

Standing Pine Elementary placed 4th in Two Dimensional Design (Elementary).

Standing Pine Elementary placed 3rd in Two Dimensional Design (Junior).

In the local state competitions, Standing Pine Elementary placed 3rd & Red Water Elementary placed 4th in Club Trading Pin (Elementary).

Standing Pine Elementary placed 3rd, Conehatta Elementary placed 4th & Red Water Elementary placed 5th in Club Trading Pin (Junior).



Members of the Red Water Elementary BETA Club.



Members of the Standing Pine Elementary BETA Club.



Members of the Tucker Elementary BETA Club.

CCHS Seniors Honored during Academic Luncheon

Choctaw Central High School held this year's Senior Academic Awards Program during a luncheon on Friday, April 28, 2023, at the Silver Star Convention Center in Choctaw.

Many of the top-academically ranked seniors were honored as Tribal and school officials and family members were in attendance to celebrate their achievements.

The Top 10 Seniors were announced as Kaisen Edwards was named Valedictorian and Jaeon Johnson, Salutatorian. Rounding out the top 10 were Deshaylee Tubby, Demidrea

Stokes, Kaydee Taylor, Thomas Ben, Delycia Cunningham, Haygen Anderson, Landon Bounds, & Elliana Ben.

Jaeon Johnson was also honored for his highest ACT score of the senior class at 31.

Recognized for being named to the Honor Roll for the 2022-2023 school year were Audrianna Billy, Hunter Farve, Emaliyah King, Ethan Nanaeto, Jaleann Sockey, Quintin Sockey, Demidrea Stokes, Kaydee Taylor, Deshaylee Tubby, Elaine Tubby, Tigel Tubby, Gannon Vaughn, Keshahn Wallace, Cheyanne Weeks, & Peyton Willis.



CCHS TOP 10, from left to right, Demidrea Stokes, Landon Bounds, Delycia Cunningham, Thomas Ben, Kaydee Taylor, CCHS Principal Alaric Keams, Kaisen Edwards (Valedictorian), Jaeon Johnson (Salutatorian), Deshaylee Tubby, Haygen Anderson, & Elliana Ben.

Named to the National Technical Honor Society were Haygen Anderson, Tyra Billy, Delycia Cunningham, Catherine Jim, Jaleann Sockey, Kaydee Taylor, & Deshaylee Tubby.

Several seniors received honors bestowed by the U.S. Armed

Forces. The Mississippi Army National Guard honored enlistees Nickolas Farmer, Christy John, & Braxton Roach. Bishop Frazier & Mathias Johnson were recipients of Scholastic

continued next page



CCHS 2022-2023 Honor Roll members (in no order) Audrianna Billy, Hunter Farve, Emaliyah King, Ethan Nanaeto, Jaleann Sockey, Quintin Sockey, Demidrea Stokes, Kaydee Taylor, Deshaylee Tubby, Elaine Tubby, Tigel Tubby, Gannon Vaughn, Keshahn Wallace, Cheyanne Weeks, & Peyton Willis.



CCHS Principal Alaric Keams with National Technical Honor Society honorees Kaydee Taylor, Catherine Jim, Haygen Anderson, Tyra Billy, Delycia Cunningham, Jaleann Sockey, Deshaylee Tubby, & CCHS counselor Tammy Parkes.



Receiving honors from the U.S. military were, from left to right, Braxton Roach, Christy John, Nickolas Farmer (Mississippi Army National Guard), Bishop Frazier & Mathias Johnson with U.S. Marine Corps recruiter Sgt. Jonathan Glover.



Seniors receiving subject awards included, top row from left to right, Gannon Vaughn, Kaydee Taylor, Jathan Briscoe, Bonifacio Hernandez, Delycia Cunningham, Deshaylee Tubby, Rella Lopez, Quintin Sockey; bottom row, from left to right, Demidrea Stokes, Tradon Wilson, Peyton Willis, Colen Dixon, Tanyon Willis, Taiton Stokes, Bishop Frazier, & Tigel Tubby.



From left to right, CCHS Principal Keams with ECCC scholarship recipients Jaeon Johnson, Braylon Smith, Nickolas Farmer, Peyton Willis, Thomas Ben, Aison Jim, Deshaylee Tubby, Kaisen Edwards, Brydon Wesley-LaSarge, Taiton Stokes, & Dr. Marie Roberts, ECCC Executive Director of Enrollment Management.



From left to right, AMDA College of the Performing Arts scholarship recipient Saylor Gibson, Neumont College of Computer Science scholarship recipient Quintin Sockey, Millsaps College scholarship recipients Taiton Stokes, Brydon Wesley-LaSarge, with Millsaps Admissions Counselor Alyssa Navarre, & University of Mississippi scholarship recipient Jaeon Johnson.

Excellence Awards presented by the U.S. Marine Corps.

The following seniors were honored for achieving high marks in their respective subjects.

Gannon Vaughn - Advanced Welding.

Kaydee Taylor - Algebra III & English IV.

Jathan Briscoe - Agriculture Science II.

Bonifacio Hernandez - Band.

Delycia Cunningham - Choctaw History, Economics, & Health Science II.

Deshaylee Tubby - College & Career Readiness & Dual Credit English.

Rella Lopez - Compensatory English IV & Culinary Arts II.

Quintin Sockey - Digital Media Technology II.

Demidrea Stokes - Dual Credit College Algebra, Dual Credit College Trigonometry, & Personal Finance.

Tradon Wilson - Employability Skills & Employment English.

Peyton Willis - Engineering I & U.S. Government.

Colen Dixon - Engineering II.

Tanyon Willis - Job Skills Math & Work Study.

Taiton Stokes - Physics.

T.A.G - Bishop Frazier.

Tigel Tubby - Work Based Learning II.

The following seniors listed

below were named recipients of scholarships at their respective colleges and universities.

Jaeon Johnson received scholarships from the University of Mississippi and East Central Community College. He is also a recipient of the Philadelphia Rotary Club Scholarship.

Demidrea Stokes received an Education/Healthcare Scholarship.

Saylor Gibson is a scholarship recipient from the AMDA (American Musical and Dramatic Academy) College of the Performing Arts, Los Angeles, CA campus.

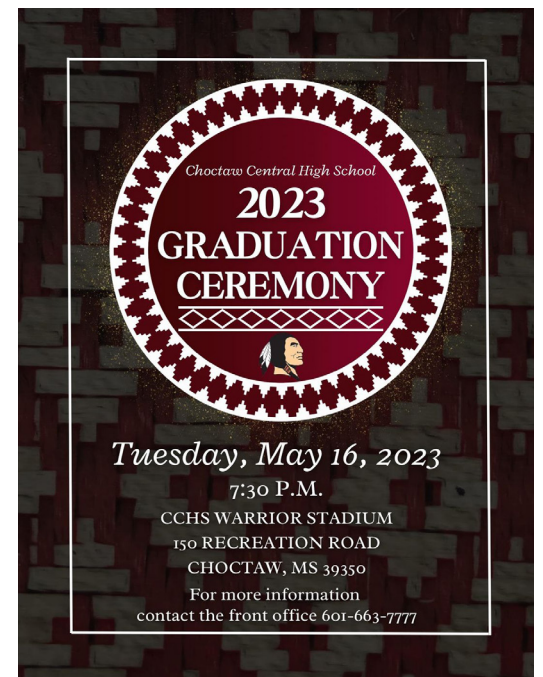
Quintin Sockey received a

scholarship from Neumont College of Computer Science in Salt Lake City, Utah.

East Central Community College scholarship recipients included Thomas Ben, Kaisen Edwards, Nickolas Farmer, Hunter Farve, Aison Jim, Cadee McMillan, Braylon Smith, Taiton Stokes, Deshaylee Tubby, Brydon Wesley-LaSarge, & Peyton R. Willis.

Taiton Stokes & Brydon Wesley-LaSarge were named recipients of schol-

arships from Millsaps College in Jackson, Miss.



NASA Sponsors Inaugural Magnolia Regional FIRST Robotics Competition in Laurel

Thirty-plus teams participated in the inaugural FIRST (For the Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics Magnolia Regional Competition in Laurel, Miss., on March 15-18, thanks, in large part, to NASA's Stennis Space Center, a lead sponsor for the event and a driving force in its launch.

Through the competition, NASA Stennis joined with NASA's Robotics Alliance Project

and co-sponsor Mississippi Power to bring to life all aspects of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) in the Magnolia state. The new regional event was a critical milestone to enhance engagement with robotics programs and the K-12 community across the southeast region of the U.S.

The event took place at the Magnolia Center in Laurel and offered students the opportuni-

ty to use STEM skills through teamwork and the excitement of competition. The goal is to have the Magnolia Regional expose more students in rural areas to STEM and become an annual FIRST Robotics Competition.

The regional competition featured two teams from Mexico, along with more than 30 high school teams from states,

ROBOTICS continued from page fifteen

including Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Texas, and Tennessee. It also served as a championship-qualifying event to send several teams to the world championship competition in Houston, Texas, in April.

The NASA Stennis workforce helped facilitate judges and volunteers throughout the four days of activities. Additionally, nine of the teams competing are considered NASA Stennis house teams, which means they have an ongoing relationship with NASA Stennis

and a NASA engineer as their team mentor.

In FIRST Robotics, high school teams receive identical parts kits and competition guidelines. They use the kits to design and build robots to compete in achieving competition goals.

For house teams, NASA Stennis engineers help students prepare for the competition. Students learn engineering and problem-solving skills that can be applied to the competition and real-world situations in the future. The teams each create

an identity, raise funds to meet goals, and work to promote STEM in their community.

The 2023 season challenge, "Charged Up" challenged teams to reimagine the future of sustainable energy. The theme called for teams



Choctaw Central High School's Chahta Warriors competed during the inaugural FIRST Robotics Magnolia Regional Competition in Laurel, Miss., March 15-18. The team earned the Judges' Award during the Magnolia Regional event, which recognizes a team's unique efforts and performance. As a NASA Stennis House Team, the Chahta Warriors have an ongoing relationship with NASA Stennis.

to explore ways to unlock the power of engineering to transform renewable energy and power a better future. For the regional competition, teams built and programmed industrial-sized robots to play an action-packed game on a themed field.

Congratulations to Choctaw Central High School's Chahta

Warriors as they earned the Judges' Award, which recognized a team's unique efforts and performance.

JOIN US FOR A



NEW STUDENT
★ *Orientation* ★

JUNE 13, 2023
PEARL RIVER CERF BUILDING
8:30AM-12:00PM

***FOR NEW APPLICANTS**
ENTERING 2023 SUMMER AND
FALL SEMESTER

PLEASE CONTACT YOUR ASSIGNED
ASSISTANT OR TRIBAL SCHOLARSHIP
OFFICE FOR QUESTIONS AT 601-650-7409

Tribal Scholarship
Fall Application Deadline

Fall Application and
Documents Due May 31st
NO EXCEPTIONS
OFFICE HOURS ON
MAY 22-31, 2023
8:00am-6:00pm

For questions, please contact the Tribal Scholarship
Program at 601-650-7409 or
email Scholarship.Program@choctaw.org



Anderson Attends Leaders Workshop

Choctaw Central High School Junior Keondrae Anderson was one of five students selected to represent the Central Electric Power Association at the 2023 Electric Cooperatives of Mississippi's Cooperative Leaders Workshop in Jackson, March 1-3. The workshop, funded by the local electric cooperatives, hosted 83 high school juniors from around the state as they participated in cooperative teambuilding exercises in a true cooperative learning atmosphere. Students had the honor of having breakfast with their state lawmakers, visit the State Capitol, attend meetings, and interact with officials. All participants will attend the national conference in Washington, D.C., this summer.



Educators Honored During Luncheon

The Choctaw Tribal Schools hosted an appreciation luncheon on Thursday, April 13, 2023, at the Career and Technical Education Center (C-TEC) in Choctaw. The event theme, "You are the Key to Our

continued next page



Administrator of the Year recipient RWES Principal Elter Wilson, left, & Chief Ben.

Success," honored teachers and teacher assistants from the outlying schools for their excellence in educational mentorship of Tribal students.

Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben and Director of Schools Dr. Randy Grierson were in attendance to celebrate and congratulate these outstanding educators. The students of C-TEC's Culinary Arts Program prepared and served the meal.

Red Water Elementary School Principal Elter Wilson was recognized as the 2022-2023 Administrator of the Year.

Teacher and Teacher Assistant of the Year honors were awarded to the following:

Bogue Chitto Elementary School - Linda Jackson, Teacher of the Year, & Magda Bell, Teacher Assistant of the Year.

Conehatta Elementary School - Shanna Ladd, Teacher of the Year, & Kristina Jim, Teacher Assistant of the Year.

Pearl River Elementary School - Allison Graham, Teacher of the Year, & Angela Farmer, Teacher Assistant of the Year.

Red Water Elementary School - Tammy Keen, Teacher of the Year, & Marinda Anderson, Teacher Assistant of the Year.

Standing Pine Elementary School - Beth Bowman, Teacher of the Year, & Daelin Cotton, Teacher Assistant of the Year.

Tucker Elementary School - Marsha Gressett, Teacher of the Year, & Casaja Phillips, Teacher Assistant of the Year.

Choctaw Central Middle School - Michael Thomas, Teacher of the Year, & Aline McMillan, Teacher Assistant of the Year.

Choctaw Central High School - Kimberly Donald, Teacher of the Year, & Caylin Jimmie, Teacher Assistant of the Year.

Teacher Assistant of the Year.
Career and Technical Education Center -

Susan Strickline, Teacher of the Year.
Congratulations to all the honorees.



BCES honorees, from left to right, Principal Ken McMullan, Teacher Assistant of the Year Magda Bell, Teacher of the Year Linda Jackson, & Chief Ben.



CES honorees, from left to right, Principal Brian Parkman, Teacher Assistant of the Year Kristina Jim, Teacher of the Year Shanna Ladd, & Chief Ben.



PRES honorees, from left to right, Principal Suzanne Hyatt, Teacher of the Year Allison Graham, Teacher Assistant of the Year Angela Farmer, & Chief Ben.



RWES honorees, from left to right, Principal Elter Wilson, Teacher of the Year Tammy Keen, Teacher Assistant of the Year Marinda Anderson, & Chief Ben.



SPES honorees, from left to right, Principal Linda Peoples, Teacher Assistant of the Year Daelin Cotton, Teacher of the Year Beth Bowman, & Chief Ben.



TES honorees, from left to right, Principal Dr. Greg Carlyle, Teacher Assistant of the Year Casaja Phillips, Chief Ben, & TES Teacher of the Year Marsha Gressett.



CCMS honorees, from left to right, Principal Lee Killen, Teacher of the Year Michael Thomas, Teacher Assistant of the Year Aline McMillan, & Chief Ben.



CCMS honorees, from left to right, Principal Alaric Keams, Teacher of the Year Kimberly Donald, Teacher Assistant of the Year Caylin Jimmie, & Chief Ben.



C-TEC honorees, from left to right, Administrator Sherry Tubby, Teacher of the Year Susan Strickline & Chief Ben.



CCHS Winterguard Wins Bronze at Competition

Congratulations to the Choctaw Central High School Winterguard as they claimed bronze medals at the 2023 Mississippi Indoor Association championships, Saturday, March 25, at the Mississippi Coliseum in Jackson. Choctaw Central competed in the Scholastic Regional A division. Reigning Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Nickey congratulated the team on their achievement & presented tokens of appreciation from the Office of Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben.



Powerlifters Advance to State Championships

Choctaw Central Lady Warrior & Warrior powerlifters Jamie McCarty & Andrew Cotton, both juniors, participated in the 2023 MH-SAA Class 4A State Powerlifting Championships at the Mississippi Coliseum in Jackson.

McCarty placed 2nd in her weight division in the girls championships on Friday, March 31. Her best lifts included: squat, 360 lbs.; bench press, 145 lbs.; & dead lift, 390 lbs., for a total of 895 lbs. She

set a new state record in Class 4A girls powerlifting in the 242 weight division for her dead lift of 390 lbs.

Cotton placed 4th in his

weight division in the boys championships on Saturday, April 1. His best lifts were: squat, 450 lbs.; bench press, 315 lbs.; & dead lift, 560 lbs.,



LEFT, Lady Warrior powerlifter Jamie McCarty placed 2nd with a total lift of 895 lbs. **RIGHT**, Warrior powerlifter Andrew Cotton placed 4th with a total lift of 1,325 lbs.



Jamie McCarty, left, with powerlifting coach Amanda Reed.



Andrew Cotton, right, with powerlifting coach Edward Routh. for a total of 1,325 lbs.

A luncheon was held on Friday, April 14, for CCHS powerlifters Jamie McCarty & Andrew Cotton as they competed in the 2023 MHSAA Class 4A State Powerlifting Championships. The luncheon, hosted by Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, was held at Stats Restaurant in the Silver Star Hotel & Casino. In attendance were members of the CCHS powerlifting teams & coaches as they also celebrated their successes this season.



SENIOR NIGHTS 2023

CCHS Hosts Senior Night

On Tuesday, April 4, Choctaw Central High School (CCHS) celebrated Senior Night for the Lady Warriors & Warriors powerlifting & baseball teams prior to the CCHS-Kosciusko baseball game at the Warrior Baseball Stadium. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben & his wife, TaRita, were in attendance to celebrate with the seniors, coaches, family, & friends. Among the seniors honored were: (Powerlifting) Catherine Jim, Emalayah King, Cheyanna Weeks, Reilly Denson, Nicholas Farmer, & Brydon Wesley; (Baseball) Haygen Anderson, Colen Dixon, Gage Lewis, Ian Lewis, Braylon McMillan, & Braylon Smith. Not pictured were Delycia Cunningham & Timothy York (powerlifting). Congratulations to all the seniors & best wishes for success in your future endeavors!



Senior Night Held at CCHS

Senior Night was held at the CCHS high school softball field on Tuesday, April 11, 2023, for the softball & golf teams. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben & his wife, TaRita, presented seniors with gifts of appreciation as family, friends, & coaches congratulated the seniors on their accomplishments. Honored were: (Softball) Delycia Cunningham, Malaka Morris & Tyra Billy; (Golf) Jaeon Johnson & Gannon Vaughn. Congratulations to all the senior Warriors & Lady Warriors & best wishes for success in your future endeavors!



Neshoba Hosts Softball Senior Night

Neshoba Central High School held Senior Night for softball on Tuesday, April 4 as Lady Rocket Kierstyn Thomas was honored for her great contributions on the softball field. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben & Director of Administration Jason Grisham were in attendance to celebrate with family members & coaches. Congratulations & best wishes in your future endeavors!

Routh named new Warriors Head Football Coach

Edward Routh was announced as the new head coach of the Choctaw Central High School Warriors football team on Thursday, March 9, 2023, in the CCHS library. Routh has been a member of the Choctaw Central coaching staff & Warriors' defensive coordinator for the past several years. Tribal & school officials offered their praise of Routh & his commitment to Tribal student-athletes. In attendance for the announcement were his family, friends, coaches, & members of the Warriors football team. Pictured left, Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, left, offers his congratulations to Coach Routh.



Softball Senior Night at Nanih Waiya

Nanih Waiya Attendance Center held their softball Senior Night on Tuesday, April 11. Lady Warrior Angel Clemmons was honored for her valuable contributions on the softball field as family members & supporters celebrated with Angel. Congratulations & best wishes on your future endeavors!



Hunter Signs with ECCC

On Friday, March 31, 2023, Neshoba Central High School Lady Rocket Shaylynn Hunter signed her letter of intent to further her basketball & academic career at East Central Community College in Decatur. Shaylynn was surrounded by her family, teammates, coaches, & supporters, including Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, Mrs. TaRita Ben & Tucker Councilman Demando Mingo. Congratulations & best wishes in your future endeavors!

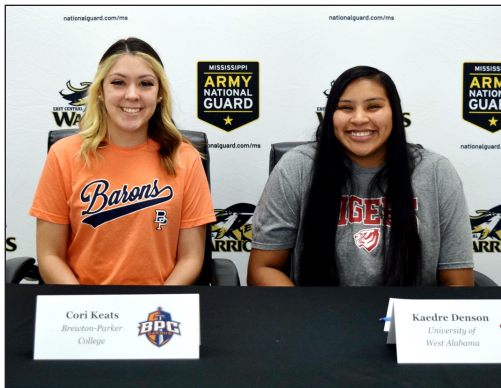


Smith Signs with ECCC

On Wednesday, April 5, 2023, Kemper County Lady Wildcat Rodezah Smith signed her letter of intent to further her basketball & academic career at East Central Community College in Decatur. During the ceremony, Rodezah was surrounded by her family, teammates, coaches, & supporters, including MBCI Director of Administration Jason Grisham, on behalf of the Office of Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben. Before the signing ceremony, Chief Ben personally congratulated Rodezah & offered words of encouragement on her signing day. Congratulations & best wishes in your future endeavors!

Keats, Denson to Play at Next Level

Congratulations to tribal members Cori Keats (left) & Kaedre Denson as they signed to continue their collegiate athletic & academic careers. Both are students at East Central Community College in Decatur & played basketball for the Lady Warriors.



Cori signed with Brewton-Parker College (Lady Barons) in Mount Vernon, GA, & Kaedre signed with the University of West Alabama (Lady Tigers) in Livingston, AL. We wish both ladies continued success in your future endeavours!



Leake Central Softball Senior Night

On Tuesday, April 18, 2023, Leake Central High School held Senior Night for softball as Choctaw youth Jamae Wright was honored for her contributions on the field & to her team. Family members & supporters celebrated with Jamae. Sam John, on behalf of the Office of Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, presented her with a gift of appreciation. Congratulations & best of luck in your future endeavors!

Williams Places 2nd in Wrestling

Congratulations to tribal member Cante'mazawin Williams, 11 years old, who recently placed 2nd in the South Dakota State Wrestling tournament in Aberdeen, SD (weight class B HWT). Cante' is the daughter of Doug Williams & granddaughter of the late Melba Jim Williams & the late Henry Williams. Her wrestling season ended with 9 pins, two 2nd-place finishes, & six 1st-place finishes. To get to the state wrestling championship, Cante' placed first at both district & regional tournaments.





Thames, Keats Receive Post-Season Honors

Congratulations to Jones College Bobcats basketball players Meloney Thames (pictured right) & Carly Keats as they earned post-season honors for the 2022-2023 season & helping Jones to its second straight NJCAA Elite Eight & seventh consecutive national tournament appearance. Both Thames & Keats were recognized on the All-Region 23 Team, along with teammates Sakya White & En'Dya Buford. Keats was the lone freshman to be selected all-region as she averaged 9.7 points while dishing out a team-high 104 assists & 35 steals. Thames was named to the 2022-23 NJCAA Division I All-America Team, Honorable Mention for the second straight year, along with teammates White & Buford. Thames averaged 15.9 points, 4.5 rebounds, 79 assists, & 32 steals during the season. Next season, both players will suit up for teams in the Southeastern Conference, Thames at Mississippi State & Keats at Arkansas.



MBCI Teams win NAYO Titles

ABOVE, Congratulations to **DEM BOYZ** as they won the 12-14 boys division of the 2023 Native American Youth Organization basketball tournament at the Seneca Nation Cattaraugus Territory in Irving, New York on April 6-8. Team members included JerMichael Stewart, Taijion Dixon, JQ Hughes, Sage Dixon, Josiah Wishork, Jervon Lewis, Brady Farve, Ty Briscoe, Jarral Sockey, Jadaleon Martinez, & Coach Benjamin Farve. **RIGHT,** Congratulations to **CHOCTAW ELITE** as they won the 15-17 girls division of the 2023 NAYO basketball tournament. Team members included Breyonce Jim, Mataeya Dixon, Audrianna Billy, Ceanna Willis, Kylinn Bell, Nataysia Willis, Kyli Truss, & Coach Luther Truss.



Baker, Smith take home Gillom, Howell Trophies

The Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame and Museum announced the winners of the 2023 Gillom and Howell Trophies on Monday, March 6 at the Golden Moon Casino VIP Room at Pearl River Resort in Choctaw.

The awards, sponsored by the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians and Pearl River Resort, are given annually to the most outstanding women's and men's college basketball players in Mississippi.

The Gillom Trophy, named for MS Sports Hall of Famer Peggie Gillom-Granderson, was presented to Angel Baker of the Ole Miss Lady Rebels. The 5'8" senior guard averaged 15 points and 5.4 rebounds per game.

The Howell Trophy, named for MS Sports Hall of Famer Bailey Howell, was presented to Tolu Smith of the Mississippi State Bulldogs. The 6'11" senior forward averaged 15 points and led the team in rebounds with 247 and blocks with 22.

"Both players put together outstanding seasons for winning teams," according to



From left to right are 2022-2023 Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Nickey, Gillom Trophy winner Angel Baker, Howell Trophy winner Tolu Smith, & Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben.

Bill Blackwell, Executive Director of the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame. "The voting was extremely close this year and we thank all of the media that submitted ballots to help select the winners."

Finalists for these prestigious awards are selected by a panel of statewide media who cover college basketball. This same panel was also tasked with selecting this year's winners.

The competition for the Gillom Trophy saw nine different players from five different schools receive votes. The top three vote totals were

continued next page

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received by Jessika Carter of Mississippi State University, Angel Baker of Ole Miss, and Domonique Davis of the University of Southern Mississippi.

The vote for the men was even more diverse with thirteen different players representing nine schools receiving votes. The three Howell Trophy finalists were Tolu Smith of Mississippi State University, Matthew Murrell of Ole Miss, and Austin Crowley of Southern Miss.

The Howell and Gillom Trophies are a part of the Outstanding Player Awards Series which also recognizes the top college athlete in football with the C Spire Conerly Trophy and the top college baseball player with the Ferriss Trophy, presented by MBCI and Pearl River Resort.

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Chicks, Chicks, & more Chicks!

Submitted by Kaiti Ford,
Tribal MSU Extension Agent

Students at Tucker Early Childhood Development Center were able to see chicks hatch in their classroom, thanks in part to the Poultry Hatch-out Program. In addition to seeing the chicks hatch, students also learned what an incubator was & taking care of the chicks in the classroom. There were various colors of chicks that hatched, & a great time was had by all!

The Poultry Hatch-out Program, offered by the Mississippi State University Extension Service, provides eggs for the classroom that is ready to be hatched within a few days. Everything



is provided in this program as participants look forward to learning & waiting for the chicks to be hatched in their classroom!

A big thank you to Ms. Karla, Ms. Jackie, & Ms. Sheena for allowing the Tribal MSU Extension Service to do this program with your students! If you are interested in implementing this program in your classroom, please call the Tribal MSU Extension Office at 601-656-9679, or email Ms. Kaiti Ford at kdf132@msstate.edu

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This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – SNAP. This institution is an equal opportunity provider. Mississippi State University is an equal opportunity institution.



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IN MEMORIAM

ABBIE MAE CHAPMAN

Funeral service for Abbie Mae Chapman, 65, was held on Friday, March 10, 2023, at the Bogue Homa CERF Building. Bro. Rich Hollingsworth officiated.



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

Mrs. Chapman passed away on March 5 at South Central Regional Medical Center in Laurel.

She was a Catholic by faith. She was previously employed

with Sanderson Farms before going to the MBCI Adult Education Program. She enjoyed fishing, going to yard sales & attending softball games to cheer on her family. She enjoyed watching the Choctaw Indian Princess Pageant & stickball games at the Fair. She was always joking with others.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Douglas & Maudie Lewis Nickey; daughters, Sonya Nickey & Leah Hamilton; & a son, Myron Chapman.

Survivors include her husband, Claude Chapman; daughter, Alison Barnes; sons, Douglas Chapman & Curtis Chapman; a sister, Annie Nickey; 11 grandchildren, 1

continued next page

CCHS Students attend Choctaw Preview Day

Submitted by Kaiti Ford, Tribal MSU Extension Agent

Several students from Choctaw Central High School attended the second-ever Choctaw Preview Day at Mississippi State University in Starkville. The students were able to get first-hand experience in touring different academic departments, such as business & electrical engineering. The students were also joined by the Indig-

enous Students & Allies Association (ISAA) to talk & answer any questions about college life.

Choctaw Preview Day is a collaboration between Tribal 4-H, Tribal Extension, Neshoba 4-H, & YOP. Thank you to Tribal 4-H Coordinator Kendra Anderson, Tribal MSU Ex-



ension Agent Kaiti Ford, Neshoba 4-H Agent Anna Byrd,

& Ann York for chaperoning the students. Also, a big thank you to Mr. Julian for driving the students to Starkville!



Pictured left, students enjoyed touring the laboratory facility then watching a video highlighting the campus life & opportunities at Mississippi State University.

great-grandchild, & a host of relatives & friends.

SANDRA RENEE WILLIS

Funeral service for Sandra Renee Willis, 58, was held on Monday, March 13, 2023, at the Pearl River CERF Building. Minister Curtis Willis, Sr. & Pastor Thomas Ben officiated.



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

Ms. Willis passed away on March 9 at Anderson Regional Medical Center in Meridian.

She served many years as an administrative assistant at Choctaw Central High School & enjoyed playing softball & basketball when she was younger. She enjoyed attending her family's sporting events, being a fan of Choctaw Central athletics & the MSU Bulldogs, cooking outdoors, & being a grandmother.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Harrison & Ruby Mae Bell Willis; brothers, Gary Hayes Willis Sr., Basil Harris Willis, & Timothy Darryle Willis.

Survivors include her daughter, Sydney Tyanne Tubby; sons, Mason Kyle Tubby & Darron Keith Tubby; a sister, Lois J. Willis Keats; brothers, Jerome W. Willis & Herman R. Willis; 2 grandchildren, 4 nieces, 4 nephews, 6 great-nieces, 10 great-nephews, 2 aunts, & a host of relatives & friends.

MICHELLE LEIGH WESLEY

Funeral service for Michelle Leigh Wesley, 51, was held on Wednesday, March 15, 2023, at the Standing Pine Community Gymnasium. Bro. Kenneth Jef-

erson & Rev. Timothy Tubby officiated.

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

Mrs. Wesley passed away on March 11 at Leake Baptist Memorial in Carthage.

She loved to cook, doing arts & crafts, & beadwork. She was always friendly, had a humble heart & cared for others.

She is preceded in death by her mother, Norma Denson Long; & a daughter, Ashleigh Chapala.

Survivors include her husband, Ryland Heath Wesley; daughter, Shannen Chapala; son, Dominic Chapala; father, Bruce Long, Sr.; brothers, Bruce Long, Jr. & Jonathan Siah Long; 2 nieces, a nephew, & a host of relatives & friends.

GASTON SCOTT TUBBY

Funeral service for Gaston "G" Scott Tubby, 35, was held on Monday, March 20, 2023, at Pine Bluff Baptist Church in Sebastopol. Bro. Kenneth Davidson & Bro. Gerald Willis, Sr. officiated.



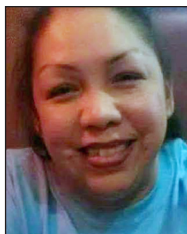
Burial was in the church cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.

Mr. Tubby passed away on March 16 at his residence.

He was remembered as one who never met a stranger & enjoyed fishing & taking pride in his cooking.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Jimmy & Flora King Tubby.

Survivors include his daughter, Mahayla K. Tubby; sisters,



Paula John (Landon) & Clarissa Cardona (Amilcar); brothers, Thaddeous Tubby, Robert Patrick (Peggy), Mark Patrick (Darlene), Hershel Monk, & Delvin Sam Monk (Sonja); a special friend, Jessica Lathem; & a hosts of cousins, nieces, nephews, & dear friends.

INFANT DE'LASON BRAE'RAYIS BELL

Funeral service for De'Lason Brae'Rayis Bell, 2 month old infant, was held on Thursday, March 23, 2023, at the Conehatta Community Gymnasium. Bro. Brian Parkman officiated.



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

Infant Bell passed away on March 18 at his residence.

He was born with a condition called Alobar Holoprosencephaly & was a fighter until the end.

He is preceded in death by his great-great-grandparents, Arthur Farmer & Susie Bell; 2 cousin, an aunt, 2 uncles, a great-aunt, & 3 great-uncles.

Survivors include his mother, Casey Bell (Dantae Frazier); brother, Jace Bell; grandparents, Gilbert Bell, Sr. & Stacie Bell; great-great-grandparents, Lee Shumke, Sr. & Sandra Jim; 4 aunts, 4 uncles, 2 great-aunts, 2 great-uncles, & a host of relatives & friends.

CAROLYN LEE DIXON

Funeral service for Carolyn Lee Dixon, 66, was held on Thursday, March 23, 2023, at Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Red Water. Deacon Ricky Edwards & Rev. Carl Wilson officiated.

Burial was in the Old Mt.

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



Ms. Dixon passed away on March 19 at the Choctaw Health Center in Choctaw.

She enjoyed her years at Red Water Elementary School as a teacher's aide for the 3rd grade. She enjoyed traveling, crossword puzzles, arts & crafts, watching sports & stickball, cooking outdoors, listening to 70's music, & watching TV.

She is preceded in death by her parents, James & Encie Farve Dixon; sisters, Molly Ann Dixon & Charlotte Dixon Tubby; brothers, Billy Joe Dixon & Terry Dixon; & grandparents, Jim & Leona Billy Dixon, Joseph & Bessie Davis Farve.

Survivors include a daughter, Melissa Dixon; sisters, Celestine Steve & Sonja Edwards; a grandson, Michael James Willis; 3 aunts, 3 uncles, & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

PANDORA DIXON SOCKEY

Funeral service for Pandora Dixon Sockey, 44, was held on Sunday, March 26,



2023, at the Red Water Community Gymnasium. Bro. Joseph Wesley & Rev. Shelly Peoples officiated.

Burial was in the Choctaw Christian Mennonite Cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.

Mrs. Sockey passed away on March 21 at Forrest General Hospital in Hattiesburg.

see OBITUARIES, pg. 26

OBITUARIES continued from page twenty-five

She was a Choctaw language teacher at Red Water Elementary School. She enjoyed watching her kids play sports & beading.

Survivors include husband, Rodrick Sockey; parents, Willard Patrick Dixon & Carolyn Joe Willis; sons, Rayden Sockey, Zander Sockey, & Koi-Nakni Sockey; sisters, Shelvie Dixon, Shayla Williams, Shamira Dixon, Stephanie Dixon, & Stacy Dixon; brothers, Terrance Williamson, Warren Dixon, Joshua Hickman, Isaiah Isaac, & Wilson Dixon; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

ROBERT LEON JEFFERSON

Funeral service for Robert Leon Jefferson, 27, was held on Thursday, March 30, 2023, at the Bogue Homa CERF Building. Rev. Stanley Dogget officiated.



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

Mr. Jefferson passed away on March 23 at his residence.

He was employed as a slot attendant at Bok Homa Casino & enjoyed being with his co-workers, family & friends, riding on the backroads, listening to music, dancing, & singing.

He is preceded in death by his grandmothers, Rose Farmer & Rosie Joe; parents, Lara Joe & Ray Jefferson; & a brother, Ravin Jefferson.

Survivors include his sisters, Shonesty Standing Elk, Juleeanna Matias, & Lourdes Joe; brother, Dexter Briscoe; 3 aunts, 2 uncles, a niece, 5 neph-

ews, & a host of relatives & friends.

DANNY ISAAC

Funeral service for Danny Isaac, 54, was held on Friday, April 7, 2023, at the family residence in Louisville. Bro. Melvin Chase officiated.



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

Mr. Isaac passed away on April 3 at Anderson Regional Medical Center in Meridian.

He was previously employed with Chahta Enterprises, Peco Food, U.S. Motors, & Choctaw Tribal Schools. He was also a handyman & landscaper.

He is preceded in death by his mother, Selena Isaac; sister, Cynthia Hickman; & a host of aunts & uncles.

Survivors include his wife, Elaine Cotton Isaac; sons, Shawn Isaac & Johnny (Tashina) Whitehead; brother, Franklin (Mavis) Hickman; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

THERON "DUKE" DENSON

Funeral service for Theron "Duke" Denson, 66, was held on Sunday, April 16, 2023, at the Pearl River Facility Building. Bro. Leonard Jimmie & Rev. Daniel Tubby officiated.



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

Mr. Denson passed away on April 12 at his residence.

He was a member of the Church of Latter-Day Saints & enjoyed playing guitar and singing. He was part of Psalms Trio & his favorite entertainer was Elvis Presley.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Bonnie Lee Denson & Rita Faye John Denson; sister, Addie Jean Denson; & brother, Timothy Dean Denson.

Survivors include his sister, Gaydon Denson; brothers, Don Denson, Rickey Lee Denson, Brandon Denson, Gerald Denson, & Carl Phillips; & a host of relatives & friends.

JIM RICHARD WALLACE

Funeral service for Jim Richard Wallace, 62, was held on Monday, April 17, 2023, at the Bogue Chitto Community Gymnasium. Deacon Kendall Wallace & Rev. Charles Doby Henry officiated.



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

Mr. Wallace passed away on April 12 at the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson.

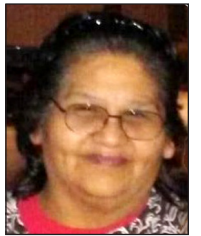
He enjoyed fishing, watching old TV shows, listening to oldies music, reading newspapers, & being with family & friends.

He is preceded in death by his wife, Jimmie Lee Mingo Wallace; parents, Leonard & Emma Lee Jackson Wallace; & sisters, Mahala Wallace & Diane Joe Thomas.

Survivors include his sister, Martha Wallace; an aunt, two uncles, & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

CHARLENE YORK

Funeral service for Charlene York, 65, was held on Saturday, April 22, 2023, at the Pearl River Community Center. Bro. Leonard Jimmie, Jr. & Rev. Daniel Tubby officiated.



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

Ms. York passed away on April 16 at Anderson Regional Medical Center in Meridian.

After graduating from Choctaw Central High School, she worked as a secretary with the Upward Program then moved to California where she worked with the U.S. Probation Office in Los Angeles. She returned home in 1991 & worked with the WIC Program then the Food Distribution Program as an office manager. She returned to school & earned her AA degree. She enjoyed playing bingo, going to yard sales, shopping, & watching sports.

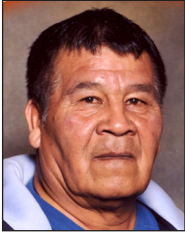
She is preceded in death by her parents, Baxter & Grace Sam York; a sister, Loretta York Simon; & brothers, Alvin York, Sr., Tony York, Sr., Frank Simpson, & John Walter "Jake" York.

Survivors include her daughter, Maria York; son, Ruben York; sisters, Roseanna Mesteth, Eileen George (Arnold) & Rowena York; a brother, Dr. Kenneth H. York (Kathy); & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

ODELL FRAZIER, SR.

Funeral service for Odell Frazier, Sr., 76, was held on Thursday, April 27, 2023, at the

Bogue Chitto Community Gymnasium. Rev. Charles Doby Henry officiated.



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

Mr. Frazier passed away on April 20 at his residence.

Born in the Bogue Chitto community, he left for school in Oklahoma when he was 16. He then moved to Chicago, Ill., & worked on transmissions for 10 years. He moved back to Mississippi & worked on transmissions for another 20 years. He made Red Water community his home in 1973 & drove a truck for 20 years & retired. He returned to work & was a custodian at Pearl River Resort for 10 years & retired in 2020.

He is preceded in death by his grandmother, Lela Vaughn Bell; parents, Frazier & Linnie Frazier, Bessie & Odie Jim; sisters, Maggie Frazier, Jill Robinson, Eva Frazier, Valerie Frazier, Susan Frazier, Gloria McMillan, Norma Jean Robinson, & Betty Waltman; brothers, Andy Frazier, David Frazier, Sr., Eugene Frazier, & Dan Frazier; 2 granddaughters, a niece, & 2 nephews.

He is survived by his wife, Deborah Frazier; daughter, Denise "The Girl" Price; sons, Vernon Frazier, Odell "Joe" Frazier, Jr., Braxton Frazier, & Joe A. Price, Jr.; sisters, Mary Samuel, Janet Chickaway, Jane Mae Tubby, Emma Sam, & Brenda Harrison; brothers, Roy Jim, Randy Jim, Glendale Willis, & Riley Jim; special family, Edmond Sam, Sr. & Patricia Kopaddy; caregiver, Maisie Fortenberry; 21 grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren, 1 great-great-grandchild, & a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, & friends.

ALISHA ROCHELLE McCOMBS

Funeral service for Alisha Rochelle McCombs, 41, was held on Friday, April 28, 2023, at the Bogue Homa CERF Building. Bro. Chris Hodge officiated.




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

Mrs. McCombs passed away on April 22 at South Central Regional Medical Center in Laurel.

She was a member of Bogue Homa Baptist Church & was attending The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in Laurel. She enjoyed being with family, friends, & her fur babies, basket weaving, playing sports, softball, stickball, volleyball, playing washers, being on her phone, & being a fan of the LSU Tigers,

She is preceded in death by her brother, Marcus Daniel Nickey; grandparents, Clinton & Saline Jefferson, Martha Jim & John C. Lewis; 2 aunts & an uncle.

Survivors include husband, Kimo McCombs; mother, Dorothy Lewis; dad, Matthew Martin; father, Randall Nickey; god-daughter, Nairobi Blakeley; sisters, Nanthea Nickey McMillan & Nandolyn Nickey; brother, Vernandall Nickey;



LIVING WATER
UNITED PENTECOSTAL CHURCH

LOCATED IN THE TUCKER COMMUNITY
(Adjacent up the hill from Tucker Elementary School)

We invite you and your family to join our family for services.

SUNDAY SERVICES - 2:00 pm
TUESDAY EVENINGS - 6:00 pm

3 nieces, 3 nephews, a great-niece, 2 fur babies, & a host of aunts, uncles, relatives, & friends.

FANNIE SUE PEOPLES

Funeral service for Fannie Sue Peoples, 83, was held on Wednesday, April 26, 2023, at Hopewell Baptist Church. Rev. Allen Peoples officiated.



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

Ms. Peoples passed away on April 23 at the Choctaw Residential Center in Choctaw.

She enjoyed fishing, beading, gardening, visiting family & friends, telling stories, & chanting for the Standing Pine Social Dance Group. She loved music & sports, often telling of her younger years playing softball with Team Madden & her family. She spent many years as a food service worker with

the Choctaw Tribal Schools. Family was of the utmost importance to her, & it was gathering around the table where she truly exemplified her matriarch status & love for feeding others.

She is preceded in death by her husband, William Shelby "Shell" Peoples; her parents, Coyt Charlie & Sinie Davis; sisters, Irene Charlie, Serene Comby, Nancy Charlie, Mattie Charlie, & twin sister Annie Sue Lewis; & brothers, Louie Charlie & Coburn Charlie, Sr.

Survivors include her daughter, Pam Johnson; sons, James Johnson, Eddie (Anita) Johnson, Shelly (Linda) Peoples, Shelby (Lea) Peoples, & Allen (Nancy) Peoples; 18 grandchildren, 20 great-grandchildren, & a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, & friends.

Welcome To



10341 Road 789
Philadelphia, MS 39350
Sunday Service: 10:00 a.m.

Come & Worship with us




MACEDONIA BAPTIST CHURCH
130 Campus Drive
Conehatta, MS 39057

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

WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE
6:00 p.m. Pray Meeting
6:30 p.m. Discipleship/
Family Ministry Class

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

Come Join Us...



Spirit of Life
CHRISTIAN CENTER
SUNDAY: 10:00 a.m. WEDNESDAY: 6:30 p.m.

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



MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS

CHOCTAW VETERAN AFFAIRS

MEMORIAL DAY

3-MAN GOLF SCRAMBLE

MONDAY
MAY 29, 2023
10 AM SHOTGUN START

DANCING RABBIT
THE OAKS

TAKING FIRST 36 TEAMS
\$300 - TEAM OF 3
\$350 - TEAM OF 3 +1-HOLE SPONSOR
\$100 - HOLE SPONSOR
DEADLINE FOR SPONSOR IS FRIDAY MAY 19
kevin.grisham@choctaw.org / 601-622-4018 / Kevin Grisham

**CHOCTAW
COMMUNITY
NEWS**

MARCH/APRIL 2023

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ATTENTION!

For Families of Fallen Tribal Veterans

The Office of Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben and the Choctaw Veterans Committee are planning to honor all fallen Tribal Veterans for the 2023 Memorial Day Holiday by placing flags at their grave sites at their respective cemeteries.

We are asking for families of fallen veterans to pick up an orange locator flag from any of the committee members below and have it placed at their veteran's grave site. We would like to see all orange flags on site by May 1, 2023.



COMMITTEE MEMBERS: *Sammie Wilson (Veterans Affairs Director) • Linda Williams*
Natasha John • Cynthia Massey • Rick Alex • Gloria White • Bernita Reynolds • Rita Mattera
Sonny Mattera • Raymond Willis

For more information, contact Linda Williams at 601-650-1545

***** LET US HONOR OUR CHAHTA TUSHKAS *****



Save The Date!

16th ANNUAL UNITY WALK

JUNE 24, 2023

Hosted by the Special Diabetes Program for Indians – Choctaw Health Center

For more information, please call 601.389.4390