



## Groundbreaking for New Boys & Girls Club Teen Center



The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians recently hosted a groundbreaking ceremony for the new Boys and Girls Club Teen Center in the Pearl River Community. Once opened, this new facility will replace the current facility, which serves

Tribal youth ages 12-18.

“The main thing we’re here for are these kids,” said Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben. “They need the space, and the opportunity came to us. I am glad that, along with the Tribal Council, all Boys and Girls Club staff, and with the help of Construction Management, we were able to facilitate something that will be here for future generations.”

The new facility will be a 11,020 square-foot steel building with a standing seam metal roof. The front half of the building will be for administrative and functional purposes: four offices, a conference/training room, restrooms, kitchen/concession area, storage and up to six

see **TEEN CENTER**, pg. 8

## Tribe Receives Grant to Develop Workforce Training Center

U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo announced the Department’s Economic Development Administration (EDA) awarded a \$5.8 million grant to the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians for the construction of the Advanced Workforce Training Center. This grant is funded by the American Rescue Plan’s Indigenous Communities Program.

“Workforce development is a primary focus for our Tribe,” said Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben. “We have undertaken many projects to help our community members prepare to face a challenging and ever-evolving job market. This Workforce Training Center is a key component of our strategy to increase the skills of our Tribal members, whether they choose a career on or outside of our Tribal lands.”

The Center will be in the Pearl River community and will be approximately

see **WORKFORCE**, pg. 7

## Tribe, MaxxSouth Broadband Partner to Expand Broadband Access

The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians is growing its partnership with MaxxSouth Broadband, whereby their existing broadband system is being expanded to serve over 2,000 tribal homes in six of the eight Tribal communities.

Earlier this year, the Tribe announced that it had received an \$8.43 million Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program (TBCP) grant award from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) that will provide funding for much needed internet access across Choctaw Tribal lands. The funding from the grant award will be used in part towards the Tribe’s partnership with MaxxSouth Broadband.

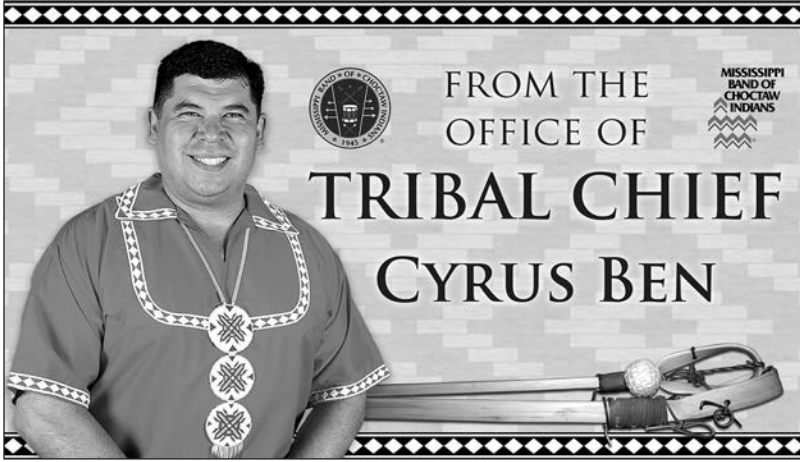
“With many school, business and service operations now being conduct-

ed online, the need for broadband internet access is more important than ever,” said Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben. “Access to adequate internet service in some Choctaw Tribal communities is limited at best. We

see **BROADBAND**, pg. 8



Contractors are currently in several Tribal communities connecting broadband wiring & fiber optics to provide access for 650MB/sec broadband service by MaxxSouth Broadband.



*Congratulations to Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben as he was named 2022 Citizen of the Year by the Community Development Partnership. He was presented his award in front of family members (pictured above), friends, & officials during the CDP's annual banquet on Monday, September 26, 2022, at the Neshoba County Coliseum. Other awards presented included The Neshoba County Fair as Large Business of the Year & The Clothesline as Small Business of the Year.*

Halito!

The temperatures are cooling down, and we all are looking forward to the fall activities that take place during this time of the year. Volleyball, cross country and football seasons have concluded, and winter sports, such as basketball and soccer, have begun.

It has been my honor to visit our Tribal and local area schools to congratulate our students, whether they were selected to their school's homecoming

court or receiving recognition as seniors in the sports that they play. It's always wonderful to see our students succeeding, and I want them to know we are very proud of them.

To be recognized as the 2022 Citizen of the Year by the Philadelphia-Neshoba County Community Development Partnership meant so much to me. The official award was presented during their annual banquet on Monday, September 26, 2022, at the Neshoba County Coliseum.

I was proud to have my family members, Tribal Council representatives, our 2022-2023 Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Raine Nickey, and Tribal and Pearl River Resort officials on hand to celebrate this recognition with me.

It was truly a great honor to be recognized by fellow citizens and leaders of my home county. Neshoba County, and the Pearl River Community, specifically, is where I have always called home, and my

family and I are very proud to be part of this great community.

I commend each staff member of the Boys and Girls Club and all volunteers for making this year's Day for Kids on Saturday, September 17 a successful one. It was great watching our youth having fun and seeing the smiles on their faces as they enjoyed a day of great activities. Congratulations on a job well done!

The Choctaw Elderly Activity Center hosted their American Indian Day Princess and Brave Pageant on Thursday, September 22. I was honored to be in attendance and to crown the winners. Congratulations to Princess Anita McCombs and Brave Larry Bell and great job to all the participants!

The Choctaw Tribal Schools celebrated American Indian

Week with different cultural activities each day. It was wonderful to see our cultural regalia on display throughout the American Indian Day pageants that took place at each campus. I applaud each student who participated in these pageants and showcased their pride in their culture. Congratulations to all the winners!

On behalf of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, I extend our sincere congratulations to Tribal member Rhonda Harjo (MBCI/Mvskoke Nation) and the 15 other Tribal leaders from around the country who were appointed to serve on the newly created Tribal Advisory Council at the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO).

Ms. Harjo is a former Deputy Chief Counsel for the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs. It was my honor to nominate her to this role. When I heard about this Tribal Advisory Council, I knew we needed to make sure a Chahta had a seat at the table, thereby giving us a voice in the room. Someone not just from our Tribe, but someone who knew Indian Country.

Rhonda has both the

*The Choctaw Elderly Activity Center held their Princess & Brave Pageant on Thursday, Sept. 22. Chief Ben, center, was on hand to crown this year's winners, Princess Anita McCombs & Brave Larry Bell. Congratulations!*



## CHOCTAW COMMUNITY NEWS

The Choctaw Community News is available at no charge upon request. Donations to help cover the cost of printing, mailing are welcomed. Correspondence should be addressed to:  
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**P.O. BOX 6010**  
**CHOCTAW, MS 39350**  
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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.

tribal heritage and knowledge of Indian Country, as well as the added benefit of knowing the inner workings of Washington, D.C. I am glad that my recommendation and nomination of her was viewed favorably, and she was appointed to this Council. Ms. Harjo will serve well in this position.

I enjoyed the opportunity to visit each and every Tribal elementary school during Read-Aloud Month in October. Visiting our children and having the chance to spend time with these youngsters really warms my heart. Sometimes I'll get a smile, a high-five, or a hug, and it truly brightens up my day!

Many of our parents, family members and community leaders took the opportunity to visit their child's school and read to them. Seeing the support and care from family members and the community can be the biggest encouragement a child needs to succeed in their education.

Community Drive-Thru Trunk or Treats were held in

the Henning Community on Saturday, October 22, all MBCI communities (except Conehatta) on Tuesday, October 25, and in the Conehatta Community on Sunday, October 30.

It was so wonderful to see the smiles on our youths' faces as they waited in line, some in their great-looking costumes, to receive candies and other goodies. Thank you to each Tribal program, department, club and family who participated in these events for giving these children and their families a wonderful time!

During a special call Tribal Council meeting on Friday, September 9, Resolution CHO 22-118, a Resolution to Expand Gaming Operations and to Designate a Resort Area in the Crystal Ridge Community of the Choctaw Indian Reservation, was passed unanimously in a 17-0 vote. Expansion plans include a Travel Plaza on the Tribe's land in Winston County featuring a convenience store, retail and commercial fuel pumps, a restaurant, gaming

slots and a Sportsbook.

This new venture will provide the Tribe with new and diversified employment and financial opportunities, without displacing revenue from our existing properties.

Revenue from the Travel Plaza will be used to support the growing needs of Tribal infrastructure including Tribal government facilities, water systems, housing, IT and broadband projects as well as Tribal education needs such as planning, design and construction of new facilities, ongoing operations and maintenance costs and education projects.

Profits from this operation will have percentages set aside specifically for Tribal Infrastructure (25%) and Tribal Education (25%). This endeavor will help us be able to move forward in being better able to service our tribal members and provide the best future possible for our children/youth.

I want to thank the Resort Planning Team, which included tribal member management

team members, for their work on the planning and presentation of the project, the CRDE Board and the Tribal Council in their important support on the future of our Tribe. I look forward to sharing more information with you as we continue important progress on our Tribal lands.

In addition to the above-mentioned Crystal Ridge project, there are other projects moving forward or soon beginning. I'm proud of the fact that we are still able to achieve progress across our Tribal lands despite the challenges we have faced in the past few years. My continued prayers are for peace and prosperity for our Tribe, our businesses, and our members and employees.

Chi Yakokilih,



Cyrus Ben, Tribal Chief



## Weavers Win Business Plan

**Competition** Congratulations to Josh & Zach Weaver as they were winners of the Fast Start Program's Business Plan Competition. The program, hosted by the MBCI Office of Economic Development's Small Business Program, offers Tribal member entrepreneurs an opportunity to gain valuable information & assistance in starting their own business. At the end of the six-week course, entrepreneurs who developed a detailed plan were entered into a Business Plan Competition with the winner receiving \$1,000 to invest into their venture. Pictured above, Chief Ben (center) presented the check to Josh & Zach Weaver & congratulated them on their achievement.



## Obeid's Food Mart Opens in Bogue Chitto

A ribbon cutting ceremony was held for the grand opening of Obeid's Food Mart on Monday, Oct. 24, in the Bogue Chitto Community. Located at the former Big Creek General Store, store owner & Tribal member Onnie Obeid, along with her husband, have over 15 years experience owning & operating a convenience store in Meridian & look forward to serving the Bogue Chitto Community members & surrounding areas. In attendance for the ceremony were Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, reigning Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Nickey, Bogue Chitto Tribal Council members Kendall Wallace & Angela Hundley, Choctaw Shopping Center Enterprise General Manager Sandy Balderas, & members of the Bogue Chitto Community.

### CTS Read Aloud Events

Numerous individuals took part in this year's Read Aloud Month activities in the local Choctaw Tribal Schools. Among those to participate were Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben & reigning Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Nickey. Although speaking to your child about all kinds of things is good for their language development, reading does more. When you read aloud together, you build up your child's "word bank" of vocabulary they know. You also introduce them to formal grammar & sentence structures (which might not be as apparent in our day-to-day conversation.) By reading consistently to a child, you improve their readiness to learn & give them the basic literacy skills to succeed in school. Some of the benefits of reading aloud include: language development; literacy skill building; instilling a love of reading; brain development; knowledge gained & shared; & personal bonding.



**Head Start Awareness Month** Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben signed a proclamation declaring the month of October as Head Start Awareness Month. Children & staff members from the Pearl River Headstart Center, DOECE Princess Amara Bell & Brave Kreedon Dixon, & DOECE officials were present for the proclamation signing.



### Congressman Guest Visits SPES

U.S. Representative Michael Guest visited Standing Pine Elementary School (SPES) on Monday, Oct. 31, to participate in Read Aloud Month activities for the students. Congressman Guest was invited by SPES instructor Callie Bowman as students & faculty were honored for the visit. Chief Ben presented Congressman Guest a Choctaw basket as a token of his appreciation for his visit & continuous support of the MBCI. Standing Pine Tribal Council member Loriann Ahshapanek & SPES Principal Linda Peoples also offered their gratitude for the visit.



# Chief Ben Honored by MC During 2022 Homecoming

Mississippi College alumnus Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben was honored as one of two alumni to receive the Order of the Golden Arrow at Mississippi College's Homecoming Brunch on Saturday, October 29, 2022, in Clinton.

The other honoree, Joy Fain Dowdle '02, '05, is a summa cum laude graduate with highest honors at MC and a summa cum laude graduate of the Law School. She is a partner in the Litigation Department of Paul Hastings, based in the firm's Houston, Texas, office, and vice chair of the firm's Lifesciences and Healthcare practice.

The Order of the Golden Arrow honors individuals, alumni, or friends of the University who have made outstanding personal or professional achievements in their professions, businesses, or careers. It recognizes exceptional performance or leadership beyond the ordinary.

Chief Ben '01, a member of the varsity football squad while at MC, is the fifth – and youngest – democratically elected chief of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw

Indians. A lifelong resident of Neshoba County, Ben was officially sworn into office on July 9, 2019. He is guided in his leadership and service to the Choctaw people by five key initiatives: respect of others; fairness and equity to all; accountability in all areas; efficiency in practices; and support and appreciation of all employees and tribal members.

Choctaws throughout Mississippi turn to Ben for the careful education and mentoring of their children and strong, thoughtful guidance of their community.

"Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben played football at MC and has a deep love for the college. We are very proud of his accomplishments, and we are excited to connect with the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians. It's quite fitting that he would also receive this award," said Jim Turcotte, vice president and executive director of alumni affairs at MC.

During a July visit by administrative leaders to Tribal lands in Neshoba County, MC President Blake Thompson and Ben signed a memorandum of understanding that solidified the Christian University's special relationship with the only federally recognized American Indian tribe in Mississippi.

The MOU created a valuable tuition assistance program for Choctaw students, and established an expanded cultural exchange between MC and the MBCI. MC will host MBCI students and leaders on the Clinton campus for cultural exchange and educational programs designed to

address the academic interests of MBCI members and their descendants.

"We worked on and completed the MOU with the hope that we can build a relationship that includes expanding the education of Choctaw history and culture to the faculty, staff, and students at Mississippi College," said Ben.

He attended East Central Community College in Decatur before visiting MC.

"Mississippi College had a great educational reputation," he said. "I always pushed myself academically, and so it ended up being a great fit. I made some great friends and, of course, received a wonderful education.

He was elected Tribal Chief about the same time as Thompson became MC's 20th president.

"We both have made an effort to build a relationship between the Tribe and school, and I look forward to building a lasting connection between the two," Ben said. "It is my hope that the MOU will not only help MC students, faculty, and alumni develop a better understanding and appreciation for our tribe, our culture, and our heritage, but help facilitate that understanding and appreciation to others within our state and country."

Ben said he has great respect for those who have been recognized as recipients of the Order of the Golden Arrow at MC.

"To be honored side-by-side with those before me is a wonderful feeling," he said. "I like to say that I am Choctaw by blood and Choctaw by education. I am a proud member of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians and now a proud member of the Golden Arrow honorees."



Tribal Chief Ben with his family at the awards ceremony - wife, TaRita, & children, Brodie, Eden, & Selah.



LEFT, Tribal Chief Ben (left) presented an official Tribal Flag of the MBCI to MC President Blake Thompson. The flag was officially flown at Robinson-Hale Stadium during pregame ceremonies. The flag was displayed as a symbol of the University's relationship with the Choctaw people. ABOVE, Tribal Chief Ben (far right), along with Tribal drummers, led the MC Choctaws onto the field as they faced Delta State.

# MC Introduces New Athletic Logo, Refreshed Brand Mark

Mississippi College Homecoming attendees may have noticed an enhanced version of the University's iconic brand mark and a vibrant new athletic logo.

The traditional MC letters received a nuanced adjustment, with clean, symmetrical lines, sharp, thin edges, and a more modern look. The new colors are a richer version of the beloved blue and gold.

The athletic logo is more striking: a stylized profile of an eagle – an important ani-

mal in the culture of the Choctaw people – adorned with feathers modeled after those prominently displayed in the crowns of Choctaw Indian Princesses. The feathers are offset by diamond shapes commonly found in handmade jewelry or woven baskets crafted by Choctaw artisans.

The refreshed look, part of a new branding initiative at the 197-year-old Christian University, is intended to appeal to a new generation of students, according to Nick Stafford, director of marketing at MC.

"The rebrand is reflective of changes that are happening at the operations level of the University. We're growing and striving to reach the next generation. We want to take strategic steps to reflect those changes that speak to that generation of students," Stafford said.

The new branding initiative will also apply to the MC School of Law campus in downtown Jackson.

"We're a multi-site University, and this is a footprint-wide brand change," he said.

Homecoming presented the perfect opportunity to unveil the design changes because it represented the largest gathering of current and former faculty, staff, students, families, and friends of the University.

"It's important for our alums to see this rebrand because it's the next evolution of something their lives are tied to. It's the next step on the ladder that reaches generations," said Stafford.

During Homecoming, the new brand mark appeared on signs and banners on campus, T-shirts, tailgate tents, postcards, stickers, MC's official website.

Changes to the brand mark were intended to



Mississippi College introduced an enhanced version of the University's iconic brand mark & a vibrant new athletic logo during Homecoming.

be subtle – upon first glance, many individuals may not notice a difference.

"The refreshed design is intended to be nuanced. It's something that honors the history of MC's letters," Stafford said.

The athletic logo, on the other hand, was purposefully different.

"We needed a logo that our athletic teams could get behind, could be proud of, and could easily understand its meaning and history. We did not come up with the design on our own – it's a reflection of our recently invigorated partnership with the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians.

"We had a concept in mind, and presented the logo to the MBCI. With their great blessing, we have this logo, which is an homage to our partnership and reminds everyone associated with MC of the strong and deep connection the University has with the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians."

The athletic logo introduces a new color into the traditional MC blue and Choctaw gold palette: celestial blue.

"That color has been used sparingly in the past since it's a shade of MC's traditional blue, but it has never been an official part of our brand until now," Stafford said. "Color-wise, it gives our logo a lot of depth."

MC's faculty and staff were treated to an "internal reveal" of the new brand mark during Convocation last spring. Stafford said the responses to the redesign were overwhelmingly supportive.

"Multiple faculty members have shared their comments about the logo," he said. "The vast majority were positive about elements of the logo and the new direction of the brand. Many of them expressed excitement about the effort."



Tribal Chief Ben with the Choctaw drum that was officially bestowed to Mississippi College with the new MC brand mark & new athletic logo emblazoned on it.





**MBCI & MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE**

**TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

## Overview

- This program offers special tuition assistance to **MBCI students** (Tribal Member and Tribal descendants) who plan to attend or are attending MC.
- MC will provide annual undergraduate tuition assistance in the amount of **\$10,000 (on-campus)** and **\$7500 (Off-campus)** per academic year to all MBCI students who qualify for admission and who will be enrolling as full-time, first-year undergraduate students. \*This applies to Tuition Assistance ONLY.
- NO waiting period to participate.

## For More Information

For more information about this program or how you can become eligible, please contact the Tribal Scholarship Program at 601-650-7409. You may also contact Scholarship Assistance at [Chenice.Ben@choctaw.org](mailto:Chenice.Ben@choctaw.org) [Samuel.York@choctaw.org](mailto:Samuel.York@choctaw.org) [Elishia.Thompson@choctaw.org](mailto:Elishia.Thompson@choctaw.org) or the Director at [Melinda.Ben@choctaw.org](mailto:Melinda.Ben@choctaw.org)

# Choctaw Economic Development Website wins IEDC Award

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The International Economic Development Council (IEDC), the largest nonprofit professional association to professional economic developers in the world, has selected recipients of its 2022 Excellence Awards. Recognized each year during the IEDC Annual Conference, the awards honor organizations for exemplary economic development marketing campaigns, projects, & programs. Twenty-five award categories honor organizations & individuals for their efforts in creating positive change in urban, suburban, & rural communities.

The MBCI Economic Development website, URL mschoctawbusiness.com, won a Silver Award in the General Purpose Website category.

“Communities need our profession now more than ever. This year’s awardees exemplify the ingenuity, leadership, & determination needed to meet the challenges of today & the future. The winners of IEDC’s Excellence in Economic Development awards represent the best of economic development & demonstrate the level of leadership that our profes-

sion strives for every day,” shared IEDC President & CEO Nathan Ohle.

“This year’s awards selection process was especially competitive. We are honored to recognize the more than 100 communities whose marketing submissions, projects, & partnerships have improved regional quality of life,” added IEDC Awards Advisory Committee

Chair Christina Winn.

Awards are judged by a diverse panel of economic & community developers from around the world. IEDC received over 500 submissions from the U.S. & four additional



countries around the world.

## BROADBAND ..... continued from page one

recognize the need and have been making great strides to provide solutions for Tribal households.”

“I am pleased to share a partnership between the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians and MaxxSouth to bridge the gap in internet connection availability to the Tribal communities that are only partially connected or have no internet service availability at all,” continued Chief Ben. “This partnership will greatly benefit our Tribal households by expanding broadband internet service across our Tribal lands.”

John Wuerdeman, Vice President/GM of MaxxSouth Broadband added, “Maxx-

South prides itself on being one of the leaders in broadband throughout Northeast Mississippi and is excited to be in this great partnership with the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians bringing world-class fiber to homes in the tribal communities.”

Construction has already begun in the Red Water, Bogue Chitto and Standing Pine communities. Homes in Red Water and Bogue Chitto have been released to sales for home installation. Home installations for Standing Pine are scheduled to begin soon. Construction for Conehatta, Tucker and Pearl River will begin later in the year, with plans to be complet-

ed by April 2023, if not sooner, due to quicker than anticipated completion of work by additional crews secured by Maxx-South.

When completed in 2023, tribal homes who qualify for the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) through Maxx-South Broadband will have access to a 650MB/sec broadband service at minimal to no charge per month, an unprecedented achievement for Indian Country. Tribal homes interested in this program and want to check their eligibility can call 662.728.8111 or go to Maxx-South.com/ACPINFO.

## WORKFORCE ..... continued from page one

50,000 square feet. It will provide vocational and technical training to existing MBCI employees, local employers, middle and high school students, and Boys & Girls Club members.

“We have developed a long-term strategy to strengthen the Choctaw workforce, which is essential to successful economic development,” said Economic Development Director John Hendrix. “This new facility will enable us to provide advanced skills training, including vocational skills such as electrical, HVAC, and industrial maintenance. We will also offer training in computer and digital skills, healthcare, and management. The Center will also support Choctaw entrepreneurs with a small



*Pictured above is a rendering of a renovated Advanced Workforce Training Center.*

business development center with a maker space and incubator.”

Raimondo stated, “This EDA investment will facilitate hands-on training for the

Choctaws in a modern, innovative space, creating new economic opportunity in the region.”



# CHOCTAW TRIBAL COUNCIL RESOLUTION REVIEW

The following ordinances & resolutions were submitted to the Choctaw Tribal Council for consideration. Listed is a brief summary & action taken.

**SPECIAL CALL MEETING  
AUGUST 31, 2022**

**RESOLUTION CHO 22-110**, authorizing the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians' Department of Family & Community Services to apply for funding through the Family Violence Prevention & Services Program from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, was ADOPTED - 14 YES (L. Ahshapanek, M. Briscoe, N. Gibson, R. Henry, Sr., A. Hundley, R. Isaac, D. Martin, W. McMillan, H. Nickey, G. Shoemake, R. Sockey, T. Thomas, Sr., K. Wallace, & K. Wesley); 0 NO; 3 ABSENT (C. Eaves, S. Johnson, & D. Min-go).

**SUMMARY:** *The Family Violence Prevention & Services Program provides support of emergency shelter & related as-*

*sistance for victims of domestic violence & their children. For more information, please contact the Department of Family & Community Services.*

**RESOLUTION CHO 22-111**, amending Resolution CHO 22-039 which authorized the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians' Office of Economic Development to apply for funds from the State Small Business Credit Initiative ("SSBCI") Program, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 3 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** *The MBCI will now submit a joint application with other Tribes for the SSBCI funding to access additional funding & to share administrative capacity for the programs available under the SSBCI funding & designates the Cherokee Nation as the implementing entity. For more information, please contact the Office of Economic Development.*

**RESOLUTION CHO 22-112**, approving the revised 2022-2023 budget for the Choctaw Tribal Schools, was

ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 3 ABSENT.

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

**RESOLUTION CHO 22-113**, approving a revised list of administrative positions with updated weighted factor compensation differentials for the Department of Schools, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 3 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** *The Department of Schools' administrative positions with responsibilities, credentials, & leadership roles that are eligible for a weighted factor compensation differential include: (1) Director of Schools; (2) Assistant Director; (3) High School Principal; (4) Pearl River Elementary Principal; (5) Elementary Principals; (6) Assistant Principals; (7) Choctaw Virtual Learning Center Administrator; (8) Choctaw Technical Education Center Administrator; (9) Federal Programs/Title I Coordinator; (10) Special Education Coordinator; (11) Curriculum Coordinator; (12) District Administrator Coach; & (13) Data Management Coordinator. For more information, please contact the Department of Schools.*

**RESOLUTION CHO 22-**

**114**, authorizing the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, Choctaw Tribal Court, Court Services, to apply for & accept the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) from the U.S. Department of Justice, was ADOPTED - 14 Yes; 0 NO; 3 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** *In FY 2020, the JAG provided Court Services a direct allocation in the amount of \$22,799. In FY 2021, the JAG provided Court Services a direct allocation in the amount of \$27,671. In FY 2022, the JAG awarded Court Services \$23,492 which will be used for training for staff & purchasing Adobe Acrobat Pro. For more information, please contact Court Services.*

**RESOLUTION CHO 22-115**, authorizing the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians to accept grant funding from the Tides Foundation, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 3 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** *The Tides Foundation awarded Choctaw Tribal Courts grant funding in the amount of \$55,000 to be utilized by the Choctaw Peacemaking Court. For more information, please contact Choctaw Tribal Courts.*

**continued next page**

**TEEN CENTER ..... continued from page one**

classrooms, with some of the classrooms allowing flexibility to become a large space for dining or other functions.

The rear of the building will be an open gymnasium with basketball goals, sleeves for volleyball, and space for many more activities. A space off from the gym kitchen will provide ample and easily accessible storage for tables, chairs, supplies, and dry goods.

The kitchen equipment is like the ones in the recently constructed community CERF buildings, but there will be a walk-in cooler to allow for more efficient purchasing, storage, and distribution of perishable items to the various Boys and Girls Club locations.

Costs associated with the site development and engineering for the project were donated by Morton Construction and Willis Engineering. Building design was developed by Yates Construction, LLC at no cost.

Construction on the new Teen Center began immediately after the groundbreaking ceremony and is scheduled to be completed in June 2023.

**RIGHT,** *Teen Club members look over the plans for their new Teen Center, scheduled for completion next June.*





**SPECIAL CALL MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 9, 2022**

**RESOLUTION CHO 22-116**, authorizing a distribution of Tribal funds, was ADOPTED - 17 YES (*L. Ahshapanek, M. Briscoe, C. Eaves, N. Gibson, R. Henry, Sr., A. Hundley, R. Isaac, S. Johnson, D. Martin, W. McMillan, D. Mingo, H. Nickey, G. Shoemake, R. Sockey, T. Thomas, Sr., K. Wallace, & K. Wesley*); 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN

**SUMMARY:** *The Resolution authorizes a distribution of Tribal funds in the amount of \$600.00 per Tribal member on December 8, 2022. For more information, please contact the Office of Tribal Distribution.*

**RESOLUTION CHO 22-117**, approving Fiscal Year 2023 Operating & Capital Budgets for the Choctaw Ordinance 56 Tribal Enterprises, was ADOPTED - 17 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN.

**SUMMARY:** *The Resolution approves fiscal year 2023 budgets for Ordinance 56 Tribal Enterprises as follows:*

*(Enterprise) Choctaw Resort Development Enterprise; (Operating) \$213,372,230; (Capital) \$52,608,098;*

*(Enterprise) Chahta Enterprise; (Operating) \$2,181,942; (Capital) \$100,000;*

*(Enterprise) Choctaw Shopping Center Enterprise; (Operating) \$1,043,825; (Capital) \$769,889.*

*For more information, please contact the Policy & Legislative Office.*

**RESOLUTION CHO 22-118**, expanding gaming operations & to designate a resort area in the Crystal Ridge Community of the Choctaw Indian Reservation, was ADOPTED - 17 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN.

**SUMMARY:** *The Tribal Council determined that establishing a new gaming facility on the Louisville property will*

*stimulate economic development, provide jobs in the Crystal Ridge community & for Tribal members living in other communities, & will generate revenue to support reservation-wide government services. For more information, please contact Pearl River Resort.*

**RESOLUTION CHO 22-119**, authorizing the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians to apply for funding from the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), was ADOPTED - 17 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN.

**SUMMARY:** *The Office of Environmental Protection proposes to use grant funding from NFWF for the following: (1) \$226,242 to expand the trail system at the former Nanih Waiya State Park; (2) \$552,776 to construct outdoor education facilities at the Wetlands Education Trail; & (3) \$3,330,226 to develop a master plan for an outdoor environmental & conservation center at Lake Pushmataha. For more information, please contact the Office of Environmental Protection.*

**RESOLUTION CHO 22-120(B)**, authorizing the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians to accept a donation from MacKenzie Scott & to designate a site in the Pearl River Community for a Boys & Girls Club Teen Center, was ADOPTED - 17 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN.

**SUMMARY:** *MacKenzie Scott donated \$2.3 million to MBCI for the purpose of creating a new Boys & Girls Club Teen Center. For more information, please contact the Boys & Girls Club.*

**RESOLUTION CHO 22-121(B)**, rescinding Resolution CHO 180-94 & Resolution CHO 74-95 & to designate a site in the Pearl River Community for Community Ball Fields, was ADOPTED - 17 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN.

**SUMMARY:** *The land iden-*

*tified in Resolution CHO 74-95 is designated for community ball fields that will be administered & maintained by MBCI. For more information, please contact the Office of the Attorney General.*

**RESOLUTION CHO 22-122**, approving a Memorandum of Understanding between Applied Research Associates, Inc. & the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MBCI) for the Community Resilience Planning Disaster Recovery Project, was ADOPTED - 17 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN.

**SUMMARY:** *Applied Research Associates, Inc. is offering assistance & guidance to MBCI to improve comprehensive plans or other long-range plans to enhance community resilience by strengthening disaster preparedness & recovery & to incorporate the use of the National Institute of Standards & Technology (NIST) guidance & associated tools in their long-range planning efforts. For more information, please contact the Development Division Office.*

**RESOLUTION CHO 22-123**, approving a Commercial Land Assignment between the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians d/b/a Choctaw Shopping Center Enterprise & Onnie Strickland d/b/a Obeid's Food Mart, was ADOPTED - 17 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN.

**SUMMARY:** *Obeid's Food Mart provides groceries, gas, deli food & automotive supply & is located at the Big Creek Property in the Bogue Chitto Community. For more information, please contact the Choctaw Shopping Center.*

**RESOLUTION CHO 22-124**, approving a Commercial Land Assignment between the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians d/b/a Choctaw Shopping Center Enterprise & Kendall Wallace d/b/a Kuntry Boy Designs, was ADOPTED - 17

YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN.

**SUMMARY:** *Kuntry Boy Designs provides custom screen-print, custom design, decals & signs & is located at the Big Creek Property in the Bogue Chitto Community. For more information, please contact the Choctaw Shopping Center.*

**RESOLUTION CHO 22-125**, approving a Memorandum of Understanding between the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians & the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA), was ADOPTED - 17 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN.

**SUMMARY:** *The purpose of the Memorandum of Understanding is to define the conditions for the use of any exercised option or continuity of service period that extends service of GSA's Network, Washington Interagency Telecommunications System ("WITS") 3, & Local Service telecom contracts. For more information, please contact the Office of Finance and Accounting.*

**RESOLUTION CHO 22-126**, amending Section XII. of the Administrative Personnel Policy & Procedures, was ADOPTED - 17 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN.

**SUMMARY:** *The Resolution approves an amendment to Section XII, Subsection (b) the MBCI Administrative Personnel Policy & Procedures. The amendment now allows exempt employees, like non-exempt employees, to also redeem the value of annual leave hours exceeding 480 hours that an employee can carry into the following fiscal year. For more information, please contact the Office of Human Resources.*

**SPECIAL CALL MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 29, 2022**

see RESOLUTIONS, pg 10

## RESOLUTIONS ..... continued from page nine

**RESOLUTION CHO 22-127**, approving Fiscal Year 2023 budgets for Tribal Administration, Programs, Agencies & Operations, was ADOPTED - 15 YES (*L. Ahshapanek, M. Briscoe, C. Eaves, N. Gibson, R. Henry, Sr., A. Hundley, R. Isaac, S. Johnson, D. Martin, W. McMillan, H. Nickey, G. Shoemake, R. Sockey, K. Wallace, & K. Wesley*); 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 2 ABSENT (*D. Mingo & Timothy Thomas, Sr.*).

**SUMMARY:** *The FY 2023 budget includes one (1) incentive payment of \$850.00, before tax withholdings, to all eligible Government Services employees who participate in the Tribe's Employee Benefit Program as of October 1, 2022 & who continue employment through January 5, 2023, except those: (1) who are covered by an approved compensation or pay plan; or (2) whose positions received a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) in the fiscal year 2023 budget; or (3) whose positions received a merit increase in the fiscal year 2023 budget; or (4) who are on disciplinary probation or suspension between October 1, 2022 & January 5, 2023. The incentive payment will be distributed on January 5, 2023. Once employees complete disciplinary probation in FY 2023, they may receive the incentive payment. For more information, please contact the Office of Finance and Accounting.*

**RESOLUTION CHO 22-128**, authorizing settlement of Worker's Compensation claims, was ADOPTED - 15 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 2 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** *The Tribal Council met in executive session with the worker's compensation counsel to discuss settlement of three (3) pending worker's compensation claims*

*involving one claimant. For more information, please contact the Office of the Attorney General.*

**RESOLUTION CHO 22-129**, approving the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians' Youth Opportunity Program revised Employee Handbook for 2023, was ADOPTED - 15 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 2 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** *The Youth Opportunity Program updates their employee handbook yearly & submits revisions to Tribal Council for final approval. For more information, please contact the Youth Opportunity Program.*

**RESOLUTION CHO 22-130**, approving a Memorandum of Understanding between the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians' Choctaw Tribal Schools & Mississippi State University for 3D Weather Data Analysis & Visualization Project, was ADOPTED - 15 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 2 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** *Mississippi State University will conduct research assessing the effects of learning modules that foster literacy in atmospheric & computational sciences among Choctaw Tribal Schools students in grades 3-12 as part of Mississippi State University's STEM+C research award from the National Science Foundation. For more information, please contact the Department of Schools.*

**RESOLUTION CHO 22-131**, authorizing the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians' Choctaw Health Center to apply for funding for the Special Diabetes Program for Indians from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Indian Health Service, was ADOPTED - 15 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 2 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** *The Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI) will continue to fund full-time employees & key personnel to provide diabetes prevention services & treatment. For more information, please contact Choctaw Health Center.*

**RESOLUTION CHO 22-132**, approving the 2022-2023 Wildlife Proclamation to regulate hunting & fishing on Tribal lands, was ADOPTED - 15 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 2 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** *The Wildlife Proclamation is revised & updated annually & includes a schedule of hunting permit fees, fishing permit fees & fees for Lake Pushmataha & outlines the penalties & fines for violations. For more information, please contact Wildlife and Parks Program.*

**RESOLUTION CHO 22-133(B)**, approving a residential lease in the Tucker Community, was ADOPTED - 15 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 2 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** *Pursuant to a last will & testament that was probated in the Choctaw Tribal Court, Jimmy Lee Ben inherited a house located in the Tucker Community, & a lease was approved for that property. For more information, please contact the Realty Program.*

**REGULAR CALL  
MEETING  
OCTOBER 11, 2022**

**RESOLUTION CHO 23-001(B)**, approving a conditional relinquishment of membership in the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, was ADOPTED - 13 YES (*L. Ahshapanek, N. Gibson, R. Henry, Sr., A. Hundley, R. Isaac, D. Martin, W. McMillan, D. Mingo, G. Shoemake, R. Sockey, T. Thomas, Sr., K. Wallace, & K. Wes-*

*ley*); 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT (*M. Briscoe, C. Eaves, S. Johnson, & H. Nickey*).

**SUMMARY:** *The Resolution approves one (1) conditional relinquishment of membership in the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians for R.M. (DOB: 05/28/1971). In accordance with Title XXII—Tribal Enrollment Code §22-4-1, any adult MBCI Tribal member may voluntarily relinquish their MBCI Tribal membership contingent upon their enrollment as a member of another federally-recognized Indian Tribe. For more information, please contact the Office of Tribal Enrollment.*

**RESOLUTION CHO 23-002(B)**, approving an absolute relinquishment of membership in the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, was ADOPTED - 13 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** *The Resolution approves one (1) absolute relinquishment of membership in the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians for E.D. (DOB: 10/15/1961). In accordance with Title XXII—Tribal Enrollment Code §22-4-1, any adult MBCI Tribal member may voluntarily relinquish their MBCI Tribal membership provided that both the Tribal Enrollment Committee & the Tribal Council approve the relinquishment. For more information, please contact the Office of Tribal Enrollment.*

**RESOLUTION CHO 23-003(B)**, approving increases in blood degree & name changes for previously enrolled Tribal members, was ADOPTED - 13 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** *The Resolution approves increases in blood degree & name changes for*

**continued next page**

# Tribe Hosts First In-Person Thanksgiving Feast Since '19

The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MBCI) celebrated the return of the annual Tribal-Wide Thanksgiving Feast at the Silver Star Convention Center in Choctaw on Tuesday, November 8, 2022.

Reigning Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Nickey and Choctaw Central High School Senior Class President Jaeon Johnson served as co-emcees as they welcomed all in attendance. It was the first time since 2019 the feast was held in-person due to coronavirus restrictions. The previous two feasts were held as drive-through events at the parking lot of Geyser Falls Water Theme Park in Choctaw.

Tribal drummers led a procession into the ballroom that included members of Neshoba Central High School's JROTC unit presenting the U.S. and MBCI flags. Red Water Elementary School

see **FEAST**, pg. 12



Hundreds were in attendance as the feast returned to the Silver Star Convention Center in Choctaw on November 8, 2022.

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

**RESOLUTION CHO 23-004(B)**, enrolling Tribal members, was ADOPTED - 13 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** The Resolution approves Tribal Enrollment for thirty-six (36) persons beginning with the name T. Anderson & ending with J. Willis. With the adoption of the Resolution, there are 11,028 enrolled Tribal members in the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians. For more information, please contact the Office of Tribal Enrollment.

**RESOLUTION CHO 23-**

**005**, amending the Choctaw Loan Program Policy, was ADOPTED - 14 YES (L. Ahshapanek, M. Briscoe, N. Gibson, R. Henry, Sr., A. Hundley, R. Isaac, D. Martin, W. McMillan, D. Mingo, G. Shoemake, R. Sockey, T. Thomas, Sr., K. Wallace, & K. Wesley); 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT (C. Eaves, S. Johnson & H. Nickey).

**SUMMARY:** The Resolution approves amendments to the Choctaw Loan Program Policy. For more information, please contact the Choctaw Loan Program.

**RESOLUTION CHO 23-006**, authorizing the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians' Choctaw Loan Program to apply for an Indian Community Development Block Grant from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, was ADOPTED - 13 YES (L. Ahshapanek, N. Gibson, R. Henry, Sr., A. Hundley, R. Isaac, D. Martin, W. McMillan, D. Mingo, G. Shoemake, R. Sockey, T. Thomas, Sr., K. Wallace, & K. Wesley); 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT (M.

Briscoe, C. Eaves, S. Johnson, & H. Nickey).

**SUMMARY:** The Choctaw Loan Program will use the ICDBG grant funding to partially fund renovations & repairs to thirty (30) cottages. For more information, please contact the Choctaw Loan Program.

**RESOLUTION CHO 23-007(B)**, authorizing the sale of all forest products within Pearl River Community Unit 22, was ADOPTED - 13 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** Timber sale includes 1,505 tons of pine logs, 652 tons of pine chip-n-saw, 552 tons of pine pulpwood & 90 tons of t-wood. For more information, please contact the Department of Natural Resources.

**RESOLUTION CHO 23-008**, authorizing the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians' Choctaw Health Center, Behavioral Health Program to apply for funding through the Project AWARE Program from the Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration, was ADOPTED - 13

YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT.

**SUMMARY:** The Choctaw Health Center's Behavioral Health Program plans to use grant funding available through the Project AWARE (Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education) Program to develop a sustainable infrastructure for school-based mental health programs & services. The purpose of the Project AWARE Program is to promote the healthy social & emotional development of school-aged youth & prevent youth violence in school settings. For more information, please contact the Choctaw Health Center.

To request a copy of a Resolution/Ordinance 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](mailto:krystina.thompson@choctaw.org).

Requests for attachments to Tribal Enrollment Resolutions will not be honored due to confidentiality rules.

FEAST ..... continued from page eleven

music students Nyla Wilson, Serena Tubby, and Laila Lewis sang the National Anthem in Choctaw, followed by an invocation by Vice Chief Ronnie Henry, Sr. of the Bogue Chitto Community.

Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben spoke to the audience of all the challenges and adversities we faced since the Tribe last held the feast in 2019, prior to the pandemic, but through it all, we truly emphasized the resiliency of the Choctaw people.

“Each and everyone of you has gone through adversity in some shape, form, or fashion, but God gave us that blessing of having the strength and breath to walk upon this earth. I also thank the Lord for giving us this opportunity for acknowledging what He has brought us through and where we are today,” said Chief Ben.

“We have a path in life that

God has called us to do. You may not feel like its a big thing when you lend a helping hand, but when you do things in your community, you are an intricate part in making things possible by helping others and making everything successful.”

Even through challenging times, the Tribe maintained progress as they received federal funding to construct nine COVID/Emergency Relief Facilities (CERF) throughout the Tribal communities and a Choctaw EMA Logistics Facility on the Choctaw Fire Department campus. The Tribe also established a partnership with



A check of \$2,000 was presented by Tribal Chief Ben to the Chahta Alla Youth Council to assist with their upcoming community service projects.

MaxxSouth Broadband to expand their system to serve over 2,000 tribal homes in six of the eight Tribal communities. The Tribe received an \$8.43 million Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program (TBCP) grant award earlier this year from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) that will provide funding for much needed internet

access across Choctaw Tribal lands. Developments are also underway for Pearl River Resort, including the renovation of Dancing Rabbit Inn in Choctaw, expansion of Bok Homa Casino in Sandersville, and a new plaza in Louisville.

As 2023 approaches, the Choctaw Central High School

continued next page



2022 WSS Pushmataha Champion - Beaver Dam



2022 WSS Women's Champion - Koni Hata Ohoyo



2022 WSS Tulli Okchi Ishko Champion - Pearl River



2022 WSS Men's 35 & Over Champion - Beaver Dam

**RIGHT, 2022 WSS Men's Champion - Bok Cito**

campus will celebrate 60 years in existence. With student population growth and an infrastructure in need of upgrades and modernization, a new high school/middle school campus is in the works on Highway 16 West.

"It will take time to build, but this is for the children, the grandchildren, and future generations. I hope the new facility we build will last 60 more years so other generations can have a place to learn and succeed," Chief Ben said.

A state of the tribe video highlighting the accomplishments and successes of the Tribe in 2022 was presented by the Office of Public Information-Choctaw Video.

While attendees enjoyed their delicious Thanksgiving meal, entertainment was provided by the Red Water Elementary School music students as they performed several of their favorite song selections. Members of the Chahta Alla Youth Council Social Dancers performed several traditional social dances. After, Chief Ben presented the group with a check of \$2,000 to assist with future community service projects.

Champions from the 2022 World Series Stickball (WSS) divisions were honored as they were presented their championship banners from Chief Ben, Princess Nickey, and WSS Commissioner Thomas Ben. Champions included: Beaver Dam, Pushmataha Division (10-13); Pearl River, Tulli Okchi Ishko Division (14-17); Koni Hata Ohoyo, Women's Division; Beaver Dam, Men's 35-Over Division; and Bok Cito, Men's Division.

Bro. Olin Williams provided the blessing for the Tribe to conclude the festivities.



**Thanksgiving Feast Held in Henning**

*The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians hosted the 2022 Henning, TN Community Thanksgiving Feast at the Henning Multi-Purpose Building on Saturday, November 12. Reigning Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Nickey served as mistress of ceremonies as entertainment was provided by the West Tennessee Social Dancers as they performed several social dances for the audience. Tribal Chief Cyrus*

*Ben spoke to community members about being thankful for the gift and blessing of life each and every day. He also offered his appreciation to military veterans and first responders for their service. Tribal Councilman Kendall Wallace offered the invocation, and the meal was served by volunteers. Door prizes were given away, with the grand prize being a beautiful beaded medallion made by Hester Allen.*

# Tribe Hosts 2022 Veterans Day Parade

Tribal veterans were honored during the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians annual Veterans Day Parade on Thursday, November 10, 2022, in Choctaw.

This year's parade theme was, "I AM ...," as numerous organizations honored veterans for their proud service for this country. The parade route began at the Choctaw Sportsplex parking lot, traveling south on

Black Jack Road and ending at the Choctaw Veterans Memorial Wall, located on the south parking lot of Geyser Falls Water Theme Park.

Reigning Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Nickey served as mistress of ceremonies for the post-parade ceremony. Choctaw Veterans Color Guard members Franklin Hickman (Navy) and Bennie Thompson (Marines) posted the flags of the U.S. and MBCI. Deidre Tubby performed the National Anthem in Choctaw and Fred Willis of the Office of Public Information offered the invocation.

Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben offered his appreciation to the veterans and their families. During this time of Thanksgiving, we should give thanks for their service, especially to those currently deployed all over the world.

"To our Tribal members serving throughout the U.S. or across the globe, we thank you. If you are a family member

that's here with a loved one deployed, we say thank you also. Your loved one is sacrificing and serving for each and every one of us. I thank each and everyone of you because it's you who served, continue to serve, and allowing us to enjoy our freedom," said Chief Ben.

"Let us continue to honor our veterans, day in and day out, and may God's blessing be with each and every one of you," Chief Ben added.

Kenneth Edwards, Veterans Service Officer for Neshoba County, served as guest

**continued next page**



Members of Neshoba Central High School's JROTC unit served as flag bearers to lead the parade procession from the Choctaw Sportsplex to the Choctaw Veterans Memorial.



Pictured from left to right are Tribal Chief Ben, parade grand marshal Dinah Williams (Army), reigning Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Nickey, guest speaker Kenneth Edwards (Navy), & parade grand marshal Leonard Jimmie, Jr. (Navy).

## Veterans Day Brunch

A Veterans Day brunch honoring all who served was held on Thursday, November 10, 2022, at the Silver Star Convention Center. The brunch was open to all MBCI Tribal Veterans registered with the Choctaw Veterans



Committee, along with a guest. Hosted by Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, the buffet-style meal was provided by Pearl River Resort. Pastor Thomas Ben offered the invocation, followed by remarks from Chief Ben and Tribal Council Veterans Affairs Committee members Richard Isaac and Wilma Simpson-McMillan as they thanked veterans in attendance for their sacrifice for our country. Other Tribal Council members in attendance were Nigel Gibson, Kent Wesley (Marines), Timothy Thomas, Sr., Richard Isaac, Richard Sockey (Navy), Wilma Simpson-McMillan, Demando Mingo, and Vice-Chief Ronnie Henry, Sr. Entertainment included traditional social dancing from students of Pearl River Elementary School and drumming by the Southern Pine drum group.





**LEFT**, Poster contest winners were, from left to right, Choctaw Central High School students Rayna Mendez, 2nd; Destiny



Hickman, 1st; & Tanyon Willis, 3rd. **RIGHT**, Parade walking division winner was the CCHS Maroon Marching Band.

speaker. After serving 20 years in the Navy, he retired in 2008 with the rank of Master-at-Arms First Class.

“A veteran has sacrificed him or herself with long hours of training, loneliness, and days gone by when we didn’t know if we were going to see this day. I thank

you all for honoring your veterans because it takes family, friends, and loved ones in order for us to go and defend this great nation of ours. It’s not only a sacrifice for us, it’s a sacrifice for you all. In order to go and serve, we have to understand that someone is behind handling all the business. We are not alone,” said Edwards.

He added Native Americans have served their country diligently, even in the face of adversity meant to keep them suppressed.

“They were warriors. They strapped their boots up tight and went to war. They did what they had to do to protect what



Float division winner was Standing Pine Elementary School (left) & vehicle division winner, Choctaw Transit.



was theirs. They’re always looked upon as some of the bravest we have ever seen.”

Growing up in the Sandtown community outside Philadelphia, Edwards recalled traveling with his brothers to the Bogue Chitto community to participate in recreational sports. He befriended several Tribal members during that time, but it was one friend, John Michael John, who surprised him in Norfolk, VA after he enlisted in the Navy.

“We called him ‘John-John’ and we tried to figure out how two boys from Neshoba County got to meet up in Norfolk, VA? We

had that common bond, being from here and knowing one another growing up. We knew what we went through, but we served our country with pride, honor, and dignity,” said Edwards.

“John-John was on the USS Ashley and I was on the USS Guston Hall. On August 3rd, we shook hands and said, ‘I’ll see you when I see you.’ We were headed to the Persian Gulf and we didn’t know when we would return. Many days I looked out on the horizon through the big eyes and I

see **VETERANS**, pg. 17



Tribal veterans pose with Chief Ben & Princess Nickey in front of the Choctaw Veterans Memorial.

### Resort Associates Donate for Breast Cancer Awareness Month

*Pearl River Resort & its sister property, Bok Homa Casino, recently collected donations from associates for Breast Cancer Awareness. Associates received a t-shirt, button, & ribbon as they also wrote messages of encouragement that covered windows at Silver Star & Bok Homa Casinos. A check totaling \$13,036.00 was presented to the Central Mississippi Chapter of the American Cancer Society. Funds will help patients have transportation to & from treatment, as well as a place to stay for the patient & caregiver.*



### SDPI Hosts Fall Walk

The Special Diabetes Program for Indians hosted a Fall Diabetes 2 Mile Walk on Saturday, October 22, 2022, in Choctaw. Participants started from the Choctaw Central High School entrance, walked to the Smith John Justice Center, then returned to the school campus.

Overall winners were (male) Treyton Lindsey & (female) Onyx Bobo.

Participants who placed 1st and 2nd in their respective age category are listed below.

AGES 7 & UNDER: (male) 1st, Jayden Anderson; 2nd, Taten Stephens; (female) 1st, Sahyimmi Isaac; 2nd, Bekah John.

AGES 8-10: (male) 1st, Chanceton Shoemake; 2nd, Del Laneny Lindsey; (female) 1st, Aleira Davis; 2nd, Journeigh Isaac.

AGES 11-14: (male) 1st, Quinton Stephens; 2nd, Joshua Willis; (female) 1st, Jaliyah Lewis; 2nd, Braylee McGee.

AGES 15-19: (male) 1st, Aiden Lilly; 2nd, Cordero Bobo, Jr.; (female) 1st, Clianna Phillips; 2nd, Deshaylee Tubby.

AGES 20-29: (male) 1st, Dregen Joe; 2nd, Jermaine Dixon; (female) 1st, TJ Redhouse; 2nd, Taysia Lewis.

AGES 30-39: (male) 1st, Albert Lewis; 2nd, Todd Stephens; (female) 1st, Dyrandra Jimmie; 2nd, Rhiannon Lilly.

AGES 40-49: (male) 1st, Malachi Steve; 2nd, Derek Willis; (female) 1st, Laura Dees; 2nd, Lindsey Gibson.

AGES 50-59: (male) 1st, Ricky Alex; 2nd, Arnold Haynes; (female) 1st, Marion Sockey; 2nd, Sharon Brown.

AGES 60-OVER: (male) 1st, Adolph Vivians; 2nd, Leonard

continued next page



### Breast Cancer Survivors Honored

*A Pink Out Breast Cancer Awareness recognition event was held during pre-game festivities of Choctaw Central High School's Senior Night on Thursday evening, Oct. 27. The event honored breast cancer survivors, those who are still fighting the disease & remembered those who have passed. Thank you to these courageous individuals & family representatives who came out & were recognized.*



**VETERANS ..... continued from page fifteen**

could see his ship. I often wondered 'what's that ole boy doing?' I thank God we all made it back."

This year's parade grand marshals, selected by the Choctaw Veterans Committee, were Leonard Jimmie, Jr. and Dinah Williams. Jimmie enlisted in the U.S. Navy in November 1979 and was honorably discharged in 1986 with the rank of Electrician's Mate, Petty Officer Third Class. Williams enlisted in the U.S. Army in September 1981, and was honorably discharged on June 30, 1993, with the rank of Sergeant.

Poster contest winners were announced. Placing 1st was Choctaw Central High School (CCHS) senior Destiny Hickman; 2nd, CCHS junior Rayna Mendez; and 3rd, CCHS senior

Tanyon Willis.

In the parade contest, Standing Pine Elementary School won the float division, Choctaw Transit won the vehicle division and CCHS Maroon Marching Band won the walking division.

Serving as judges were: (poster) Kendra Anderson, Rodgrick Anderson, and Shelbi Bell; (parade) Kelby Anderson, Brianna Vaughn, and Gerren Isaac.

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

Tribal veterans in attendance received a commemorative tote bag, compliments of the Choctaw Veterans Committee, Tribal Chief Ben and the Tribal Administration.



Jimmie, Jr.; (female) 1st, Ruthie Bell; 2nd, Cheryl Denson.

The Diabetes Clinic, located on the second floor at Choctaw Health Center in Choctaw, is staffed with a physician, family nurse practitioner, diabetes nurse educator, and a licensed practical nurse. They also house the SDPI Diabetes Prevention Team as they work closely with those diag-

nosed with pre-diabetes.

Classes are offered every Monday at 12:00 p.m., as they learn about the benefits of exercising, calorie counting, meal planning, etc.

If you are interested to see if you qualify for the SDPI program or set up an appointment to schedule screenings or see a provider, call the Diabetes Clinic at 601-389-4370.

## ★ RECRUITMENT ★

**To MBCI Veterans -**

**We are looking for veterans who are interested in joining the Choctaw Veterans Color Guard.**

**Qualifications:**

1. Must have Honorable Discharge.
2. Any age.
3. Male or Female.
4. Must be flexible during week, when called upon.
5. Willing to work on weekends, at times.
6. Must be willing to participate on evenings, at times.
7. Must be willing to travel out of town, at times.
8. Will be paid for the participation.
9. Uniforms will be provided.
10. Other participating events requested.

**If any MBCI Veterans are interested, call or come by my office at the Choctaw Elderly Activity Center.**

**Sammie Wilson, Director / VSO**  
Office 601-650-1737 / 601-663-7580  
Cell: 601-504-3223

## IN CRISIS?

**Call Choctaw Behavioral Health Hotline at 601.389.4175**

Mon.-Fri. 8am to 4:30pm, Weekends & Holidays dial 601.389.4400

Hey, WYD??  
 @powwow, grabbin a snakbox  
 U?  
 Nothin...  
 Can we talk?  
 I need sum1 2 listen. I thnk I need help.  
 OF COURSE! I'm all haksobish

**National Suicide Lifeline**  
 Dial 988  
Offers free services 24/7

**Crisis Text Line**  
 Text MHFA to 741-741  
Free 24/7 crisis counseling

**Lifeline Crisis Chat**  
 Visit [crisischat.org](http://crisischat.org)  
Chat with crisis centers around the US

**The Trevor Project**  
 Text START to 678-678  
Offers support for LGBTQ community

#weneedyouhere

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# TAKE 3 ACTIONS TO FIGHT FLU

Influenza (flu) is a contagious disease that can be serious. Every year, millions of people get sick, hundreds of thousands are hospitalized, and thousands to tens of thousands of people die from flu. CDC urges you to take the following actions to protect yourself and others from flu.

## GET YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY VACCINATED!

A yearly flu vaccine is the first and most important step in protecting against flu viruses.

Everyone 6 months or older should get an annual flu vaccine. Protect Yourself. Protect Your Family. Get Vaccinated. #FightFlu

## STOP THE SPREAD

Take everyday preventive actions to help stop the spread of flu viruses!

Avoid close contact with sick people; avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth, cover your coughs and sneezes, wash your hands often (with soap and water).

## ASK YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT FLU ANTIVIRALS

Take antiviral drugs if your doctor prescribes them!

Antiviral drugs can be used to treat flu illness and can make illness milder and shorten the time you are sick.

WWW.CDC.GOV/FLU #FIGHT FLU CDC

# Flu Vaccines Available

Influenza (flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by the influenza virus that infects the nose, throat, & lungs. Some people, especially people 65 years & older, young children, & people with additional health concerns, are at higher risk of developing serious complications from the flu. The best way to reduce your risk of getting the flu is by getting a flu vaccine each year.

The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention recommends that everyone ages 6 months & older get a flu vaccine. Flu vaccines are available now at the Choctaw Health Center & outly-

ing clinics.

Early increases in seasonal influenza activity are being noted nationwide, especially in the southeastern & south-central portions of the nation.

Choctaw Health Center is noting a surge in Influenza A cases **continued next page**

**FLU VACCINES AVAILABLE AT CHC**

**FLU VACCINES ARE AVAILABLE NOW. THEY ARE AVAILABLE AT CHC AND OUTLYING CLINICS!**

**IT IS SAFE TO GET A FLU SHOT AT THE SAME TIME AS ANY COVID VACCINE, INCLUDING THE BOOSTER**

For more information, contact the Choctaw Health Center at 601.389.4500

# WHEN TO GO TO THE ER

UNLESS YOU HAVE SIGNS OF A MEDICAL EMERGENCY, IT'S VERY UNLIKELY THAT YOU NEED TO GO TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM

SIGNS OF A MEDICAL EMERGENCY FOR CHILDREN	FOR ADULTS
Fast or difficulty breathing	Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
Bluish skin color	Pain or pressure in chest or abdomen
Dehydration (no urine for 8 hours)	Sudden dizziness
Not waking up or interacting	Confusion
Flu-like symptoms that improve but then return with a fever and a worse cough	Severe and/or persistent vomiting
Fever above 104 degrees	Flu-like symptoms that improve but then return with a fever and a worse cough

**WITH THE FLU, YOU'LL MOST LIKELY EXPERIENCE SOME OR ALL OF THESE SYMPTOMS FOR UP TO 7 DAYS:**

- Fever that is often accompanied with chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle and/or body aches
- Headache
- Feeling tired and weak
- Some people may experience vomiting or diarrhea

**\*\*High-risk individuals include pregnant women, people over the age of 65, or individuals with a weakened immune system. If you are considered high-risk, contact your primary care provider or CHC Telehealth at 601.389.4314/4315 as early as possible if you develop any flu-like symptoms.**

**It's not necessary to obtain a flu test if you are sick. Please stay home until your fever and symptoms have resolved for 24 hours without medication.**

Keep in mind that making unnecessary visits to the emergency room exposes others to your germs, and you to theirs.

## Suicide prevention and awareness is extremely important and it is imperative that we educate ourselves on how to notice signs and how to take action to help our friends and loved ones.

Click here: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/suicide/in-depth/suicide/art-20044707are>

**988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE**

**CHOCTAW YOUTH RESILIENCY INITIATIVE**

Behavioral Health Dept. 210 Hospital Circle Choctaw, MS 39350 Main Office: 601-389-4150 Hours: 8:00-4:30 After hours: 601-389-4400 Fax: 601-389-4152

**CRISIS TEXT LINE | Text HELLO to 741741**

Free, 24/7, Confidential

\*"Crisis" doesn't just mean suicide... It's any painful emotion for which you need support: Bullying • School Stress • Depression • Anxiety • Suicide Relationships • Friendships • Family Problems • Self-Harm

## How to Help If You Think a Friend or Loved One May Be Considering Suicide

- Know the warning signs**  
And trust your instincts. If you are worried about someone, it's worth taking the next step.
- Offer to help**  
Let your friend or loved one know that you are worried about them and want to support them. Just knowing that they are not alone will probably be a big relief.
- Listen**  
Listen - and pay attention to online conversations and posts - don't judge, and try not to act shocked, no matter what they say. Take them seriously.
- Encourage them to get help**  
Encourage them to go to an adult that they trust - a family member, teacher, or guidance counselor.
- If they won't go for help or if you don't think they'll do it fast enough**  
Tell an adult that you trust, right away. It is also important to call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255) if you're worried, stressed, or aren't sure who to tell. Don't keep it a secret, even if your friend made you promise. You could be saving their life.

Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

**\*If in need, we encourage you or your loved ones to seek help!\***

throughout our tribal communities. American Indians & Alaska Natives are at higher risk of developing serious complications from the flu & the flu vaccine has

proved effective in preventing illness & hospitalization.

Choctaw Health Center encourages all to consider getting their annual flu vaccine now

to help our communities manage this current Influenza outbreak.

## What is RSV?

An early and severe surge of Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) is taking place in multiple regions of the country and overwhelming children's hospitals.

Usually circulating from late fall through early spring, hospitals typically see a jump in RSV cases in late winter. This year, cases began appearing this summer and have steadily risen since, creating significant capacity issues at children's hospitals across the country.

RSV is a common respiratory virus that usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms. Most people recover in a week or two, but RSV can be serious, especially for infants.

RSV is the most com-

**American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/ANs) are at higher risk of developing serious complications from flu**

**A yearly flu vaccine can help protect you and others around you from flu**

**Flu is a leading cause of pneumonia**

Flu and pneumonia rank among the top 10 causes of death for American Indians and Alaska Natives.

American Indians and Alaska Natives are more likely to die from pneumonia and flu than are US residents of other races!

Across the U.S., flu causes hundreds of thousands of hospitalizations each season.

American Indians and Alaska Natives are at **higher risk** than others for:

- Pneumonia and bronchitis
- Hospitalization
- Death

**Flu poses an even greater risk to American Indians and Alaska Natives who:**

- are young children or elders
- are pregnant women
- have diabetes, severe obesity, heart disease, or asthma and other lung problems

**Flu symptoms can include:**

**FATIGUE\***  
(FEELING VERY TIRED)

**HEADACHE**

**MUSCLE ACHES OR BODY ACHES**

Runny or stuffy nose

**COUGH**

**FEVER**

**CHILLS**

**SORE THROAT**

\*Not everyone with flu will have a fever

**PROTECT YOUR CHILD from RSV**

**Avoid close contact with sick people**

**Wash your hands often**

**Cover your coughs & sneezes**

**Clean & disinfect surfaces**

**Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands**

**Stay home when you're sick**

[www.cdc.gov/rsv](http://www.cdc.gov/rsv)

mon cause of bronchiolitis (inflammation of the small airways in the lung) and pneumonia (infection of the lungs) in children younger than 1 year of age.

While most people recover in a week or two, RSV can be serious in infants and older adults. American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) infants are at increased risk of severe RSV compared to infants across the US, with 10 percent of Native American infants hospitalized with RSV infections each year.

RSV can spread when:

- An infected person coughs or sneezes.
- You get virus droplets from a cough or sneeze in your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- You touch a surface that has the virus on it, like a doorknob, and then touch your face before washing your hands.

- You have direct contact with the virus, like kissing the face of a child with RSV.

People infected with RSV are usually contagious for 3 to 8 days. However, some infants, and people with weakened immune systems, can continue to spread the virus even after they stop showing symptoms, for as long as 4 weeks. Children are often exposed to and infected with RSV outside the home, such as in school or child-care centers. They can then transmit the virus to other members of the family.

RSV can survive for many hours on hard surfaces such as tables and crib rails. It typically lives on soft surfaces such as tissues and hands for shorter amounts of time.

For more information about RSV, visit the [ihs.gov](http://ihs.gov) website or CDC website.

**You are not alone**

Pause and remember, there is hope.

**NEED HELP? CALL:**

**Choctaw Behavioral Health**  
(601) 389 - 4150

Hours: 8:00 am - 4:30 pm

After Hours: (601) 389 - 4400

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**  
1-800-273-TALK (8255)

or

Text HOME to 741741 to connect with a Crisis Counselor

**Learn to recognize the warning signs:**

- Hopelessness; feeling like there is no way out
- Anxiety, agitation, sleeplessness, or mood swings
- Feeling like there is no reason to live
- Rage or anger
- Engaging in risky activities
- Increasing alcohol or drug abuse
- Withdrawing from family and friends
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Withdrawing or isolating themselves
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
- Extreme mood swings

**The presence of any of the following signs requires immediate attention:**

- Thinking about hurting or killing themselves
- Reading or seeking information on ways to die
- Talking about death, dying, or suicide
- Showing hopelessness or expressing that they have no reason to live
- Talking about feeling trapped, being in unbearable pain, or a burden to others
- Self-destructive or risk taking behavior, especially when it involves alcohol, drugs, or weapons

You are stronger than you think; Please reach out and seek help!

If you or someone you know needs help, connect to hope.

Call or text #988, or chat at [988lifeline.org](http://988lifeline.org), to speak to a trained crisis counselor 24/7/365.

**Green Corn Festival** *The Department of Early Childhood Education hosted their 30th Annual Green Corn Festival on Friday, Oct. 21, at the Standing Pine Community Recreational Field. The event showcases pre-school aged early childhood children performing Choctaw social dances in their traditional attire in an effort to keep the Choctaw heritage alive by passing on the traditions to the DOECE children. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, Tribal Council members Loriann Ahshapanek of Standing Pine & Wilma Simpson-McMillan of Tucker offered remarks. A traditional meal was served after the performances.*



**Fun at the Fall Harvest Fest**

*On October 25-28, 2022, the Department of Natural Resources/ Agriculture Extension Program hosted Fall Harvest Fest at the Department of Natural Resources facilities & Lake Pushmataha in the Pearl River Community. Nearly 550 Pre-Kindergarten through second grade students & teachers from the Choctaw Tribal Schools & Department of Early Childhood Education participated in four fun-filled days of fall activities. The event was funded through a grant from the Choctaw Community Fund. Since 1998, the Department of*

*Natural Resources & the Department of Early Childhood Education have come together to offer fun, educational activities specifically for students in the younger grades. In addition to receiving goodies provided by Tribal departments & programs, the highlight of the day was taking a hayride across the road to the grounds of Lake Pushmataha as cutouts of their favorite animated characters were on display. On the last day, Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben was in attendance to enjoy the fun activities with the students as everybody had a great & memorable time!*

# Choctaw Tribal Schools Release Honor Roll

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

## BOGUE CHITTO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

### CHIEF'S LIST

(1st Grade) - Deyunte Fuller, Bekah John, Brooke Nickey, & Emerald Runnels.

(7th Grade) - Neveah McCool.

### PRINCIPAL'S LIST

(1st Grade) - Zayelynn Nicky & Nala Tubby.

(2nd Grade) - Cornelia Bell, Jaisely Chickaway, Jalayah Clemmons, Stoney Henry, Alistair Jim, Echo McMillan, & Lucas Thomas.

(3rd Grade) - Paisley Hickman, Taelor Crosby, Christian Hickman, Doni Mason, Ay'Zree Mitch, & Lai'Lee Wallace.

(4th Grade) - Raylynn Amos, Easton Hundley, & Tamina Jim.

(5th Grade) - Ollie Hickman & Ivan Houston.

(6th Grade) - Jessiny Cotton.  
(7th Grade) - Lenisa Allen, Terry Bounds, Chacelyn Dixon, Kamrynn Hundley, Bentley Ray, & Ameryn Robinson.

(8th Grade) - Aiden Bell, Eliason Chickaway, Amaliyah McMillan, Treighton Robinson, & Delanie Wallace.

## CHOCTAW CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

### CHIEF'S LIST

(12th Grade) - Emaliyah King, Jaleann Sockey, Quintin Sockey, Gannon Vaughn, Janina Williams, & Peyton Willis.

(11th Grade) - Chesney Amos, Jocelyn Bell, Kylinn Bell, Mattison Bell, Delaiah Billy, Lakenton Chickaway, Jabari Denson, Kaniya Frazier, Brennan Henry, Tori Henry, Tristen Henry, Kodi Jimmie, Jayce Sam, Amilia Sebastian, Ashlynn Stephens, Joelton Thomas, Connor Vaughn, Destinee Williams, Dreshawn Williams, & Koie Williams.

(10th Grade) - Amari Amos, Kethan Anderson, Karli Bell, Damian Billie, Kaegan Henry, Mauhree Jones, Taelan Martin, Raiyleigh Perry, Christianna Weeks, & Brylee Willis.

(9th Grade) - Alexandria

Amos, Ryleigh Anderson, Akaylin Bell, Caitlyn Bounds, Yuriana Crosby, A'lanya Evans, Marlena Fraire-Rains, Cambee Johnson, Kayliona Kessinger, Tracell King, Leah Lewis, Luis Macario-Tomas, Nyla McCool, Ellee McMillan, Dailyynn Willis, & Delianna Wilson.

### HONOR ROLL

(12th Grade) - Audrianna Billy, Tyra Billy, Jathan Briscoe, Colen Dixon, Kaisen Edwards, Johann Espinosa, Hunter Farve, Jacob Frazier, Bonifacia Hernandez, Breanna Isaac, Aison Jim, Christy John, Mathias Johnson, Leonard Kopaddy, Gage L. Lewis, Deangelo Lovato, Destiny Montoya-Hickman, Ethan Nanaeto, Haley Nelson, Hailee Stephens, Demidrea Stokes, Kaydee Taylor, Isaiah Thomas, Deshaylee Tubby, Elaine Tubby, Tigel Tubby, Waniya Tubby, Keshahn Wallace, Cheyanne Weeks, Kobe Willis, & Cali Wilson.

(11th Grade) - Keondrae Anderson, Aisha Bell, Mateo Ben, Gabriel Chitto, Aaliyah Clemmons, Lakaysia Dixon, Taylor Dixon, Belinda Frazier, Zeya Gomez, Brannon Isaac, Zaiyah Isaac, Delayla Jenkins, Layla Jim, Alan John, Jr., Seth John,

Kaysa Johnson, Truman Lewis, Eric Martin, Lorena Martinez, Jamie McCarty, Rayna Mendez, Brandon Mesteth, Peyton Mingo, Tessney Morris, Melanie Perez, Alesia Roa, Richie Shoemake, J'Haven Smith, Zylar Thomas, Destini Tubby, Jorgan Vaughn, Jalen Willis, Kaily Willis, Kambridge Willis, Markus Willis, Nataysia Willis, & Tayla Willis.

(10th Grade) - Dominic Amos, Tajha Bell, Skyler Ben, Brecailyn Billy, Almera Charlie, Sanjaya Chickaway, Aubree Cotton, Andre' Dan, Christian Davis, Desiny Hickman, Abram Isaac, Isaiah Johnson, Khyal Johnson, Tamara Johnson, Tehya Ketcher, Lyriq McMillan, Jade Montoya-Hickman, Lela Morris, Nathanael Nicky, Dayleona Phillips, Alissia Sebastian, Adarius Shoemake, Lola Slocum, T. J. Thomas, Ezra Triplett, Jaryan Wesley, Jonathan Willis, Karidee Willis, Keira Willis, Cruz Wilson, & Jzayah Wilson.

(9th Grade) - Olin Alex, Yazzlynn Alex, Danity Anderson, Adam Bell, Peyton Bell, Zaiya Bell, Zoe Bell, Anniston Billy, Silas Billy, Arianna Cotton, Lexie Cotton, Jmearie Davis, Xhaiden Edwards,

see HONOR ROLL, pg. 22

## CTS Students Honored for Perfect Scores

*Congratulations to students in the Choctaw Tribal Schools who made perfect scores on their state tests. Students were honored during pre-game festivities during CCHS Homecoming on October 14. On October 28, the students were honored with a "Perfect Score Luncheon" at Clearwater Key Beach Club in Choctaw. They received banners & words of encouragement from Tribal Chief Cyrus*



*Ben & Director of Schools Dr. Randy Grierson. Honorees include: (Choctaw Central High School) Seth Lewis, Keydren Thompson, Kanyon Tubby, Keondrae Anderson,*

*Ulyla King, Chloe Wesley; (Choctaw Central Middle School) Beauwy Bell; (Conehatta Elementary School) Kinsley King Alex Smith, Shyne Chickaway; (Pearl River Elementary School) Traih'sin John, Payton Meely, D'Anthony Willis, Kamarii Cantrell, Iylah King; (Red Water Elementary School) Ashlyn Killingsworth, Jaysena Wishork, Nylah Wilson, Serena Tubby; & (Tucker Elementary School) Bryceton McMillan, Jake Segenhagen, Hunter Segenhagen.*

**HONOR ROLL ..... continued from page twenty-one**

Devree Farve, Jazzlyn Gomez, James Hickman, Jamiya Hudson, Elias Isaac, Dichelle Jim, Prentiss Jim, Adarius Lewis, Ryan Lewis, Jr., Seth Lewis, Ellayla McMillan, Malaki Morris, Tristy Phillips, Lexi Rodriguez, Nataelynn Sockey, Tyris Stokes, Keydren Thompson, Trinity Tubby, Mikayla Wallace, Alexis Weeks, Christian Weeks, Clemmie Wickson, Zaymian Williamson, Connor Willis, Deyanara Willis, Kenyon Willis, Neshoba Willis, & Peyton Willis.

**CHOCTAW CENTRAL MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**CHIEF'S LIST**

(8th Grade) - Kailynn Perry.

**HONOR ROLL**

(7th Grade) - Beauwy Bell, Osi Chapman, Anabella Farve, Dracetin Isaac, Elijah Jimmie, Jalaya Routh, Ashton Stephens, Westbrook Thompson, Carmella Tubby, Ni'Leyah Williams, & Brylas Willis.

(8th Grade) - Dorian Bell, Ty Briscoe, De'Andre Clemons, Fred Comby, Hayden Deson, Hiahni Denson, Josias Hickman, Ariela Jefferson, Asante Johnson, Shastyn Lewis, Jermaine Mingo, Anslee Shumake, Jake Steve, Callie Tubby, Sedney White, Kelli Williams, & Nalayna Willis.

**CONEHATTA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

**CHIEF'S LIST**

(1st Grade) - Hannah Crosby, Cheri Hicks, Tobias John, April Lewis, Balian Morris, Espyn Stephens, Haiden Willis, & Gracie Wilson.

(2nd Grade) - Langston Logan, Zoe Wallace, & Ka'Draizlyn Williams.

(5th Grade) - Rodgrick Anderson & Kinsley King.

(6th Grade) - Konley Ander-

son.  
(8th Grade) - Taijah Kessinger.

**PRINCIPAL'S LIST**

(1st Grade) - Brayas Bell, Raydon Bell, Da'Nylie Ben, Ameira Edwards, Everly Evans, Roslyn Farmer, Bryten Jefferson, Paisley Jefferson, Christian Mingo, Kaelynn Sardina, Jaycee Shoemake, Deandre Shumake, & Devante Tubby.

(2nd Grade) - Davaeya Christie, Kashay Charlie, Deanalyn Chickaway, Miley Dixon, Kari Hicks, Daegan Isaac, Laney Jefferson, Da'Niley Shoemake, Ryan Shumake, Jr., Namiayah Tubby, Peyton Wesley, Myles Williamson, Kelane Willis, Janice Wilson, & Kylyse Yazzie.

(3rd Grade) - Teyshoni Farmer, Ori Stephens, Charlaya Steve, Kayden Thomas, & Trevor Thomas.

(4th Grade) - Nadaleigh Chickaway, Shyne Chickaway, Colton Hickman, Macie Jefferson, Makiya Logan, Zaydrian Reynolds, Jay Shoemake, Jr., Zayvion Shoemake, & Randalin Wilson.

(5th Grade) - Javaylius Chickaway, Midnite Hall, & Aubrey Wilson.

(6th Grade) - Zahyce Bell, Miley Flores, Carson Jimmie, Alexis Smith, Kinsley Thomas, Tailyn Tubby, Jes'sias Williams, & Justamia Wilson.

(7th Grade) - Shanshia Mingo.

(8th Grade) - Lillian Hickman, Taylor Jefferson, Tiarri Kessinger, Joshua McMillan, & Zaiyt'n Sockey-Anderson.

**PEARL RIVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

**CHIEF'S LIST**

(1st Grade) - Jayden Anderson, Danario Bell, Kysen Dix-

on, Taurasi Sardina, Kaison Thomas, Carly Baker, Arlando Bigpond, Remington Isaac, Aiyanna Chandler, Aceton Willis, Semaycelynn Bell, Ayame Jim, Alston Meely, Kemper Stafford, & Amariann Wishork.

(2nd Grade) - Kaycson Clements, Hamaya Morris, Kodchakorn Billie, Braylon Clemons, Ahlaric Hernandez, Kaylee McMillan, Tamatoa Bald Eagle, J'Hazlyn Bell, Khyrii Cantrell, Garrett Johnson, & Maydream York.

(3rd Grade) - Zaine Bell, Raine Billy, Neyalih Dixon, Hazelin Joe, Adelyn Daniel, Shohmalali Dixon, & Neilani Thompson.

(4th Grade) - Kahlon Edwards, Anzaerius Huddleston, Iylah King, Laiya Willis, & Dawson Tubby.

(5th Grade) - Karyton Hudson & Aryanna Mitch.

**PRINCIPAL'S LIST**

(1st Grade) - La'Ryden Cotton, Piper Isaac, Beth Lewis, Adriel Mitch, Anakin Mitch, Nevaeh Toledo, Josie Wallace, Zayvier Wesley-Gamarra, Kaleyah Denson, Hayden Dixon, Ethan Hickman, Khalani Isaac, Zendaya Jefferson, Ashmariah McMillan, Hushtoposhik McMillan, Za'liyah Moncriease, Calvin Willis, Keyon Willis, Skyla Willis, Im'Unique Allen, Kleilali Dixon, Javen Frazier, Crimson Robinson, Denaje Bell, & Oliver Carr.

(2nd Grade) - Kinya Bell, Xavery Gomez, Logan Hickman, Kaiseton Shell, Jaylon Williams, Kyler Willis, Baylan Buffalomeat, Teyana Clemons, Jalanna Dixon, Kason Isaac, Kylus John, Trenton Kinsolving, Kaeden Marshall, Ashlyne McMillan, Isaiah Mingo, Mylee Ben, Dakaizlee Clements, Sophia Diaz, Riley Isaac, Kyler Jim, Dez'lyn Shumake, Christopher Barojas, Jayce Isaac, Bryson John, Krymsen

McMillan, & Lane Willis.  
(3rd Grade) - Jaiyce'Yann Bell, Okshomichi Kyree Bell, Lyla Tubby, Alice Ferris, Kolvin Isaac, Madalyn Jimmie, Hazzen Thomas, Liliana Thompson, Brydan Lewis, Mariah McBeath, Onnahili Morris, Elilee Steve, Cayzrea Stoliby, Anna'Laiya Tubby, Drey Williams, Jordan Williams, Eva Willis, Stormie Willis, & Kawhi York.

(4th Grade) - D'Ananlyn Bell, Kazden Ben, Andym Bigpond, Paeton Gibson, Kady Hickman, Da'Leigh Johnson, Jordana Polk, Messiah Stoliby, Dezmond Willis, Ladarian Bell, Kamarii Cantrell, A'mi Clements, Peyton Eaves, Traih'sin John, Payton Meely, Felicianna Orduno, Jaciryn Vaughn, Natanya Allen, Aloni Dan, Jaythan Dixon, Deonte Isaac-Carter, Hunter John, Manali'i Bald Eagle, Truin Dixon, Chanceton Shoemake, & D'Anthony Willis.

(5th Grade) - Caybriana Hickman, Bella Millsaps, Kaecety Williams, Chashion Dixon, Sanaeya Martin, Taven Tubby, Uriah Ben, Kaelynn Chickaway, Nevaeh Garcia, Amaya Isaac, Kaylene Willis, Jaiycelynn Bell, Paizley Dixon, & Tylasia Hughes.

(6th Grade) - Sherman Billie, Wyatt Chickaway, Kairyn Dixon, Brandon Lewis, Khanzlee Richardson, Nikolai Denson, Riley Meely, Nizhoni McMillian, Ameer Stell, & Arizona Willis.

**STANDING PINE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

**CHIEF'S LIST**

(1st Grade) - Violet Farve, Colt Frazier, Draeden Sam, & Garilayne Willis.

(2nd Grade) - Krailee

**continued next page**

# PFE Board Holds First Meeting of the School Year

Title I Parent & Family Engagement Board (PFE) met for its September Board meeting at the Ayipa Cafe as 23 members,



**LEFT**, PFE Chair Renata Morris (left) with new Board Member Carletta Denson of the Pearl River Community. **RIGHT**, From left to right, PFE Chair Renata Morris with Pearl River Council Member Nigel Gibson & Dr. Randall Grierson, Director of Schools. Gibson was accepting the Outstanding Choctaw Educator award on behalf of his mother, Patricia Martin Gibson.



**LEFT**, PFE Chair Renata Morris (center) with Toniya Lay, Director of Behavioral Health (left), & Tiffani Riggen, Outreach Prevention Educator. **RIGHT**, From left to right are 2022-'23 PFE Chair Diana Alex, 2022-'23 Co-Chair Denise John, & Title I Coordinator Heather Adams.

guests, & staff enjoyed a delicious lunch prepared & served by Culinary Arts students & their instructor, Marinda Woodruff, at C-TEC.

PFE Chair Renata Morris welcomed guests as she introduced new Board member Carletta Denson. She will represent the Pearl River Community.

Patricia Martin Gibson was recognized as September's Outstanding Choctaw Educator. Patricia has worked with the school system for 28 years. She has worked as an Administrative Assistant to the Director of Education & served in the Bureau of Indian Education's Title I Program. She currently serves as the Choctaw Tribal Schools' Registrar.

Patricia is from the Pearl River Community where she attended elementary & middle school.

She graduated from Choctaw Central High School & furthered her education at Mississippi State University. She is the mother of three adult children, grandmother to 11, & great-grandmother of two.

Patricia was unable to attend the Board meeting, but her son, Pearl River Councilman Nigel Gibson, accepted the award on her behalf.

Toniya Lay, Director of Choctaw Behavioral Health, & Tiffani Riggen, Outreach Prevention Educator at Choctaw Health Center, presented a very informative & timely presentation on Bullying

Dr. Randall Grierson, Director of Schools, relayed information about improvements in the schools' performance. The schools have seen 70 percent growth on ELA & Math scores since 2021. This reflects a 36 percent increase over 2021 scores.

All CTS families are encouraged to participate in the Read 20 Initiative. Parents & students are encouraged to use the Stop-IT app on their phones to report problems.

Diana Alex will serve as the 2022-2023 PFE Chair & Denise John will serve as Co-Chair. Delnita Jones was elected to serve as Board Member At-Large.

For further information, please contact Heather Adams at 601-663-7640 or Diane Johnston at 601-656-5724.



Pictured, from left to right, are members of the C-TEC Culinary Arts class, instructor Marinda Woodruff, & students Teressa Willis, Alex Comby, Keira Willis, & JaMarcus Wesley.

Chapman, & Teyari Primer.  
(3rd Grade) - Treyvon Dixon, Cerulean Lewis, Braden Sam, Grayson Tangle.

(4th Grade) - Jaric Anderson.

### HONOR ROLL

(1st Grade) - Rueshawn Allen, Jashayen Bell, Hayden Martinez, Gracelynn McMillan, & Darnesha Willis.

(2nd Grade) - Azalea Farmer, Cedric Hickman, Charly John, Traceton Reed, & Hunter Sam.

(3rd Grade) - Bailee Frazier, Liliana Frazier, Jack John, Avia Thompson, & Riley Wilson.

(4th Grade) - Izden Charlie, Kenaric Cotton, Hamiah Frazier, Avery Hardy, Dasan Isaac,

Raenise Jefferson, Faith Lewis, Paige Lewis, Zander Lewis, Milayla Shomo, & Elizabeth Willis.

(5th Grade) - Melody Frazier, Jayden Hardy, Daisy Isaac, & Mel Lindsey.

(6th Grade) - Kalayana Allen, Summer Lewis, Ansen McMillan, & Tekhyius Primer.

### TUCKER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

#### CHIEF'S LIST

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

(2nd Grade) - Keilani Gib-

son, Cooper Jefferson, Eve Lewis, & Rhyus York.

(3rd Grade) - Arialyn Henry, Keianna Lewis, & Carter York.

(4th Grade) - Crisney Perry.

(5th Grade) - Leim McMillan.

(7th Grade) - Bryceton McMillan & Braeson Sam.

(8th Grade) - Eric Shumake & Canyon Tubby.

#### PRINCIPAL'S LIST

(1st Grade) - Jayston Fields-Amos.

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

(3rd Grade) - Nathaniel Amos, Karson Bell, Kaleb

Farmer, Renaya Farmer, Ja'sia Henry, Savion King, James Polk, Liam Thomas, Jacaius Willis, Raijen Willis, & Rylee Young.

(4th Grade) - Paycen Comby, Braydon Farmer, Mylah Gibson, & A'Ria McMillan.

(5th Grade) - Greatone Ben, Madelynn Henry, Pepper Jones, Lindraya King, Damari Thomas, Kaidence Thompson, Elliana Tubby, & Claire Willis.

(6th Grade) - Kollier Thomas.

(7th Grade) - Marshall Mingo & Esiason Willis.

(8th Grade) - Annabelle Anderson & Colsen Stell.

# Runners Compete for Cross Country Titles

The 2022 MHSAA State Cross Country Championships were held at Choctaw Trails in Clinton, Miss., on November 7 & 9. Several Tribal student-athletes participated for their respective schools.

In the Class 5A championships on Nov. 7, Neshoba Central High School placed 5<sup>th</sup> in the overall girls team division. Freshman Kyli Truss placed 6<sup>th</sup> in the individual standing as she finished the over 5,000 meter course with her time of 22:33.6. She was named an All-State medalist.

Junior Katelyn Williams finished 26<sup>th</sup> with her time of 25:38.3; junior Ruth Dixon placed 30<sup>th</sup> with a time of 26:05.0; freshman Yazi Williams placed 54<sup>th</sup> with a time of 29:53.5; & junior Kailyn Willis placed 60<sup>th</sup> with her time of 30:44.3.

In the boys division, Neshoba finished 3<sup>rd</sup> overall. Freshman Zyan Hickman placed 13<sup>th</sup>

individually and was named an All-State medalist with his time of 19:02.7.

Seventh grader Quinton Dan finished 15<sup>th</sup> with his time of 19:29.3; Emjae Willis placed 36<sup>th</sup> with a time of 21:34.7; & senior Omar Williams finished 45<sup>th</sup> with a time of 22:16.5.

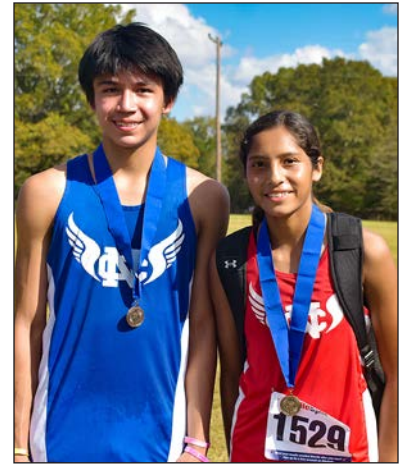
On Nov. 9, Choctaw Central High School competed in the Class 4A championships as the girls and boys both placed 8<sup>th</sup> overall in the team standings.

For the Lady Warriors, senior Hunter Farve finished 24<sup>th</sup> with her time of 23:21.18; Roslyn Bohannon placed 26<sup>th</sup> with a time of 23:38.09; sophomore Christianna Weeks placed 49<sup>th</sup> with a time of 25:10.29; senior Alexis Thomas finished 51<sup>st</sup> with a 25:25.01 time; junior Natahsia Willis placed 71<sup>st</sup> with a time of 27:10.21; & senior Emilayah King placed 79<sup>th</sup> with a time of 27:50.35.

For the Warriors, junior Brennan Henry placed 25<sup>th</sup> with his time of 18:48.62; junior Zylar Thomas finished 29<sup>th</sup> with a time of 18:53.25; eighth grader Anslee Shumake placed 45<sup>th</sup> with a time of 19:38.97; junior Peyton

Mingo placed 62<sup>nd</sup> with his time of 20:30.89; senior Colen Dixon finished 71<sup>st</sup> with his time of 20:40.77; eighth grader Deondre Clemmons placed 72<sup>nd</sup> with a time of 20:46.16; & Cali Wilson finished 121<sup>st</sup> with a time of 23:33.01.

Also in Class 4A, Newton County High School placed 6<sup>th</sup> overall in the boys standing. Senior Sebastian Johnson placed 43<sup>rd</sup> with a time of 19:37.33 & senior Dresen Jimmie finished 47<sup>th</sup> with his time of 19:40.60.



*Congratulations to Zyan Hickman & Kyli Truss of Neshoba Central for being named All-State medalists.*



*Congratulations to the Neshoba Central (above) & Choctaw Central (below) cross country teams for participation in the 2022 MHSAA State Cross Country Championships in Clinton.*



## Willis Recognized by Rotary Club

*Congratulations to Choctaw Central High School Senior Peyton Willis as he was honored as one of three high school students in Neshoba County named October 2022 Student of the Month by the Rotary Club of Philadelphia.*



## Poster, Essay Contest Winners

Students representing the Choctaw Tribal Schools were recently honored as they placed in the Neshoba County Soil & Water Conservation District Poster/Essay Contests. Each received a cash prize & ribbon for their winning entry. The theme for the contests was, "Healthy Soil=Healthy Life." Winners are listed below in their respective category.

**POSTER CONTEST** - (Grades 2-3) 1<sup>st</sup>, A'Ria McMillan, Tucker Elementary School (TES); 2<sup>nd</sup>, Mariah McBeath, TES; 3<sup>rd</sup>, Jacaius Willis TES; (Grades 4-6) 1<sup>st</sup>, Mamie Sam TES; 2<sup>nd</sup>, Braelynn Thomas, TES; 3<sup>rd</sup>, Dacey Jefferson, TES; (Grades 7-8) 1<sup>st</sup>, Shastyn Lewis, TES.

**ESSAY CONTEST** - (Grades 7-8) 1<sup>st</sup>, Shastyn Lewis, TES; (Grades 9-10) 1<sup>st</sup>, Delaiah Billy, Choctaw Central High School.



*Pictured, front row from left, Jacaius Willis, Mariah McBeath, A'Ria McMillan; back row, Mamie Sam, Shastyn Lewis, Delaiah Billy, Dacey Jefferson, & Braelynn Thomas.*



# HOMECOMING HONORS

Choctaw Central High School Senior Hunter Farve was crowned 2022 Homecoming Queen on Friday, Oct. 14, at Warrior Stadium. Members of the homecoming court are, front row from left to right, crown bearer Colt Frazier, flower girl Violet Farve; middle row, Freshman Maid Lexi Rodriguez, Senior Maid Lexie Love, Junior Maid Tory Henry, Homecoming Queen Farve, Senior Maid Emaliyah King, Sophomore Maid Brylee Willis; back row, CCHS Principal Alaric Keams, escort Abraham Rodriguez, escort Damian Tubby, escort Rory Willis, Sr., escort Randy Farve, Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, escort Elray King, Director of Schools Dr. Randy Grierson, & escort Carl Isaac.



Nanah Waiya Attendance Center held their Homecoming ceremony on Friday, Sept. 30. Congratulations to Choctaw youth Karlisha Clark as she was selected freshman maid on the homecoming court. Reigning Choctaw Indian Princess Cadence Nickey presented a token of appreciation to Miss Clark on behalf of Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben.



Congratulations to Choctaw youth Lyric Lay as she was selected junior maid on Lake High School's Homecoming Court. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben presented a token of appreciation to Miss Lay during the homecoming parade on Wednesday, Sept. 28, & congratulated her on her accomplishment.



Congratulations to Choctaw youth Rodezah Smith as she was selected senior maid on Kemper County High School's homecoming court. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben & Mrs. TaRita Ben were in attendance for Homecoming ceremonies on Friday, Sept. 23, to offer a token of appreciation to Miss Smith as they celebrated with her family.



Leake Central High School held their Homecoming ceremony on Friday, Sept. 30. Congratulations to Choctaw youths Lexi Flint (left) as she was selected junior maid & LaKristia Boyd (right) was selected sophomore maid on the homecoming court. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben presented tokens of appreciation to Miss Flint & Miss Boyd & congratulated them on their honor.

Northwest Rankin High School held their Homecoming parade on Wednesday, Sept. 21. Congratulations to Choctaw youth Ayauna Littlejohn as she was selected senior maid on the homecoming court. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben & Mrs. TaRita Ben were in attendance to offer a token of appreciation as they celebrated with Miss Littlejohn's family on her honor.



Congratulations to Choctaw youths Cara Jones (left) & Chloe Thompson (right) of Neshoba Central High School as they were selected junior maids on the homecoming court. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben offered tokens of appreciation to them during Homecoming ceremonies on Friday, Sept. 23. He then celebrated with Miss Smith & Miss Thompson's families on their honor.



# 2022 AMERICAN INDIAN DAY PRINCESSES & BRAVES



**DOECE Princesses, Braves** *The Department of Early Childhood Education held their American Indian Day Pageant on Tuesday, Sept. 20, at the Pearl River Amphitheater. Crowned were, from left to right, Princess 2nd Alternate KyEmri Bell, Princess Amare Bell, Princess 1st Alternate Madeline Watkins, Brave 1st Alternate Keaton Billy, Brave Kreedon Dixon, & Brave 2nd Alternate Paistyn Dixon.*



**CES Princesses, Braves** *Conehatta Elementary School hosted their American Indian Day Pageant on Thursday, Sept. 22, in the school gymnasium. Crowned were, from left to right, Tiny Brave Taio Tubby, Tiny Princess Peyton Wesley, Lil Brave Layden Johnson, Lil Princess Jacy Tubby, Junior Brave Dantzler Stephens, & Junior Princess Lillian Hickman.*



**BCES Princesses, Braves** *Bogue Chitto Elementary School hosted their American Indian Day Pageant on Monday, Sept. 19, in the school gymnasium. Crowned were: (Group I) Princess Lenaya Dianne Thomas, Brave Jariah Pierce Hundley; (Group II) Princess Jaislely Issi Osi Chickaway, Brave Erik Perez; (Group III) Princess Taelor Emrie Crosby, Brave Kaiden Scott Tucker; (Group IV) Princess Tenayah Shoemake, & Brave Bentley Ray.*



**PRES Princesses, Braves** *Pearl River Elementary School held their American Indian Day Pageant on Thursday, Sept. 22, in the school gymnasium. Crowned were: (Div. I) Princess Jaysa Gibson, Brave Daylen Rodriguez; (Div. II) Princess Carly Baker, Brave Alston Meely; (Div. III) Princess Azzlynn Shoemake, Brave Kolvin Isaac; (Div. IV) Princess Karyton Hudson, & Brave Cameron Truss.*



## CCMS, CCHS Princesses, Braves

*Choctaw Central Middle School/High School held their*



*American Indian Day Pageant on Thursday, Sept. 22, in Warrior Stadium. Pictured from left to right are CCMS Princess Shastyn Lewis, CCMS Brave De’Ryan Williamson, CCHS Brave Jaeon Johnson, & CCHS Princess Malaka Morris.*



**RWES Princesses, Braves** *Red Water Elementary School hosted their American Indian Day Pageant on Thursday, Sept. 22, in the school gymnasium. Crowned were: from left to right, (Category I) Princess ZaDaylia Denson, Brave Tritan Willis; (Category II) Princess Hayden Wishork, Brave Ja’Kaizen Solomon; (Category III) Princess JaeMerie Wesley, Brave Tyrell Ford; (Category IV) Princess Hadley Mack, & Brave Brady Farve (not pictured).*



**(LEFT) SPES Princesses, Braves** *Standing Pine Elementary School hosted their American Indian Day Pageant on Wednesday, Sept. 21, in the school gymnasium. Crowned were, from left to right, Tiny Brave Jacob Frazier, Tiny Princess Lillian Farve, Lil Brave Grayson Tangle, Lil Princess Bailee Frazier, Brave Zayden Isaac, & Princess Shaylee Alex.*



**(LEFT) TES Princesses, Braves** Tucker Elementary School held their American Indian Day Pageant on Thursday, Sept. 22, in the school gymnasium. Crowned were, from left to right, (Div. I) Princess Ava Gibson, Brave Zeitler Farmer; (Div. II) Princess A'Ria McMillan, Brave Dominic Willis; (Div. III) Princess Greatone Ben, & Brave Cameron Gibson.

## Lady Rockets Receive State Championship Rings

The 2021-2022 Neshoba Central Lady Rockets basketball team was honored on Friday, Sept. 16, during a championship ring ceremony prior to the Neshoba Central-Holmes County Central football game. The Lady Rockets completed a perfect 33-0 season on their way to winning the 2022 MHSAA Class 5A state basketball championship last March in Jackson. Congratulations Lady Rockets & good luck in the upcoming season!



## Warriors Conclude 2022 Season in 4A Playoffs

The Choctaw Central Warriors football team saw their season come to an end in the first round of the MHSAA Class 4A playoffs with a 41-0 defeat to the Clarksdale Wildcats on Friday, Nov. 4, at Clarksdale. The Warriors were 5-4 in the regular season prior to their playoff loss. It was their fourth consecutive appearance in the playoffs. The high-



light of the 2022 season was their win in the Battle of the Nations rivalry game over the Cherokee Braves 30-20 on Sept. 2, in Cherokee, NC.

# Congratulations Seniors!

HONORING OUR TRIBAL STUDENT-ATHLETES DURING SENIOR NIGHTS 2022

**CCHS SENIORS HONORED** Choctaw Central High School held Senior Night activities on Thursday, Oct. 27, at Warrior Stadium. Honored were seniors in football, band, cheer-leading, & cross country. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben presented each senior a token of recognition. Honored were: **(football)** Jeriah Jimmie, Brydon Wesley, Channing Jimmie, Ruben Mendez, Aison Jim, Jaeton Johnson, Braylon McMillian, Reilly Denson, Taiton Stokes, Haygen Anderson, Gage Lewis, Amzie Anderson, Brendon Morris, Nickolus Farmer, Gannon Vaughn, Kookie Thompson-Steve, manager Braylon Smith; **(band)** Christian Williams, Janina Williams, Kaiden Anderson, Trevor Frazier, Peyton Willis, Bonifacio Hernandez, Mathias Johnson, Sierra Willis, Ellianna Ben; **(cheer)** Mandy Proctor, Audrianna Billy; **(cross country)** Alexis Thomas, Hunter Farve, Colin Dixon, Cali Wilson; **(multiple activities)** Natayah Anderson (band,

cheer), Saylor Gibson (band, cheer), & Emalayah King (band, cheer, cross country). Not pictured are Kattielyn Johnson (band) & Kenyun Thomas (cheer). **SENIOR PICS CONTINUED NEXT PAGES**







### VOLLEYBALL SENIORS HONORED

Choctaw Central High School hosted Senior Night for volleyball on Sept. 13. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben presented seniors Malaka Morris, Alexis Thomas, & Keshahn Wallace tokens of recognition for their achievements. Also honored was Head Coach Elyse Willis as she coached her last game at CCHS. She accepted a position at East Central Community College as the women's basketball assistant coach. Congratulations & good luck on her future endeavour!



### KCHS HOSTS SENIOR NIGHT

Kemper County High School hosted Senior Night for volleyball on Tuesday, October 4, 2022. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben was in attendance to present senior Rodezah Smith with a token of recognition & later joined her family during the recognition ceremony.



### SENIOR NIGHT AT NWAC

Nanah Waiya Attendance Center hosted Senior Night for volleyball on Tuesday, Oct. 4. Senior Angel Clemmons was honored as Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben presented her with a token of recognition & later joined her family during the recognition ceremony.

**NCHS HONORS SENIORS** Neshoba Central High School hosted Senior Night activities for football on Oct. 14, JROTC & cross country on Oct. 7, & volleyball on Oct. 4. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben presented seniors a token of recognition. Honored were: (football) Dakiren Wilson, Isaiah Dixon, Keegan Thompson, Demyias Mingo, Zander Benn, Ayers Chickaway; (JROTC) Frederick Rush & Zachariah Waiter; (cross country) Tamaya Hampton & Omar Williams; (volleyball) Nautica Bacon.

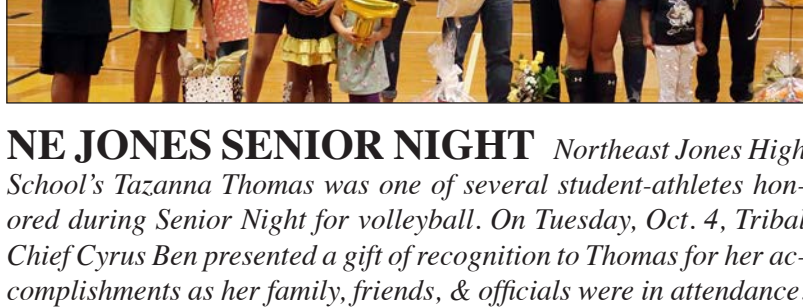
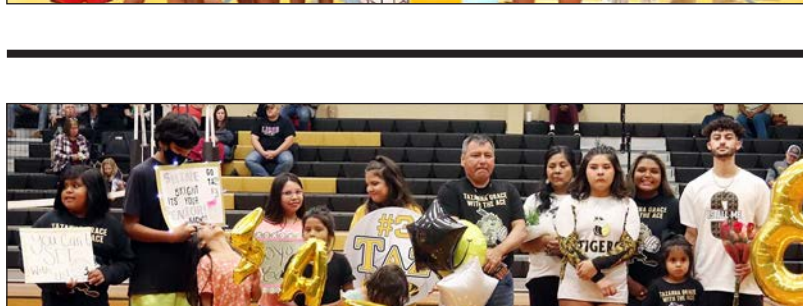


**UNION SENIOR HONORED** Union High School hosted Senior Night for football on Thursday, Oct. 27. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben presented Choctaw youth Davorion McDonald a token of recognition for his achievements.



### SENIORS HONORED BY NCHS

Newton County High School hosted Senior Night activities for football & cross country on Thursday, Oct. 13. A volleyball ceremony was held on Oct. 3. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben presented tokens of recognition to each senior & celebrated with the families during the ceremonies. Honored were: (football) Greer Billy & Sebastian Anderson; (cross country) Sebastian Johnson & Dresden Jimmie; & (volleyball) BreAnna Anderson.



portunity to have fun while learning the fundamentals of football & cheerleading. They participate in area leagues where they compete with other youth football programs. Congratulations to the young Warriors & cheerleaders on a job well done during the season.

### Warrior Youth Football Honored

Participants & volunteer coaches of the Warriors Youth Football program were honored during pre-game ceremonies on Friday, Oct. 14, at Warrior Stadium. The program provides Tribal youth an op-

**NE JONES SENIOR NIGHT** Northeast Jones High School's Tazanna Thomas was one of several student-athletes honored during Senior Night for volleyball. On Tuesday, Oct. 4, Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben presented a gift of recognition to Thomas for her accomplishments as her family, friends, & officials were in attendance.



# Who Knew the Real World Cost So Much

Submitted by Kaiti Ford, MSU Extension Agent



Participants in the Employment & Training summer session got a glimpse on how much “the real world” costs on a monthly basis. Participants were given an occupation, as close to their desired occupation as possible, & a scenario to “budget” their expenses needed for them & their family. Participants went to stations representing certain expenses, such as transportation, food, entertainment, clothing, etc., & chose categories from each station that best fit their budget. All participants realized the “real world” costs a lot! A big thank you to Julia Lindsey, Dawnena Jefferson & the Employment & Training Department for allowing the Tribal MSU Extension Office to come & implement this wonderful program to your department!



**CHOCTAW CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM**  
&  
**CHOCTAW EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**  
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**FOR MORE INFORMATION AND COURSE LISTINGS**  
Contact The Career & Technical Program Angeline King or Bernadine Dixon @ 601-650-1745 or 601-650-1749

SCHOOL APPLICATIONS are available at the Choctaw Manpower Training Center Career & Technical Department. All documentation is required before the deadline date. **INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS** will not be accepted. Applications can be emailed upon request

Call or contact the program for information, for the Spring Semester Classes.  
601-650-1749 or 601-650-1745

“STRIVING FOR EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE”



## CLP Staff Completes Homebuyer Education Training

Staff members of the Choctaw Loan Program (CLP) recently completed a week-long “Pathways Home Train-the-Trainer” class for Homebuyer Education & Counseling by the National American Indian Housing Council. The class consisted of topics such as: Homebuyer Education Best Practices; Housing Affordability & Budgeting; Credit; One-on-One Counseling; Foreclosures; & more. All housing applicants are required to attend a homebuyer education session & receive a certificate before their application is presented for final approval. The CLP staff will begin holding classes for homebuyers soon. If you have a completed housing application, CLP will inform you soon of a class start date. For more information, call 601-656-0056. Pictured above, front center, is Darlene Willis; middle row, from left to right, Alicia Wesley, LaShannon Ferris, Nana Frazier, Patricia Baccus; back row, Alex Dixon, Benjamin Stephens, & Mike Williamson.



## Diamond Dreams Receives Donation

Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben threw out the ceremonial first pitch at the Diamond Dreams ball field in Philadelphia on Tuesday evening, Oct. 18. Organized in 2010, Diamond Dreams is a baseball/softball league for special needs children of Neshoba and surrounding counties. An avid supporter of the league, Chief Ben presented a check for \$1000 on behalf of Pearl River Resort and the Tribe to the Diamond Dreams league. Local school organizations, PRR Associates, & numerous volunteers assisted with activities that evening. As an added attraction, a fireworks show was held to the delight of everyone in attendance.



**MBCI Halloween Fun** The 2022 MBCI Community Drive-Thru Trunk or Treat events were held on Wednesday, Oct. 26, in the communities of Bogue Chitto, Bogue Homa, Crystal Ridge, Pearl River, Red Water, Standing Pine, & Tucker. Families had a great time as they received candy & goodies, compliments of Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben & the Tribal Administration, the Choctaw Tribal

Council, local development clubs, Tribal programs, organizations, & families. Drive-Thru Trunk or Treat events were also held in Henning, TN on Saturday, Oct. 22 & Conehatta Community on Sunday, Oct. 30. Trick or Treat events were held at the Choctaw Town Center on Thursday, Oct. 27, while Chahta Immi Cultural Center, Choctaw Transit, & Risk Management hosted their events on Halloween.

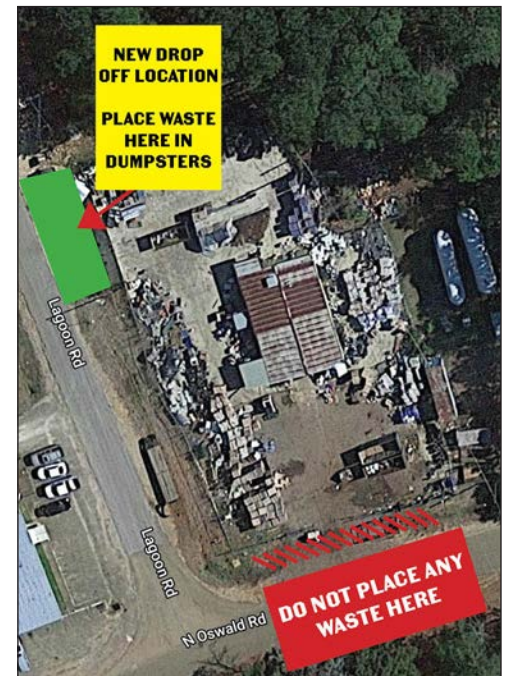


**FVVS Hosts Day of Remembrance**

The Family Violence & Victim's Services Program hosted a program observing the National Day of Remembrance for Murder Victims on Thursday, Sept. 22, at Lake Pushmataha in Choctaw. The purpose of the event was to focus on the impact of murder on families & communities, & ways to support & serve surviving family members. To memorialize Tribal members who lost their lives to violence, a bench overlooking the lake was dedicated in their memory.

**From the Office of Environmental Protection**

Due to the amount of traffic & hazardous conditions for employees & Tribal members on Oswald Road in the Pearl River Community, Choctaw Solid Waste & Recycling Center will be moving the drop off point for household rubbish & recyclables from the Oswald Road gate around the corner to the Lagoon Road gate.



Starting Nov. 7, any household rubbish or recyclables will need to be dropped off at the new drop off point on Lagoon Road. In addition to being safer, the new location has a concrete surface & will allow for easier unloading of materials. Please place materials in the dumpsters provided. Do not place any waste at the Oswald Road gate.



**Day for Kids held at Choctaw Sportsplex**

On Saturday, Sept. 17, the Boys & Girls Club of the MBCI held its annual Day for Kids at the Choctaw Sportsplex in the Pearl River Community. Day for Kids creates an opportunity for an entire community to get involved with the development of kids. Simply having fun for a few hours allows kids to feel energetic & establish relationships through activity. When kids interact with others on a positive level, they tend to think more positive of themselves. Oftentimes, that positive thinking leads to making better decisions as they grow. Families had

the chance to participate in fun activities such as cornhole, face painting, cake walk, football throw, stickball throw, bingo, volleyball, basketball, inflatable jumpees, & a princess & brave pageant. Congratulations to newly crowned Princesses Mylee Ben, Kandison Nickey, Nolynn Bell, & Braves Kason Isaac, Kenyon Wesley, & Zaymian Williamson. A lunch was provided to participants. The event also highlighted several Tribal departments & programs & the services they provide to the community.

**CHOCTAW TOWN CENTER**  
*Outdoor Market*  
**COME JOIN US!!**  
**A GREAT PLACE FOR A SALE!!**  
 Yard sales, fundraisers, food sales, or bake sales for individuals, organizations or ball teams.  
 Applications & guidelines can be picked up at the Office of Economic Development. If you have any questions, call DeeSandra Ben at 601-650-1612.

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### Reed Honored for Service

Choctaw Wildlife & Parks Department Director Mitzi Reed was honored on Friday, Nov. 4, for 22 years of loyal service to Wildlife & Parks & the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians. Reed (pictured far right) accepted a position with the Native American Fish & Wildlife Society (NAFWS). Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben presented a gift of appreciation to Reed during a luncheon held on the grounds of the Smith John Justice Center. The event was attended by her family, friends, coworkers, & Choctaw Youth Conservation Corps members.



### Wilson Retires from Recreation

A retirement celebration for Carl Wilson was held on Sep. 6, at the Pearl River Community Gymnasium. Wilson retired after 26 years of service to the MBCI Recreation Department. In attendance for the celebration were Mr. Wilson's family, Tribal officials, & several members of the Recreation Department. Pictured above, Wilson (center) with his family. Below, Wilson with members of the Recreation Department & Tribal officials. Congratulations on your retirement & good luck on your future endeavors.



### Pickle Retires from CFD

Congratulations to Choctaw Fire Department Director & MBCI EMA/Homeland Security Director Phil Pickle as he celebrated his last day of service to the Tribe on August 31, 2022. He retired after 25 years of service. Members of CFD, along with officials, Tribal Council members in attendance, & Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, offered their appreciation & tokens of appreciation. Good luck on your future endeavors & happy retirement!

### New Recruits Answers the Call

Firefighters Cobi John & Peyton Bell of the Choctaw Fire Department graduated with Class 198 from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1001 Firefighter I-II course held at the Mississippi State Fire Academy in Jackson.

classroom, & hands-on instruction in the areas of fire behavior, fire suppression, rescue, incident command, hazardous materials, & other fire related topics. This course meets & exceeds the NFPA for Firefighter Qualifications & the uniform minimum training standards stated in the Mississippi Code section 45-11-7.

This intense seven-week course includes online,

The Mississippi State Fire Academy is a division of the Mississippi continued next page

### Waiter Graduates

Congratulations to newly certified MBCI Wildlife Ranger Jakob Waiter on his graduation from the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center!



### Bell Completes MEFO Training

Congratulations to Fire Inspector Gabriel N. Bell of the Choctaw Fire Department as he completed the MS Executive Fire Officer (1021-III-IV) training at the Mississippi State Fire Academy in Jackson on Oct. 13, 2022.



### Negrete Retires from Court Services

Shirley Negrete celebrated her numerous years of service to the Choctaw Tribal Court Services with a retirement luncheon on August 31, 2022. Members of the court services staff were in attendance as Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben presented a traditional Choctaw basket as a token of appreciation for her service to the Tribe. Congratulations on your retirement & good luck on your future endeavours.

Insurance Department. State Fire Marshal Mike Chaney & Academy Executive Director Terry Wages conclude that firefighters, through their newly acquired skills & knowledge, will be an asset to the fire departments they represent.

“We are excited to introduce our newest group of certified MS Firefighters that will be tasked with protecting our communities all across our great state,” said Director Wages.



From left are Choctaw Fire Department Firefighters Cobi John & Peyton Bell.

## Choctaw Language Finds Home on World’s Most Translated Website

The most translated website in the world — jw.org, the official website of Jehovah’s Witnesses — includes content in more than 1,030 languages, including many Indigenous languages considered at risk of dying out.

Among them are Central Alaskan Yupik, spoken by some 10,000 in Alaska, as well as Blackfoot, Cherokee, Choctaw, Hopi, & Navajo.

“Translating Indigenous languages is a labor of love for all those involved & for our organization,” said Robert Hendriks, the U.S. spokesman of Jehovah’s Witnesses. “The work is challenging & time consuming. But our goal isn’t to make a profit, it’s to provide the Bible’s comforting message clearly & accurately to as many people as possible.”

Patty Nickerson, full-blood Choctaw, is a member of the Philadelphia,



Patty Nickerson

MS congregation of Jehovah’s Witnesses. The Witnesses knocked on her door more than 25 years ago.

“I was living in Newton County at the time,” explains Patty. “They answered all my questions using the Bible & that caught my interest, especially when I learned God has a name — Jehovah.”

Today, Patty continues to volunteer her time sharing what she’s learned from the Bible with her family & others in the community; especially those living on the Choctaw Reservation.

The reservation of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians reaches into eight counties in the state (Neshoba, Leake, Newton, Scott, Jones, Attala, Kemper, & Winston). The tribe is one of three bands of Choctaw with federal recognition in the U.S.

“I was raised on the reservation with my mom who was a single parent,” says Patty. “When I first began studying the Bible, she was concerned. But in time, she saw the benefits that studying had brought to me. She even began having her own Bible study but became ill & passed away during that time.”

Today, Patty’s husband & a daughter share her faith. Another daughter & several grandchildren are now studying the Bible, too.

“Choctaw almost became a lost language,” says Patty. “Having Bible-based information & videos in



Patty, in traditional Choctaw attire, conducts a virtual Bible study in the Choctaw language.



Download the Choctaw Bible App

Scripture and hymns written in Choctaw and highlighted with audio.

- Christmas Hymns
- The Book of 1,2,3 John
- Christmas & Easter Story link
- About CBTC

Scan with your devices to download:

Android

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If you cannot scan:

Android users go to [www.choctawbible.com](http://www.choctawbible.com) and Click Download Choctaw Bible App

iPhone users go to the AppStore and look up Choctaw Bible.

Choctaw Bible Translation Committee  
409 Industrial Rd. Choctaw MS 39350  
601.656.5192

[info@choctawbible.com](mailto:info@choctawbible.com) • [www.choctawbible.com](http://www.choctawbible.com)

Choctaw on the jw.org website helps them to know that Jehovah is interested in Choctaw people, not just certain people. Choctaws are special to him, too.”

For Patty Nickerson, the Choctaw publications on jw.org has helped her to embrace her culture while deepening her faith.

*Submitted by Public Information Desk, Jehovah’s Witnesses, United States of America*



# IN MEMORIAM

## JEANETTE WILLIS

Graveside service for Jeanette Willis, 57, was held on Thursday, September 1, 2022, at Mt. Zion Cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.



Ms. Willis passed away on July 17. She resided in Oakland, CA & was a homemaker.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Harrison & Edna Willis; 3 sisters, 2 brothers, & a granddaughter.

Survivors include her daughters, Rosa Tubby, Diana Willis, Denisa Willis, Liana Tubby, & Julianna Tubby; son, Dalton Tubby; sisters, Eleanor Torralba & Josephine Morris; five nieces, 2 nephews, relatives, & friends.

## LEAH DAWN HAMILTON

Funeral service for Leah Dawn Hamilton, 29, was held on Sunday, August 28, 2022, at the Bogue Homa Community Gymnasium. Rev. Robert Patrick officiated.



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

Mrs. Hamilton passed away on August 23 at St. Dominic Hospital in Jackson.

She enjoyed shopping, family trips, visiting tattoo shops with her sister, & being a MSU

Bulldogs fan.

She is preceded in death by her sister, Sonya Nickey; & brother, Myron Chapman.

Survivors include her husband, Dennis Hamilton; daughters, Mariah Hamilton, & Deneshia Hamilton; sons, Dennis Hamilton, Jr., AJ Hamilton, Montell Hamilton, & Kobe Frazier; parents, Claude & Abbie Chapman; sister, Alison Bell; brothers, Curtis Chapman & Douglas Chapman; & a host of nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, relatives, & friends.

## LARIN KENT THOMAS

Funeral service for Larin Kent Thomas, 62, was held on Monday, August 29, 2022, at Macedonia Baptist Church in Conehatta. Deacon Billy Smith & Rev. Mark Patrick officiated.



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

Mr. Thomas passed away on August 24 at Anderson Regional Medical Center in Meridian.

He was a U.S. Marine Corps Veteran & graduate of East Central Community College. He was an officer with the Choctaw Police Department, security guard with Pearl River Resort then an assistant trainer with Choctaw Vocational Rehabilitation Center. He enjoyed bow hunting, fishing, & being with his grandchildren.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Golden & Dorothy Stephens Thomas; a sister, Helen Thomas; a brother, Ronnie

Wayne Thomas; a nephew, 10 aunts & 7 uncles.

Survivors include his daughter, Lakeisha Thomas; son, Gabriel Thomas; sisters, Ethel Thomas, Fannie Williamson, Ivora Johnson, & Barbara Sam; brothers, Edwin Thomas, Jesse Thomas, Donald Thomas, & Clifford Thomas; 6 grandchildren & a host of relatives & friends.

## BRUCE LEE HICKMAN

Funeral service for Bruce Lee Hickman, 65, was held on Wednesday, August 31, 2022, at the Bogue Chitto Community Gymnasium. Bro. John Frazier & Bro. Randall Joe officiated.



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

Mr. Hickman passed away on August 26 at the Choctaw Residential Center in Choctaw.

He was employed with Chahta Enterprises, Choctaw Paper Company, & Williams Bros. He enjoyed attending Jesus New Covenant Church, playing the guitar, hunting, fishing, cooking outdoors, & telling stories.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Charles Hickman, Sr. & Eva Hickman (Wallace); grandparents Henry "Enis" Wallace & Callie Wallace (Jackson), Edmond Hickman; sister, Terri Ann Hickman; brother, Elvis Hickman; & daughters, April Renee Hickman & infant girl Hickman.

Survivors include his son, Sheldon Hickman; adopted son, Braycen Cutler; brothers, Charles Hickman, Jr. & Brady Hickman; 2 granddaughters; an aunt & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

## DEACON GEORGE RICHARDSON ISAAC

Funeral service for Deacon George Richardson Isaac, 84, was held on Wednesday, September 14, 2022, at Hope Indian Baptist Church in Pearl River. Deacon Joseph Wesley, Rev. Travis Willis & Rev. Robert Patrick officiated.



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

Mr. Isaac passed away on September 9 at Merit Central in Brandon.

He was a member of Hope Indian Baptist Church & was ordained as deacon in July 2010. He was a man of faith & integrity from a generation that understood what God's Word truly meant.

He is preceded in death by his wife, Nancy Isaac; children, George Isaac, Hanzel P. Isaac, Sr., & infant daughter Felicia Isaac; parents, Rev. Hugh & Celia Isaac; sisters, Vaneda Lewis, Beauty Willis, & infant Alice Marie Isaac; & brothers, Paul D. Philmon Isaac & Rev. Emerson Isaac.

Survivors include his daughter, Lora Mitch Orduno; sister, Arnedia Duplessie; brother, Deacon Williamson Isaac; special niece, Mavis Davis; 30 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren; & a host of relatives & friends.

## MELTON ROBINSON, SR.

Funeral service for Melton Robinson, Sr., 59, was held on Wednesday, September 14, 2022, at Bogue Chitto Community Gymnasium. Deacon Kendall Wallace & Rev. Charles Doby Henry officiated.

Burial was in the Bogue

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



Mr. Robinson passed away on September 10 at his residence.

He was a tree planter, logger, & recently employed with Choctaw Agriculture. He enjoyed listening to his sons play music, dancing, hunting, fishing, playing washers, pool, gardening, telling jokes, & being a Cowboys fan.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Billy & Patsy Robinson; sister, Mary Ann Robinson; brother, Robbie Robinson; & three grandchildren.

Survivors include his wife, Tiffany Amos Robinson; daughters, Stephanie Dixon, DeAnna Robinson, Krystal Robinson, & Amelia Wallace; sons, Melton Robinson, Jr. & Jeremiah Robinson; sisters, Lonie Henry, Lisa Thompson, Martha Willis, & Elizabeth Robinson; 20 grandchildren, an aunt, & a host of relatives & friends.

**JOHN EDMUND STARR**

Graveside service for John Edmund Starr, 73, was held on Saturday, September 17, 2022, at the Starr Family Cemetery. Rev. Daniel Tubby officiated. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.



Mr. Starr passed away on September 13 at Baptist Golden Triangle Hospital in Columbus.

He enjoyed fishing, yard sales, landscaping, listening to music, & playing drums for

the Southern Starr Dancers. He taught others to dance & enjoyed talking about the Choctaw culture to others.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Summer Starr & Maggie Billy; sisters, Warner Starr Wishork, Norma Jean Starr, Dorothy Starr Wishork, & Willie Starr; & brothers, Ruben Starr, Arnold Starr, & Regis Christopher Starr.

He is survived by a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, friends, & his support dog, Baby Girl.

**BRAELEIGH NITA-OSI DIXON**

Funeral service for Braeleigh Nita-Osi Dixon, 12, was held on Monday, September 19, 2022, at Conehatta Elementary School Gymnasium. Pastor Mark Patrick officiated.



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

Miss Dixon passed away on September 13 at her residence.

She attended Conehatta Elementary School where she was a member of the Beta Club & the basketball team. She also attended the Conehatta Boys & Girls Club & enjoyed playing stickball, basketball, fast pitch softball, volleyball, making TikTok videos, & riding 4-wheelers.

She is preceded in death by her great-grandparents, Florine Billy, Selby Dixon, Bobby John, Betty Agnes Thomas, & Arthur Thomas, Sr.; step-grandfather, Jesus Sardina, Sr.; an infant sibling, 2 infant cousins, 3 great-uncles, & a step-uncle.

She leaves in God's care her mother, Brianne Thomas; father & stepmother, Glent Andrick Dixon & Mariza Sardina;

sisters, Angelia Omba Dixon & ChrisAenn Stoliby; brothers, G'lent Dixon, Messiah Stoliby, Ares Ketcher, & Tushka Thomas; grandparents, Glen Dixon, Sr., Julie Shoemake, Deric Sam, Sr., Vidal Isaac, Sr., & Vanessa Thomas; great-grandmother, Ruby John; & a host of aunts, uncles, great-aunts, great-uncles, relatives, & friends.

**DEANIE DENISE WALLACE ASHFORD**

Funeral service for Deanie Denise Wallace Ashford, 61, was held on Tuesday, October 4, 2022, at the Crystal Ridge Community Gymnasium. Rev. Jeffery Short officiated.



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

Mrs. Ashford passed away on September 26 at Anderson Regional Medical Center in Meridian.

She was previously employed with Cal-Jac Inc & Pearl River Resort. She enjoyed sewing, western movies, cooking, & helping raise her great-nieces & great-nephews.

She is preceded in death by parents, Alexander Ben Wallace & Joe Lynn Tubby; foster parents, Andrew & Sara Miller; son, Ronnie Geter; brothers, Robert Gillette, Roger Gillette, Randall Gillette, & Kenneth Miller; & a niece & nephew.

Survivors include her husband, Issac Ashford; sisters, Shirley Grant, Maggie Farmer, Mary Clark, Celia Polk, & Anita Gillette Edwards; brothers, Travis Wallace, Larry Miller, Richard Gillette, Rodney Gillette, & Velton Farmer; 2 grandchildren, & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

**VENISIA LOPEZ-FELICIANO**

Funeral service for Venisia Lopez-Feliciano, 51, was held on Wednesday, October 12, 2022, at the Bogue Homa CERF building. Rev. Chris Hodge officiated.



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

Ms. Lopez-Feliciano passed away on October 8 at South Central Regional Medical Center in Laurel.

She was a Baptist by faith, enjoyed listening to music, & being a MSU Bulldogs fan.

She is preceded in death by her father, Paul "Philmon" Isaac; daughter, Catlin Brooke Allen; sister, Amanda Isaac; brothers, Randy Jefferson, Gary Jefferson, Randall Isaac, & Delmon Isaac; & grandparents, Rev. W.C. Nickey & Josephine Nickey, Rev. Hugh Isaac & Celia Isaac.

Survivors include her daughters, Kelly Overland, Summer Allen, & Karley Overland; sons, Lance Overland, Cameron Allen, Kyle Allen, & Evan Allen; mother, Kathleen Nicky Isaac; sisters, Sandra Willis, Vonda Hickman, Sheila Isaac, & Martesha Barrack; brothers, Darris Isaac, Thurman Isaac, & Darrin Isaac; 7 grandchildren, & a host of aunts, uncles, relatives, & friends.

**FELTON LEE JOHN**

Funeral service for Felton Lee John, 71, was held on Friday, October 14, 2022, at the Pearl River Baptist Church. Pastor Mark Patrick officiated.

Burial was in the Canaan

see OBITUARIES, pg. 40

OBITUARIES ..... continued from page thirty-nine

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



Mr. John passed away on October 10 at Regency Hospital in Meridian.

He was retired from Williams Bros., & was a deacon, music director & Sunday School director at Canaan Baptist Church. He loved going to church, singing, listening to church hymns, watching sports, reading his Bible, morning walks, & being an Elvis Presley fan.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Oden John & Unakay Willis; daughter, Latonya Jeanette Allen; sisters, Janell John Vaughn, Shelly John, & baby girl John; & brothers, Freeman John & Freddie John.

Survivors include his daughters, Ashley John & Tammy John; sons, Ricky John, Nathan Allen, Harrington Allen, Jeremika John, Antonie John, & Thurston Allen; 21 grandchildren, 7 great-grandchildren, & a host of relatives & friends.

ELLIOTT RYAN JOHNSON

Funeral service for Elliott Ryan Johnson, 41, was held on Friday, October 14, 2022, at Stonewall Baptist Church in Conehatta. Deacon Joseph Wesley & Pastor Robert Patrick officiated.



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

Mr. Johnson passed away on October 10 at his residence.

He was previously employed

with Pearl River Resort as a blackjack dealer. He was a Baptist by faith & enjoyed drawing, watching movies, & beading.

He is preceded in death by his infant daughter, Destiny Faulkner; grandparents, Dale Lee & Cutie Mae Jefferson; 2 grandchildren & a nephew.

Survivors include parents, Brenda & Eddie Joe; daughter, Midnight Mist Hall; sons, Nathan Shane Cotton & Elliott Ryan Johnson, Jr.; sisters, Savannah Johnson & Cassandra Wilson; brothers, Jeremiah Joe & Elton Shoemake III; 2 grandchildren; an aunt, uncle, & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

MENA DWANN WILLIS

Funeral service for Mena Dwann Willis, 15, was held on Thursday, October 13, 2022, at Conehatta Community Gymnasium. Bro. Robert Ben officiated.



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

Miss Willis passed away on October 7 at Children's of Mississippi Hospital in Jackson.

She attended Choctaw Central High School & was a Catholic by faith. Her hobbies included painting, sewing, baking, & reading.

She is preceded in death by her sister, Sherridan Karmesha Willis; grandparents, Virginia Ann Willis, Dennis Williams & Nelson Wilson; & an uncle.

Survivors include her mother, Leslie Shoemake; father, Marcus D. Willis; sisters, Markesha D. Willis, Sharen L. Shoemake,

Leloni Shoemake, & Memorie D. Willis; a brother, Brandon K. Thomas; grandmother, Juanita Shoemake; special friend, Kodin Mingo; an aunt, uncle, & a host of relatives & friends.

FREEMAN BEN

Funeral service for Freeman Ben, 79, was held on Sunday, October 16, 2022, at Hope Indian Baptist Church in Pearl River. Deacon Joseph Wesley & Rev. Travis Willis officiated.



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

Mr. Ben passed away on October 11 at the Choctaw Residential Center in Choctaw.

He was a member of Hope Indian Baptist Church & was an Assistant Sunday School Director. He enjoyed fishing, gardening, fixing TV's & radios, crossword puzzles, & attending church. He was a mechanic & drove pulp wood trucks.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Mike Ben & Otis Tubby Ben; a daughter, Nellie Ann Ben; sons, Howard Lee Ben & Charles Freeman Ben; a sister, Sadie Hissong; a brother, David Ben; & a nephew.

Survivors include his daughter, Nancy Ann Ben Willis; a son, Jared Jaye Jim; sisters, Marcella Ben Vaughn & Doris Ben Willis; four grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; & three nephews.

WARREN LEE ISAAC

Funeral service for Warren Lee Isaac, 41, was held on Wednesday, October 19, 2022, at Hope Indian Baptist Church in Pearl River. Deacon Wil-

liamson Isaac & Pastor Mark Patrick officiated.



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

Mr. Isaac passed away on October 14 at his residence.

He attended Hope Indian Baptist Church & enjoyed hymn singing & learning his family ancestry.

He was preceded in death by his parents, George Anthony Isaac & Earlianna Jane Tubby; grandparents, George Thomas Tubby, Sr. & Ida Lewis Tubby, George Richardson Isaac & Nancy Lee Isaac; 2 aunts & 3 uncles.

Survivors include his sister, Tonya Wishork; brothers, Gerren Isaac & Boris Isaac; 4 aunts, an uncle, & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

LOLINE AMOS WALLACE

Funeral service for Loline Amos Wallace, 79, was held on Wednesday, October 19, 2022, at her residence in Macon. 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.

Ms. Wallace passed away on October 15 at Forrest General Hospital in Hattiesburg.

She was a homemaker & enjoyed hosting family celebrations, cooking hominy, fishing, & dancing.

She is preceded in death



by her husband, R.B. Wallace; parents, Wagner & Rosie Clemmons Amos; sons, Robert Wallace, Waddell Wallace, & Talon Wallace; sister, Maurine Amos Mingo; & brothers, John Amos & Billy Amos.

Survivors include her daughter, Sadie Wallace Hickman; sons, Larry Wallace & George Wallace; sisters, Corine Amos & Lilly Amos Davis; 11 grandchildren, 49 great-grandchildren, 7 great-great grandchildren, & a host of relatives & friends.

**FRANK WILLIAMSON**

Funeral service for Frank Williamson, 83, was held on Thursday, October 20, 2022, at Macedonia Baptist Church in Conehatta. Deacon Billy Smith & Pastor Robert Patrick officiated.



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

Mr. Williamson passed away on October 16 at Rush Foundation Hospital in Meridian.

Known to many as Frankie, he attended the Mississippi School for the Deaf & Blind. He married Meriva Anderson Williamson in September 1957. They moved their family to San Francisco, CA, where he was employed as a wood worker. They moved back to Conehatta in 1969. He was a member of Macedonia Baptist Church & enjoyed hunting, fishing, playing dominoes, dancing with the Choctaw elders program, watching his favorite sports teams, & traditional drumming for the Koni Hata Stickball teams & during social events.

He is preceded in death by his wife, Meriva Anderson

Williamson; parents, Arnold & Annie Mae Williamson; sisters, Rachel Wickson & Jeanette Shoemake; brothers, Milburn Williamson & Wilburn Williamson, Sr.; & 2 grandchildren.

Survivors include his daughters, Verna Williamson & Lavera Gibson; sons, Velton Williamson, Michael Williamson, & Gary Williamson; sisters, Evelyn John, Rose Mary Williamson, Anna Williamson, & Ansylin Ferris; brother, Donald Williamson; 9 grandchildren, 25 great-grandchildren, 5 great-great grandchildren, & host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

**JERIS EDWARD SHOEMAKE**

Funeral service for Jeris Edward Shoemake, 44, was held on Saturday, October 22, 2022, at the Conehatta CERF building. Gabe Swann & Bro. Eddie Johnson officiated.



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

Mr. Shoemake passed away on October 18 at UAB Hospital in Birmingham, AL.

He was employed with Conehatta Recreation & enjoyed watching New York Giants & Notre Dame football, fishing, & coaching.

He is preceded in death by his father, Joe Shoemake; & brother, Jay Elliot Shoemake, Sr.

Survivors include wife, Latissha Shoemake; daughters, Zaylee Shoemake, Zaynah Shoemake, & Hope Pesata; sons, Zapherious Shoemake, Zerious Shoemake, Zayvion Shoemake, Zay'Quan Shoemake, Tyrin Stewart, & Damien

Tsosie; mother, Regina Shoemake; sisters, Angela Dixon & Karidy Shoemake; brothers, Vincent Smith, Vince Smith, & Mitch Shoemake; 2 grandchildren, & a host of relatives & friends.

**WILLIS EUGENE TULLOS**

Graveside service for Willis Eugene Tullos, 78, was held on Monday, October 24, 2022, at Holy Rosary Catholic Cemetery in Tucker. Father Bob Goodyear, S.T., officiated. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.



Mr. Tullos passed away on October 18 at his residence.

Coach Tullos was passionate & believed in his athletes. He cared about the youth & tried to guide them in the right direction. A graduate of Mississippi State University, he had coaching & teaching stints at Choctaw Central, Cherokee, Newton County, & Philadelphia High Schools. He coached the Choctaw Central Lady Warriors to their first ever state basketball championship in 1996, & won again in 1998 & 1999. He enjoyed fishing, watching the Atlanta Braves & Dallas Cowboys, track & field, Mississippi State Athletics, & watching his favorite TV shows.

He is preceded in death by his father, James Eugene Tullos.

Survivors include his wife, Tanya Cooke Tullos; mother, Mary Ann Willis Tullos; daughters, Sonja Smith & Sandi Tullos; son, Michael Tullos; brother, Donald Tullos; 7 grandchildren, 6 great-grandchildren, 2 nieces, & a nephew.

**ANTONE JEFFERSON**

Funeral service for Antone

Jefferson, 17, was held on Thursday, October 27, 2022, at the Conehatta Community Gymnasium. Max Anderson & Pastor Mark Patrick officiated.



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

Mr. Jefferson passed away on October 23 in Conehatta.

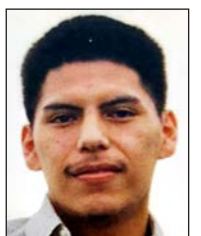
He enjoyed playing basketball, stickball, & listening to his favorite songs.

He is preceded in death by his father, Arman Jefferson, Sr.; sister, Laurinell Monk; grandparents, Patty Shoemake, Emma Jefferson, & Roy J. Steve; 5 uncles, 5 great-aunts, & 4 great-uncles.

Survivors include his mother, Vera Ann Monk; sisters, Melody Jefferson, Emmalee Monk, & DeeAngel Monk; brothers, Arman Jefferson, Jr., Carman Steve, Keaton Steve, & David Monk III; grandfather, Leran Jefferson, Sr.; 2 aunts, 4 uncles, a nephew, 5 great-aunts, a great-uncle, a great-great aunt & uncle, special godparents & godsister, & a host of relatives & friends.

**GRANT HAYS WILLIS**

Funeral service for Grant Hays Willis, 25, was held on Sunday, October 30, 2022, at the Pearl River Community Center. Minister Curtis Willis, Sr. & Pastor Thomas Ben officiated.



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

**continued next page**

Mr. Willis passed away on October 26 at his residence.

He was a 2016 graduate of Neshoba Central High School where he played basketball, ran track & cross country. He was a member of the Beaver Dam Stickball team, enjoyed sports, & gaming.

He is preceded in death by his grandparents, Gary H. Willis, Sr., Willie & Gloria Hickman; & great-grandparents, Harrison & Ruby Bell Willis.

Survivors include his father, Gary H. Willis, Jr.; mother, Lois Hickman; sister, Bailey Leyton Willis; brothers, Gary H. Willis, III & Griffith H. Willis; grandparents, Walter & Louise Wilson; & a host of aunts, uncles, relatives, & friends.

#### INFANT

#### JANAYLEE NAKAYE WILSON

Funeral services for Janaylee Makaye Wilson, one day old infant, was held on Friday, November 4, 2022, at the Pearl River Community Center. Bro. Ricky Thompson, Sr. officiated.



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

Infant Wilson passed away on October 26 at the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson.

She is preceded in death by her grandmother, Rebecca Ann Wilson; & great-grandparents, Lee & Mable Wilson, Bart & Grace Lewis.

Survivors include her parents, Jennifer Wilson & Nicholas Rush; brother, Nikolai Jani-race Rush; grandmother, Rachel Davis; grandfather. Emerick Lewis; 3 aunts, 3 uncles, & a host of relatives.

#### ADRIAN LEE DIXON

Graveside services for Adrian Lee Dixon, 49, was held on Wednesday, November 2, 2022, at the Nanih Waiya Menonite Cemetery. Deacon Kendall Wallace & Pastor Robert Patrick officiated. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.



Mr. Dixon passed away on October 29 at his residence.

He enjoyed fishing, playing washers, dominoes, texting, Facebook, attending church, & being a Nanih Waiya & Bok Cito stickball fan.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Eddie & Bobbie Jean Frazier Dixon; brother, Chris Frazier; stepchildren, Crystal Thomas & Chris Thomas; a grandchild, & a great-great aunt & great-great uncle.

Survivors include his daughter, Rebecca Lyons; sons, Mario McMillan & Andrew Dixon; sisters, Lacrisa Dixon & Priscilla Dixon; brothers, Garcia Dixon, Orlando Dixon, Orlando Dixon, Teddy Allen, & Luke Allen; special friend, Dina Thomas; 13 grandchildren, 2 aunts, an uncle, & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

#### CHARLES RAY MEELY

Memorial service for Charles Ray Meely, 78, was held on Wednesday, November 23, 2022, at Dixon Chapel Cemetery in Pauls Valley, Okla.

Mr. Meely passed away on November 4 at his home in Gautier, MS.

He enjoyed fishing, carpentry, cooking, & being with family.

He is preceded in death by his wife, Bettye L. Allen Meely; parents, Stephen Meely & Har-

riet Smith Meely; sons, Randy Meely, Ronald Meely, Jonathan Meely; brothers, Lincoln Meely, Solomon Meely, Dewitt Meely, Gilbert Meely, William "Bill" Meely, Eslin Meely; & 5 great-grandchildren.

Survivors include his sons, Charles Edward Meely & Allen Meely; sister, Lucille Meely; 22 grandchildren, 33 great-grandchildren, & a host of relatives & friends.

#### EDMUND KENNETH DAVIS

Graveside service for Edmund Kenneth Davis, 73, was held on Saturday, November 19,



2022, at Holy Rosary Catholic Cemetery in Tucker. Father Bob Goodyear, S.T., officiated. John E. Stephens Chapel was in charge of arrangements.

Mr. Davis passed away on November 7 at the VA Hospital in Tuscon, AZ.

He lived most of his life in Tucson & was a U.S. Army Veteran. He was a member of Holy Rosary Catholic Church & enjoyed reading & listening to music.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Michael Davis Sr. & Martha Lee Tubby; son, Benjamin Davis, Sr.; brothers, Jerry Wayne Davis, Patrick Lee Davis; 2 nieces & a nephew.

Survivors include his sister, Donna Carol Spottedcorn; brother, Michael Davis Jr.; 2 grandchildren, Jordan Davis & Benjamin Davis, Jr.; & a host of relatives & friends.

#### CATINA MARIE COTTON

Funeral service for Catina Marie Cotton, 50, was held on Sunday, November 13, 2022, at Bogue Chitto Community Gymnasium. Deacon Randy Jim & Rev. Charles Doby Hen-

ry officiated.

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

Ms. Cotton passed away on November 7 at the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson.

She enjoyed flea markets, decorating, & cooking. She was a cook & busser at Pearl River Resort.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Billy Gene Bell, Jr., Marilyn & Cillo Cotton, Sr.; sisters, Jacqueline Wilson-Clay & Sheila Mattera; & brothers, Errol Bell & Rarron Frazier.

Survivors include her sisters, Solvia Cotton, Cheryl McMillan, & Antonia Steve; brothers, Garrison Joe, Ken Frazier, & Luppie Cotton; & a host of nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews, relatives, & friends.

#### SHELLY SOLOMON JIM

Graveside service for Shelly Solomon Jim, 52, was held on Monday, November 14,



2022, at St. Catherine Catholic Cemetery in Conehatta. Father Bob Goodyear, S.T., officiated. John E. Stephens Chapel was in charge of arrangements.

Mrs. Jim passed away on November 9 at her residence.

She was a Guest Room Attendant at Pearl River Resort & most recently with Jani Cleaning at Bok Homa Casino.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Percy & Idalene Johnson Solomon; brothers, Nolan Solomon & Pat Solomon; grandparents, Murphy & Lela Solomon, J.D. & Katie Mae Johnson; & an uncle.



Survivors include her husband, Ronald Jim, Sr.; sons, Murphy King, Ronald Jim, Jr. & Ronan Jim; step-daughter, Lisa Lewis; step-son, Ryan Lewis; brother, Davin Yates Solomon; 4 aunts, an uncle, & a host of relatives & friends.

**INFANT**

**GELILAH IMANI FARMER**

Funeral service for Gelilah Imani Farmer, 6 weeks-old infant, was held on Wednesday, November 30, 2022, at Stonewall Baptist Church in Conehatta. Deacon Ricky Edwards & Pastor Robert Patrick officiated.



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

Infant Farmer passed away on November 19 at Laird Hospital in Union.

She is preceded in death by her great-grandparents, Robert Farmer & Eunice Anderson, Golden & Dorothy Stephens Thomas; grandfathers, Eric Jackson & Larin Thomas; & a great-aunt, great-uncle.

Survivors include her parents, Teyjah Farmer & Gabriel Scott Thomas; sisters, Teyshoni Farmer & Brailey Shumake; brothers, Huntley Thomas & Dalmerrick Thomas; grandmothers, Trudy Farmer & Priscella Twiss; & a host of aunts, uncles, & relatives.

**CHRISTOPHER SHANE COTTON, SR.**

Funeral service for Christopher Shane Cotton, Sr., 46, was held on Tuesday, November 29, 2022, at the Crystal Ridge Community Gymnasium. John E. Stephens Chapel was in charge of arrangements.

Mr. Cotton passed away on November 22 at Neshoba General Hospital in Philadelphia.



He was a U.S. Army Veteran & enjoyed working on cars & cooking.

He is preceded in death by his father, Cillo Cotton Sr.; mother, Clara Stewart; sisters, Catina Cotton, Katrina Dan, & Stephanie Cotton; & a stepmother, Marilyn Cotton.

Survivors include his life companion, Yvette Hustito, daughters, Kieristen Cotton & Dominic Cotton; sons, Christopher Shane Cotton II, Nicholas Cotton, Christian Cotton, & Damien Cotton; sisters, Solvia Cotton & Cheryl Cotton McMillin; brothers, Luppie Cotton & Cillo Cotton, Jr.; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

**DELRAY DOMINIC SOCKEY**

Funeral service for Delray Dominic Sockey, 23, was held on Friday, December 2, 2022, at the Standing Pine Community Gymnasium. Deacon Mar-

co Patrick & Pastor Mark Patrick officiated.

Burial was in Old Canaan Cemetery.

John E. Stephens Chapel was in charge of arrangements.

Mr. Sockey passed away on November 28 at his residence.

He enjoyed playing basketball & stickball, listening to music, & dancing.

He is preceded in death by his grandfather, Sullivan Tub-



**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**

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**10341 Road 789**  
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Sunday Service: 10:00 a.m.

*Come Join Us...*

*Spirit of Life*  
**CHRISTIAN CENTER**

**SUNDAY: 10:00 a.m. WEDNESDAY: 6:30 p.m.**

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*Pastor Thomas Ben*

*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**

by, Jr.

Survivors include his parents, Peter Sockey & Renee Clemons; daughter, Ivory Rose Okfochosh Osi Sockey; sisters, Brooklyn Sockey & Na-Taelynn Sockey; brothers, Christian Sockey, Swan Sockey, & Tiger Sockey; grandparents, Frances Clemons, Zula Jim, & Clyde Sockey; companion, Dylanna Charlie; & a host of relatives & friends.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians Office of Engineering Services

Notice is hereby given that the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MBCI) has developed a Tribal Transportation Improvement Program (TTIP) in accordance with 25 CFR 170.421. The TTIP identifies proposed Tribal Transportation Projects consistent with the Tribe's adopted Long Range Transportation Plan & provides estimates of funding needs for those projects for a period of five years. Project prioritization & cost projections are based upon FY 2022 funding levels for the Tribal Transportation Program as allocated by Congress. These funding levels may change from year to year based upon a variety of factors. The public is entitled & encouraged to review MBCI's draft TTIP. Copies of the draft TTIP are available to review upon request. To receive a copy of the draft TTIP or to submit questions, please contact Reggie Shumaker, Office of Engineering Services, at (601) 663-7546 or rshumaker@choctaw.org.



### Completes NCCER Course

Workers from Tribal Maintenance, Pearl River Resort Maintenance, Public Works, & Choctaw Health Center Maintenance Department completed the NCCER (National Center for Construction Education & Research) Electrical & Instrumentation course. The NCCER is a comprehensive four-level Electrical curriculum that helps trainees prepare for a career in the electrical field. Trainees develop an understanding of electrical systems in structures, follow blueprints, & install wiring & other electrical components, such as circuit breaker panels, switches, & light fixtures. Pictured above, from left to right, are Instructor Kilpatrick, Terrence Comby, Marty Briscoe, Herman Young, Jr., Adam Joe, Norman Samuel, Jr., Chad Johnson, & Dijon Hickman. Congratulations to all who completed the course.

## CHOCTAW COMMUNITY NEWS

## SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER 2022

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### Let's Beat the Winter Blues!

**What is Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) or Winter Blues?**

- \* SAD is a form of depression that is caused by the change in seasons. As the days become shorter, and the hours of daylight decrease, some people have a sudden change in mood, energy levels and sleep pattern.
- \* SAD can affect people of any age.
- \* SAD is usually most severe between December—February.
- \* During the winter months, it's not unusual for SAD to heighten due to the impact of COVID-19.

**Helpful Tips to Beat the Winter Blues:**

- \* Meditate. Meditation can calm your mind and release any anxious thoughts.
- \* Have a regular exercise routine, at least 30 minutes of physical activity into your day.
- \* Re-arrange your space to maximize exposure to sunlight.
- \* Sitting outside for a bit during the day or even just opening the blinds.
- \* Take vitamin D supplements or eat foods high in vitamin D.
- \* Resist the urge to eat unhealthy sugary or high carbohydrate foods.
- \* Connect with others.
- \* Seek professional help.

**Symptoms of SAD include:**

- \* Sleeping problems
- \* Anxiety
- \* Fatigue or low energy level
- \* Feelings of sadness
- \* Lack of interest and pleasure in activities
- \* Irritability and mood swings
- \* Lack of concentration
- \* Changes in appetite
- \* Social withdrawal

**CHC Behavioral Health is here for you!**  
Contact us at 601-389-4150.



### MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS 2022-2023 HUNTING AND FISHING SEASONS

	Hunting Season	Bag Limit
(A) Bobwhite Quail	11/24/22 - 03/04/23	8/day; 16 poss.
(B) Turkey, either sex (Gobbler with 6 inch beard or longer)	10/15/22 - 11/15/22	1/day; 3/fall season
Turkey, Gobblers only (Gobbler with 6 inch beard or longer)	03/15/23 - 05/01/23	1/day; 2/spring season
Youth Turkey (May harvest 1 gobbler any age)	03/08/23 - 03/14/23	1/day; 2/spring season
(C) Squirrel Youth Squirrel	10/01/22 - 02/28/23 09/24/22 - 09/30/23	8/day; 16 poss. 8/day; 16 poss.
(D) Deer - either sex		
ALL BUCKS MUST BE 6 POINTS OR HIGHER DURING THE 2022-2023 SEASON. Exception: Youth less than fifteen (15) years old and elders (57+ years old) may have harvest one (1) buck with any hardened antler, regardless of number of points, inside spread, or beam length.		
Bucks: Three (3) per season, one (1) per day		
Does: Six (6) per season, two (2) per day; with additional two (2) allowed with archery.		
Archery Only	10/01/22 - 10/31/22	
Youth (Gun)	10/22/22 - 10/31/22	
Gun (without dog)	11/01/22 - 11/11/22	
Gun (with dog)	11/12/22 - 12/02/22	
Gun (without dog)	12/03/22 - 12/08/22	
Gun (with dog)	12/19/22 - 01/22/23	
Archery/Primitive/Gun (without dogs)	01/23/23 - 02/12/23	
(E) Rabbit Cultural Rabbitstick with dogs	10/15/22 - 02/28/23 09/24/22 - 03/06/23	8/day; 16 poss. 8/day; 16 poss.
(F) Fox, crow, blackbirds	No closed season	No limit
(G) Wild hog (No guns in Oct., Archery Only)	No closed season	No limit
(H) Opossum, raccoon, bobcat Raccoon only	10/01/22 - 02/28/23 07/01/23 - 09/30/23	No limit 1/nightly; 2 poss.
(I) Frogs	04/01/23 - 09/30/23	25/nightly; 50 poss.
(J) Trapping	11/01/22 - 03/15/23	No limit

1.2 MIGRATORY BIRDS (including Doves)  
• Regulations and Season will follow federal and state requirements.

### FLU VACCINATION IS THE BEST PROTECTION TO FIGHT THE FLU

A yearly Flu vaccine is the first and most important step in protecting against Flu viruses.

Every year, millions of people get sick, hundreds of thousands are hospitalized, and thousands to tens of thousands of people die from Flu.

### STOP THE SPREAD!

Wash your hands, Cover your cough

### WHAT IF I AM SICK?

- If prescribed, start antivirals within the first 48-72 hours
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Control fever with Tylenol & Ibuprofen
- Know when to go to the ER

**MOST LIKELY SYMPTOMS (FOR UP TO 7 DAYS)**

- Fever, often accompanied with chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny/stuffy nose
- Muscle and/or body aches
- Headache
- Feeling tired & weak
- Some may experience vomiting or diarrhea

High-risk individuals including pregnant women, people over the age of 65, or individuals with a weakened immune system should contact their primary care provider or CHC Telehealth at 601-389-4314/4315 as early as possible if they develop any flu-like symptoms. After hours calls can be directed to the ER at 601-389-4400.