

CHOCTAW COMMUNITY NEWS

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CHOCTAW, MISSISSIPPI 39350

FEBRUARY-MAY 2024



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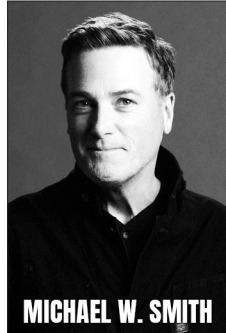
Entertainment line-up announced for Choctaw Indian Fair

The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians proudly announces the 74th edition of the Choctaw Indian Fair on July 10-13, 2024. Enjoy four days of fun, Native American social celebrations, cultural activities, Tribal arts and crafts, demonstrations and exhibits, the thrilling action of World Series Stickball, and professional nightly entertainment in beautiful Choctaw, Miss.

Headlining the Main Stage are featured Tribal ceremonies as well as one of Contemporary Christians' top artists, a group of '90s Hitmakers and a chart-topping Country music superstar.

Beginning Wednesday, July 10th, fair stage activities officially kick off with Opening Ceremonies featuring Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben followed by the 69th Annual Choctaw Indian Princess Pageant.

On Thursday, July 11th, live on the



MICHAEL W. SMITH

THURSDAY, JULY 11



BLACKSTREET • MONTELL JORDAN • YOUNG MC • ROB BASE

FRIDAY, JULY 12



TYLER HUBBARD

SATURDAY, JULY 13

main stage is world-renowned Grammy award-winning Contemporary Christian artist Michael W. Smith.

Friday, July 12th, highlights iconic '90s hip-hop and R & B artists with the *I Love the 90s* Tour featuring Blackstreet, Rob Base, Montell Jordan and Young MC.

Closing out fair week on Saturday, July 13th, is country music megastar with 21

No. 1 singles on country radio, countless awards and sold-out tours, Tyler Hubbard, one-half of the multi-platinum duo Florida Georgia Line.

Make plans now to celebrate the Choctaw Indian Fair on July 10-13, 2024. Follow and like Choctaw Indian Fair on Facebook for updates or visit www.ChoctawIndianFair.com.

CCHS hosts graduation ceremonies

Hundreds were in attendance to honor members of the Class of 2024 as Choctaw Central High School (CCHS) held graduation ceremonies on Tuesday evening, May 14, at the Silver Star Convention Center in Choctaw.

With "Pomp and Circumstance" playing overhead, 121 seniors walked proudly down the aisle to complete their high school journey as family members and supporters cheered them on.

Senior Buford Billie offered the invocation and Bogue Chitto Elementary School student Tayber Thomas performed the National Anthem in the Choctaw language.

CCHS Principal Alaric Keams said it has been quite a journey witnessing the maturity of then-shy freshmen trying to find



ABOVE, Members of Choctaw Central's Class of 2024 during graduation ceremonies at the Silver Star Convention Center on Tuesday, May 14. **RIGHT**, This year's top graduates were Salutatorian Nataysia Willis (left) & Valedictorian Keondrae Anderson.

their place at CCHS to now seniors who are leaving their mark of excellence.

"They have done a tremendous job of representing our school," said Keams. "They have embodied the true representation of being a Choctaw Central High School Warrior. I can say with confidence

see GRADUATION, pg. 19





Halito!
 The academic school year has come to an end, and many people are enjoying their summer break. The temperatures are rising high each day and will continue to stay hot for the next couple of months, so I urge everyone to use extreme caution when working or staying outside for long periods of time.

Take short breaks inside as needed, drink plenty of water, and pace yourself in whatever

outdoor projects you are doing. Check up on any Elders that live near you and make sure they have what they need to be safe.

I am so proud of our graduates of the Class of 2024. All of your hard work and dedication has brought you here to this very moment. Whether you move up a level in school, head off to college, join the military, or enter the workforce, remember that every day there are always opportunities to learn something new, embrace new challenges, and become a better person. Congratulations, and keep moving forward!

Looking back on the school year, I want to express my pride in our Tribal youth. Our students have truly excelled in



Meets with BIA officials

Brenda Redwing, Regional Transportation Engineer from the Bureau of Indian Affairs Eastern Area Office, met with Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben on Tuesday, April 30, to discuss needs that exist on Choctaw Tribal lands. In attendance for the meeting were, from left to right, Reginald Shumaker, MBCI Public Works Department, Chief Ben, Brenda Redwing, Kelby Anderson, MBCI Public Works Department, Rae Vaughn, Choctaw Agency Superintendent, & Craig Chisolm, Choctaw Agency Transportation Engineering Technician.

sports, academics, and extra-curricular activities.

We have had the Neshoba Central Lady Rockets win their second Girls State Basketball Championship in three years. Courtney Lewis and her fellow West Lauderdale Lady Knights won their second consecutive State Softball Championship. Neshoba Central Lady Rocket Kyli Truss was the Track and

Field State 1600m Champion. Choctaw Central Lady Warrior Anya Anderson was the Girls State Powerlifting Champion. Choctaw Central Warrior Andrew Cotton is the two-time Track and Field State Shot Put Champion and earned 3rd Place at the Boys State Powerlifting Championship. Jamaurion and Trey McQueen and the **continued next page**

CHOCTAW COMMUNITY NEWS

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

**COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM
 P.O. BOX 6010
 CHOCTAW, MS 39350
 TELEPHONE: 601-663-7736**

Brian C. Willis
Communications Manager

Melford Farve
Communications Writer

Darron Tubby
Communications Photographer

Diana Solomon
Communications Photographer

Deon Denson
Communications Photographer

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

Signs MOU with U.S. Attorney's Office

Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben welcomed U.S. Attorney Todd Gee of the Southern District of Mississippi to Choctaw Tribal Headquarters on Thursday, April 4. Gee, along with Chief Ben, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) governing the terms & conditions surrounding the appointment of a Tribal Special Assistant U.S. Attorney (SAUSA) dedicated to the prosecution of certain crimes in Indian Country. The Tribe & the U.S. Attorney's Office are committed to filling gaps in jurisdictional coverage; increasing communication & coordination with tribal, federal, & state law enforcement agencies; establishing consistent relationships between federal prosecutors & the Tribal community; improving the quality of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, & stalking prosecutions through training & best practices; & responding to



precipitous or extraordinary increases in crime, or in a type or types of crime. The MOU sets forth the parameters of hiring, appointing, & supervising a Tribal SAUSA under the Violence Against Women Tribal Special Assistant United States Attorney Fellowship Initiative grant supported by the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW).

Brandon High School Bulldogs were the Boys State Baseball Champions.

Many of our outstanding seniors had signing days to express their intent to pursue their academic and athletic careers at the collegiate level. The Neshoba Central Big Blue Band were State Marching Band Champions. Our reigning Choctaw Indian Princess Nalani LuzMaria Thompson was selected as Neshoba Central's 2023 Homecoming Queen.

All of these achievements, and so many more, serve as a testament to the great qualities our students have within themselves. I'm excited to see what the future holds for all of our excellent Tribal youth!

I would like to congratulate Miss Alice Keats, our 2019-2021 Choctaw Indian Princess, on her crowning earlier this year as Neshoba County's Miss Hospitality. Alice will compete in the state's 2024 Miss Hospitality Pageant, which begins on July 12 and ends on July 13, with contestants participating the entire week of the competition from July 7 through July 13.

Our Tribe is proud of Alice for her continued public service and for serving as a great role model for our young Choctaw ladies. We wish her the best of luck at the state competition!

I was honored to recognize our teachers, law enforcement officials in Dispatch, Security, Detention, Wildlife and Parks, and Police, Choctaw Residential Center nurses and staff, and our Choctaw Health Center staff during recognition weeks in May. These outstanding individuals provide needed services to our Tribal Members, and I am very grateful for all they do!

The 74th Choctaw Indian Fair is just weeks away. The dates are July 10-13. Our Tribe's biggest cultural celebration of the

year is our chance to showcase Choctaw culture at its finest, while also including other activities and performances that have become annual traditions for fairgoers.

I am honored to serve as host to our friends and visitors alike during Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the Fair, on Wednesday and Saturday, July 10th and 13th, at 6:00 p.m., respectively. The Choctaw Indian Princess Pageant will be on Wednesday night at 7:00

p.m., following Opening Ceremonies. Thirteen lovely young Choctaw ladies will vie to be the next goodwill ambassador of our Tribe.

During the four days of the Fair, you can see dancing, arts, crafts, interactive cultural activities at Shawi's Discovery Zone and Tushka Village, taste some delicious traditional foods at one of our three Choctaw food concessionaires, and of course, enjoy the thrilling action of World Series Stick-

ball at Warrior Stadium.

We also have the carnival on the midway, competitions such as a watermelon eating contest and other activities such as a magical poodle show, along with some delicious food choices, at Ayipa Village. At Ossi Cove, we have Scales, Tails, and Teeth, Birds and Exotics of the World Show, Critter Keeper Show, and the Dinosaur Experience.

see LETTER, pg. 4



CCHS FCA observes National Day of Prayer

Choctaw Central High School's Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) observed the National Day of Prayer on Thursday, May 2, as a prayer circle was held around the painted Warrior head logo on the courtyard pavement between Choctaw Central Middle & High School campuses. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, along with Tribal & school officials, joined students, faculty, & staff as they gathered to pray. The National Day of Prayer is an annual day of observance designated by the United States Congress & held on the first Thursday of May, when people are asked "to turn to God in prayer & meditation".



Elder Abuse Awareness Month proclamation signed

On Tuesday, May 28, 2024, Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben signed a proclamation officially declaring June as Elder Abuse Awareness Month on Choctaw Tribal Lands. The signing ceremony was held at the Choctaw Elderly Activity Center in Choctaw. Several Tribal Elders & officials with the MBCI Department of Family & Community Services were in attendance to witness the event. We are urged to care & protect our Tribal Elders. Elder Abuse is not a Choctaw Tradition.



Ribbon cutting ceremony held for Bogue Chitto Pond subdivision

A ribbon cutting ceremony for 25 houses in the new Bogue Chitto Pond subdivision in the Bogue Chitto community was held on Monday, March 11. The houses are under the administration of the Choctaw Housing & Loan Program (CHLP). Cutting the ribbon were new homeowners Craig & Angel Runnels as they were joined by Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, Tribal Council Representatives Vice Chief Ronnie Henry, Sr., Loriann Ahshapanek, Kendall Wallace, Angela Hundley, Kent Wesley, & Sam John, 2023-2024 Choctaw Indian Princess Nalani LuzMaria Thompson, MBCI Director of Administration Jason Grisham, MBCI Development Division Director Sarah Medlock, CHLP officials, & project partners.



CHA breaks ground for new houses in Red Water

The Choctaw Housing Authority (CHA) held a groundbreaking ceremony on Thursday, February 29, for four new housing units in the Red Water community. Two 2-bedroom/2-bath ADA houses facing Red Water Road & two 3-bedroom/2-bath houses facing North Pearl Street will be built. Morton Construction did the site work, Willis Engineering did site planning, Johnny Wynne & Associates did the house plans, & IKBI, Inc. will construct the houses. Attending the ceremony were Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, 2023-2024 Choctaw Indian Princess Nalani LuzMaria Thompson, Tribal Council Representatives & CHA Housing Board Commissioners Loriann Ahshapanek, Kent Wesley, & Demando Mingo, Tribal Council Representatives Sam John, Ricky Anderson, Sr., & Richard Sockey, CHA Housing Board Commissioner Richard Isaac, CHA Executive Director Gary Ben, CHA officials, & project partners. The project is slated for completion in Summer 2024.

Ribbon cutting held for new homes in Standing Pine

The Choctaw Housing Authority (CHA) held a ribbon cutting ceremony on Thursday, February 29, for five new housing units in the Standing Pine community. Two 2-bedroom/2-bath ADA houses, two 3-bedroom/2-bath houses, & one 4-bedroom/2-bath house were completed in January 2024. Morton Construction did the site work, Willis Engineering did site planning, Johnny Wynne & Associates did the house plans, & IKBI, Inc. constructed the houses. Joining new tenants & members of the Standing Pine community for the ceremony were Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, 2023-2024 Choctaw Indian Princess Nalani LuzMaria Thompson,



Tribal Council Representatives & CHA Housing Board Commissioners Loriann Ahshapanek, Kent Wesley, & Demando Mingo, Tribal Council Representatives Sam John & Richard Sockey, CHA Executive Director Gary Ben, CHA officials, & project partners.

LETTER, continued from page 3

For those who like to show off their coordination and athletic abilities, we have the volleyball and cornhole tournaments, the Iron Warrior competition, and Rez Run.

Main Stage entertainment begins at 8:30 p.m. each night, starting Thursday with contemporary Christian music artist Michael W. Smith, Friday with the "I Love The 90s" Tour (featuring Blackstreet, Rob Base, Montell Jordan and Young MC), and closing out the Fair on Saturday with country star Tyler Hubbard.

For more information on the Choctaw Indian Fair, please visit www.choctawindianfair.com or like our Choctaw Indian Fair Facebook page.

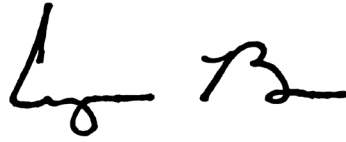
One of our oft-repeated lines for the Choctaw Indian Fair is "There's Something for Everyone!" I agree entirely with that statement. It's what makes new visitors returning guests year after year. So for those of you who have never come to the Fair, or if you who know friends or family members who have never been to the Fair, this is the time to make plans to visit us during the Choctaw Indian Fair!

continued next page

We are continuing to make progress here on Choctaw Tribal lands. Housing units have been completed or are nearing completion, and ground is being broken in other communities for more units to be built. We have undertaken some community signage and re-pavement projects, not only to get ready for the Fair, but also to give our communities a much-needed makeover. I look forward to seeing the results of these projects. Thank you

for your patience and understanding as we keep progress moving forward. As always, thank you for your prayers and support, and I look forward to sharing more news on projects in upcoming editions.

Chi Yakoklih,



Cyrus Ben, Tribal Chief



Tribal Flag unveiled at MC

Mississippi College (MC) honored the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MBCI) by unveiling the MBCI Tribal Flag during halftime activities of the MC Choctaws vs Delta State basketball game at the A.E. Wood Coliseum in Clinton on Saturday, February 24. MC & MBCI share a strong & growing relationship, with the college using "Choctaw" at its mascot name & seeing an increasing number of Tribal students choosing to attend MC to further their education after high school. Pictured above at the unveiling ceremony were, from left to right, Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, his son & MC signee Brodie Ben, MC student-athlete Patsden Williams, & MC President Dr. Blake Thompson.

Begay visits Tribe, CCHS students

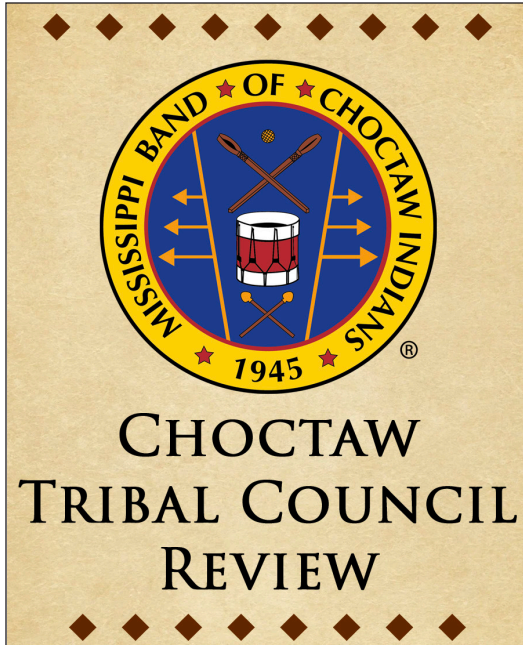
Native golf professional Notah Begay III (Navajo, San Felipe, Isleta) visited the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians on Monday, April 22, to speak to the students of Choctaw Central High School. Later, he met with members of the Lady Warriors & Warriors golf teams at Dancing Rabbit Golf Club & shared golfing tips & advice. He concluded his visit with members of the Tribal Leadership at Pearl River Resort. Begay is a three-time All-American at Stanford University & helped them win the 1994 NCAA Division I Men's Golf Championship. He is a four-time PGA TOUR winner & is an analyst with NBC Sports & the Golf Channel. He founded the NB3 Foundation, which provides health & wellness education for American Indian youth.

MBCI flag displayed at museum

Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben & 2023-2024 Choctaw Indian Princess Nalani LuzMaria Thompson traveled to the Two Museums (Museum of Mississippi History & Mississippi Civil Rights Museum) in Jackson on Friday, March 8, to preview a new exhibit, "Flags From Mississippi: Emblems Through Time." Included in the exhibit is the official MBCI Tribal Flag. Welcoming them was Mississippi Department of Archives & History (MDAH) Director Katie Blount. Rarely shown state, national, & military flags from the collection of the MDAH features 20 flags made from a variety of fabrics, such as wool & silk. Some were sewn by hand. Highlights include an original Magnolia flag, adopted in 1861 as the first official flag of Mississippi, that has been saved by conservators after it became severely fragmented. The MBCI flag, officially adopted in 1994, displays symbols expressing resilience, progress achieved in the face of adversity, & Choctaw political ties spanning the last 500



years with Mississippi, the United States, Spain, & France. The flags will be on display through November 8 & admission to the exhibit is free.



**SPECIAL CALL MEETING
NOVEMBER 28, 2023**

RESOLUTION CHO 24-023, approving a Limited Waiver of Sovereign Immunity in favor of contractors engaged to construct school facilities to replace Choctaw Central High School & Choctaw Central Middle School, was ADOPTED - 16 YES (L. Ahshapanek, R. Anderson, Sr., C. Eaves, N. Gibson, R. Henry, Sr., A. Hundley, S. John, D. Martin, D. Mingo, H. Nickey, G. Shoemake, R. Sockey, T. Thomas, Sr., K. Wallace, K. Wesley, D. Wilson); 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT (B. Steve).

SUMMARY: This serves as an addendum to the contract that will be utilized to construct the new school facilities & sets forth the processes for resolving disputes with those contractors. For more information, please contact the Development Division.

**REGULAR CALL MEETING
JANUARY 9, 2024**

ORDINANCE NO. 24-003, issuing a Charter of Incorporation to OKLAHIKBIH, Inc., was ENACTED - 16 YES (L. Ahshapanek, R. Anderson, Sr., C. Eaves, N. Gibson, A. Hundley, S. John, D. Martin, D. Mingo, H. Nickey, G. Shoemake, R. Sockey, B. Steve, T. Thomas, Sr., K. Wallace, D. Wilson); 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT (K. Wesley).

SUMMARY: The Ordinance approves the establishment of a new subsidiary corporation of Chahta Holding Group, Inc. known as "OKLAHIKBIH, Inc." The Board of Directors of Chahta Holding Group, Inc.,

adopted Resolution CHG 2024-001, which issued the Charter of Incorporation to OKLAHIKBIH, Inc. For more information, please contact the Chahta Holding Group.

ORDINANCE NO. 24-004, amending Criminal Code Sections §3-6-6, §3-6-7, & §3-6-8, was ENACTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: The Ordinance approves amendments to Criminal Code Sections §3-6-6, §3-6-7, & §3-6-8, to accommodate medical cannabis that is lawful for cardholders with valid Mississippi cannabis registry identification cards issued under the Mississippi Medical Cannabis Act. The amended sections do not apply to Mississippi cannabis registry identification cardholders whose possession of medical cannabis does not exceed the allowable amount authorized under the Mississippi Medical Cannabis Act. For more information, please contact the Office of the Attorney General.

RESOLUTION CHO 24-024(B), approving an absolute relinquishment of membership in the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: The Resolution approves an absolute relinquishment of Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MBCI) Tribal membership of a minor child. In accordance with Section §22-4-1 of the Tribal Enrollment Code provides that the parents of a MBCI Tribal member who has not reached the age of 18 may voluntarily relinquish their child's 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 24-025(B), approving increases in blood degree & name changes for previously enrolled Tribal members, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: The Resolution approves the increase in blood degree & name changes for (4) MBCI Tribal members. Section §22-2-8 of the Tribal Enrollment Code provides that MBCI Tribal members may apply to increase their blood degree based on new or additional information about paternity or maternity. Section §22-3-11 of the Tribal Enrollment Code provides that MBCI Tribal members may change their names as they appear in MBCI's enrollment records by submitting certain documents. For more information, please contact the Office of

Tribal Enrollment.

RESOLUTION CHO 24-026(B), enrolling Tribal members, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: The Resolution approves the Tribal enrollment of MBCI for 51 members beginning with the name L. Allen & ending with D. York. Sections §22-2-10 & §22-2-14 of the Tribal Enrollment Code provide that new MBCI Tribal members are to be enrolled by Tribal Council Resolution upon recommendation by the Tribal Enrollment Committee & to ensure that those new members meet the membership criteria set forth in Article III of the Revised Constitution Bylaws of the Tribe. With the adoption of this Resolution, there are 11,065 enrolled MBCI Tribal members. For more information, please contact the Office of Tribal Enrollment.

RESOLUTION CHO 24-027, approving FY 2024 budget for Choctaw Residential Center Enterprise, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: The Resolution approves Fiscal Year 2024 budget for the Choctaw Residential Center Enterprise which includes the following:

- (1) Operating Expenditures in the amount of \$10,084,773;
- (2) Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$598,380; and
- (3) Distribution to the Tribal Government General Fund in the amount of \$750,000.

For more information, please contact the Choctaw Residential Center.

RESOLUTION CHO 24-028, approving a commercial land assignment between the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians d/b/a Choctaw Shopping Center Enterprise & Jerry Sweet & Kay Kile-Taylor d/b/a 1 Family Services in Indian Country, LLC, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: The Resolution approves a two-year commercial land assignment to Jerry Sweet & Kay Kile-Taylor d/b/a 1 Family Services in Indian Country, LLC. Previously, the Tribal Council adopted Resolution CHO 23-056, which authorized the contract for 1 Family Services in Indian Country, LLC to administer MBCI's child support enforcement & Temporary Assistance to Needy Families programs. For more information, please contact the Choctaw Shopping Center.

RESOLUTION CHO 24-029, approving a Memorandum of Understanding between the Mississippi Band of Choctaw

Indians' Department of Chahta Immi & the University of Florida, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The University of Florida has tapes of interviews with MBCI Tribal members in its collection & wants to collaborate with the Department of Chahta Immi during the process of digitizing & archiving those tapes. The MOU establishes the scope of the collaboration between the MBCI Department of Chahta Immi & the University of Florida. For more information, please contact the Department of Chahta Immi.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-030, authorizing the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians to apply for Special Tribal Criminal Jurisdiction Reimbursement Program Funding from the U.S. Department of Justice, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Special Tribal Criminal Jurisdiction Reimbursement Program funding will alleviate the financial burden associated with the conditions for exercising special Tribal criminal jurisdiction set forth in 25 U.S.C §1304(d). Under 25 U.S.C. §1304, Indian Tribes can criminally prosecute non-Indians for assault of Tribal justice personnel, child violence, dating violence, domestic violence, obstruction of justice, sexual violence, sex trafficking, stalking, & violations of protection orders under the Special Domestic Violence Criminal Jurisdiction. For more information, please contact the Office of the Attorney General.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-031(B), approving a Timber Use Policy Statement for cutting & removal of forest products from lands of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Bureau of Indian Affairs requires that Tribes establish periodic timber use policy statements addressing the cutting & subsequent removal of forest products valued at \$15,000. For more information, please contact the Department of Natural Resources.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-032(B), approving an expenditure plan for forest management deductions, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *Pursuant to 25 U.S.C. §413, ten percent of gross proceeds from the sale of timber harvested from MBCI Reservation lands is collected by the Secretary of the Interior & set aside for forest management activities. An expenditure plan*

is required under 25 C.F.R. §163.25 to gain access to funds withheld from timber sale proceeds in the previous fiscal year. For Fiscal Year 2023, the ten percent timber sale proceeds is \$5,250 & interest earned is \$78.21. For more information, please contact the Department of Natural Resources.

RESOLUTION CHO 24-033, authorizing disposal of 18 former Bureau of Indian Affairs employee housing units, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Choctaw Loan Program has determined 18 housing units are no longer of value to the Choctaw Loan Program because of excessive maintenance costs. Section XIII of the Revised MBCI Procurement Policies provides that a Tribal Council Resolution is required to dispose of Tribal property that is no longer needed by MBCI Tribal government programs. For more information, please contact the Choctaw Loan Program.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-034, authorizing the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, Choctaw Health Center, to enter into affiliation agreements with accredited colleges, universities, & technical training schools to provide clinical experience in healthcare, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The MBCI's Choctaw Health Center (CHC) seeks to attract qualified, trained, & licensed health care professionals to meet its mission & accreditation standards in providing quality health care to the Tribal community. CHC will provide field supervision for any Tribal member, CHC employee, or future employees pursuing unpaid clinical hours for health care related certifications, degree programs, or graduate level studies & there are no costs associated with affiliation agreements which provide for unpaid internship or preceptorships hours. For more information, please contact the Choctaw Health Center.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-035, authorizing the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, Choctaw Health Center, Choctaw Behavioral Health, to apply for a Community Overdose Intervention Prevention Program from the Department of Health & Human Services, Indian Health Service, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Community Overdose Intervention Prevention Program (COIPP) grant aims to address the opioid crisis in Tribal communities by increasing access to*

culturally appropriate & evidence-based treatment including medical-assisted treatment using FDA-approved medications for the treatment of opioid use disorder. The grant funds will assist the CHC's Behavioral Health in developing opioid misuse prevention, personnel training to first responders, treatment & recovery support services for the purpose of addressing opioid abuse & the overdose crisis. For more information, please contact the Choctaw Health Center.

RESOLUTION CHO 24-036, authorizing disposal of surplus Tribal motor vehicles, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Resolution authorizes the disposal of motor vehicles that are no longer of value to MBCI Tribal government programs because of high mileage & excessive maintenance costs. For more information, please contact the Procurement Office.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-037, approving the revised employee handbook for the Youth Opportunity Program's Summer Employment Program, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *For more information, please contact the Youth Opportunity Program.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-038, amending the Tribal Scholarship Program's Policies & Procedures, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *For more information, please contact the Tribal Scholarship Program.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-039, authorizing Sarah Swanner-Medlock of Mississippi State University to conduct doctoral research relating to the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians' education & workforce development programs, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The dissertation is titled "Analysis within the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians: The Cause & Effect of an Under Educated & Under Skilled Labor Force & finding the Systematic Solutions for Education & Job Training." The research conducted will help MBCI evaluate the efficiency of its education & workforce development programs at no cost to MBCI. For more information, please contact the Policy & Legislative Office.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-040, approving the 2024-2025 school calendar for



RESOLUTIONS continued from page seven

Choctaw Tribal Schools, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

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

RESOLUTION CHO 24-041, approving a lease agreement with Holy Rosary Indian Mission Parish, Philadelphia, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Resolution approves a land lease agreement between the MBCI & Holy Rosary Indian Mission Parish, Philadelphia for a term of 25 years. For more information, please contact the Realty Program.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-042(B), approving a land lease permit for W. Mingo in the Conehatta Community, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Resolution approves a one-year land lease permit for W. Mingo in the Conehatta Community. For more information, please contact the Realty Program.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-043(B), approving a land lease permit for B. Farmer in the Pearl River Community, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Resolution approves a one-year land lease permit for B. Farmer in the Pearl River Community. For more information, please contact the Realty Program.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-044(B), approving rights-of-way in favor of Leake County, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Resolution approves the rights-of-way in favor of Leake County to allow for state-funded improvements to portions of North Jordan Street that pass through MBCI Reservation land in the Red Water Community. For more information, please contact the Realty Program.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-045(B), acquiring ±117 acres in Leake County, Miss., & to transfer fee title to the United States of America in trust for the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, was ADOPTED - 16 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *Additional MBCI Reservation lands are needed to promote Tribal Self-Determination by providing opportunities for future development that will accommodate MBCI's growing population. For more information, please contact the Realty Program.*

**SPECIAL CALL MEETING
MARCH 21, 2024**

RESOLUTION CHO 24-046, authorizing a Distribution of Tribal Funds, was ADOPTED - 13 YES (*L. Ahshapanek, R. Anderson, Sr., N. Gibson, R. Henry, Sr., A. Hundley, S. John, D. Martin, H. Nickey, G. Shoemake, B. Steve, T. Thomas, Sr., K. Wallace, K. Wesley*); 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT (*C. Eaves, D. Mingo, R. Sockey, D. Wilson*).

SUMMARY: *The Resolution authorizes the Distribution of Tribal Funds in the amount of \$600.00 per enrolled Tribal Member on July 2, 2024. For more information, please contact the Office of Tribal Distribution.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-047, approving the 2024 Choctaw Community Fund Budget, was TABLED - 13 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Resolution approving the 2024 Choctaw Community Fund Budget in the amount of \$85,233 to provide opportunities that will benefit Choctaw youth & elders, was tabled. For more information, please contact the Development Division.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-048, approving a budget for Opioid Settlement Funds, was TABLED - 13 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The settlement agreements requiring that the proceeds of the settlement are on certain activities that will remediate the impact of opioid drugs, was tabled. For more information, please contact the Office of Attorney General.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-049, approving a Memorandum of Understanding between the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians' Department of Early Childhood Education & Bay Mills Community College, was ADOPTED - 13 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *Bay Mills Community College has received ACF funding to provide tuition assistance to Tribal Head Start & Early Head Start program staff enrolled in courses required to complete degree requirements to become teachers in early childhood education. For more information, please contact the Department of Early Childhood Education.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-050, amending the Administrative Personnel Policy & Procedures – FTA Drug & Alcohol Policy,

was ADOPTED - 13 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Resolution amends the MBCI Administrative Personnel Policy – FTA Drug & Alcohol Policy & Procedures with the additional amendment to the “Pre-Employment Testing” section of the policy that is necessary for the Tribe to continue receiving Federal Transit Administration grant funds through the Mississippi Department of Transportation. For more information, please contact Choctaw Transit.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-051, authorizing the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program, to apply for an American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services Grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration, was ADOPTED - 13 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services Grant applied for will continue to provide services to American Indians who experience physical or mental impairments that limit their participation in competitive employment & who reside on or near federal reservations. For more information, please contact the Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-052, approving a research agreement between the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians' Office of Economic Development & the Center for Evaluation & Research Education at the University of Mississippi, was ADOPTED - 13 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The collaboration will focus & study the impact of the Tribe's workforce development & entrepreneurship programs to identify strategies for strengthening. For more information, please contact the Office of Economic Development.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-053, authorizing the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians' Office of Economic Development to apply for Rural Business Development Grant Program Funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, was ADOPTED - 13 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Office of Economic Development wants to use Rural Business Development Grant Program funding to develop a “Small Business Incubator” within the building that will house the*

Advance Workforce Training Center. For more information, please contact the Office of Economic Development.

RESOLUTION CHO 24-054, approving a Limited Waiver of Sovereign Immunity in favor of contractors engaged to construct the Advanced Workforce Training Center in TechParc Building A, was ADOPTED - 13 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Resolution approves a Limited Waiver of Sovereign Immunity in favor of contractors engaged & sets forth the processes for resolving disputes with those contractors to construct the Advanced Workforce Training Center in TechParc Building A. For more information, please contact the Office of Economic Development.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-055, authorizing the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians' Department of Family & Community Services to apply for funding through the Grants to Indian Tribal Governments Program from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, was ADOPTED - 13 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The goal of this program is to provide support of emergency shelter & related assistance for victims of domestic violence & their children. For more information, please contact the Department of Family & Community Services.*

RESOLUTION 24-056, 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 - 13 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *Funding provided through the Family Violence Prevention & Services Program will assist the Tribe's efforts to increase public awareness about, & primary & secondary prevention of family violence, domestic violence, & dating violence, & their dependents. For more information, please contact the Department of Family & Community Services.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-057 (B), approving a business lease for H. Dixon, Jr. in the Pearl River Community, was ADOPTED - 13 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Resolution approves a business lease permit for H. Dixon in the Pearl River Community. For more information, please contact the Realty Program.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-058 (B), approving a land use permit for D. Lewis in the Bogue Homa Community, was ADOPTED - 13 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Resolution approves a one-year land lease permit for D. Lewis in the Bogue Homa Community. For more information, please contact the Realty Program.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-059 (B), approving a land use permit for C. Ben in the Pearl River Community, was ADOPTED - 13 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Resolution approves a one-year land lease permit for C. Ben in the Pearl River Community. For more information, please contact the Realty Program.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-060 (B), approving a land use permit for L. Fuller in the Pearl River Community, was ADOPTED - 13 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Resolution approves a one-year land lease permit for L. Fuller in the Pearl River Community. For more information, please contact the Realty Program.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-061 (B), approving a land use permit for C. Jim in the Pearl River Community, was ADOPTED - 13 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Resolution approves a one-year land lease permit for C. Jim in the Pearl River Community. For more information, please contact the Realty Program.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-062 (B), approving a land use permit for L. Wesley in the Pearl River Community, was ADOPTED - 13 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Resolution approves a one-year land lease permit for L. Wesley in the Pearl River Community. For more information, please contact the Realty Program.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-063 (B), approving a land use permit for P. Wesley in the Standing Pine Community, was ADOPTED - 13 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Resolution approves a one-year land lease permit for P. Wesley in the Standing Pine Community. For more information, please contact the Realty Program.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-064 (B), acquiring ± 45 acres in Neshoba County, Miss., & Winston County, Miss., & to trans-

fer fee title to the United States of America in trust for the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, was ADOPTED - 13 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *Additional MBCI Reservation lands are needed to promote Tribal Self-Determination by providing opportunities for future development that will accommodate MBCI's growing population. For more information, please contact the Realty Program.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-065 (B), acquiring ± 288 acres in Neshoba County, Miss., & Winston County, Miss., & to transfer fee title to the United States of America in trust for the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, was ADOPTED - 11 YES (L. Ahshapanek, R. Henry, Sr., A. Hundley, S. John, D. Martin, H. Nickey, G. Shoemake, B. Steve, T. Thomas, Sr., K. Wallace, K. Wesley); 1 NO (R. Anderson, Sr.); 0 ABSTAIN; 5 ABSENT (C. Eaves, N. Gibson, D. Mingo, R. Sockey, D. Wilson).

SUMMARY: *Additional MBCI Reservation lands are needed to promote Tribal Self-Determination by providing opportunities for future development that will accommodate MBCI's growing population. For more information, please contact the Realty Program.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-066 (B), acquiring ± 30 acres in Newton County, & to transfer fee title to the United States of America in trust for the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, was ADOPTED - 13 YES (L. Ahshapanek, R. Anderson, Sr., N. Gibson, R. Henry, Sr., A. Hundley, S. John, D. Martin, H. Nickey, G. Shoemake, B. Steve, T. Thomas, Sr., K. Wallace, K. Wesley); 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT (C. Eaves, D. Mingo, R. Sockey, D. Wilson).

SUMMARY: *Additional MBCI Reservation lands are needed to promote Tribal Self-Determination by providing opportunities for future development that will accommodate MBCI's growing population. For more information, please contact the Realty Program.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-067 (B), acquiring ± 21.8 acres in Winston County, Miss., & to transfer fee title to the United States of America in trust for the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, was ADOPTED - 13 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 4 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *Additional MBCI Reservation lands are needed to promote Tribal*

CRDE unveils official name of travel plaza: “CRYSTAL SKY”

CHOCTAW, MS – The Choctaw Resort Development Enterprise (CRDE), owned by the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, is thrilled to announce the official name of its upcoming travel plaza: “Crystal Sky.”

The name draws inspiration from the nearby Tribal community in Winston County. Known as Crystal Ridge, this community shares part of its name with the travel plaza. This exciting development promises to be a beacon of hospitality, convenience, and cultural pride for travelers passing through the Louisville area.

“As we unveil the name of our Travel Pla-



za, I am filled with gratitude,” said Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben. “This endeavor isn’t just about bricks and mortar; it’s about weaving connections. Crystal Sky will not only serve travelers passing through but will also uplift the Louisville/Winston County area and honor the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians.”

In April 2023, during the groundbreaking ceremony for the Travel Plaza, Chief Ben unveiled an innovative contest. Tribal members were invited to submit their suggestions for the plaza’s name, reflecting the spirit of the community and the natural beauty of the surroundings.

The response was overwhelming, with 258 entries pouring in. After extensive rounds of voting and thoughtful consideration, the winning name emerged: “Crystal Sky.” The final decision was made collaboratively by the Tribal Council and CRDE Board members.

Congratulations to Tribal member Dachele E. of Louisville, MS, whose submission captured the essence and vision of the property. As a token of appreciation, Dachele received a \$500 cash prize in recognition of her creativity and contribution to the community.

Self-Determination by providing opportunities for future development that will accommodate MBCI’s growing population. For more information, please contact the Realty Program.

REGULAR CALL MEETING APRIL 9, 2024

ORDINANCE NO. 24-005, approving the Tribal Seal, Tribal Logo, and Tribal Flag Usage Guidelines & to enact the Tribal Emblems Use Code as Title XXXVI, Chapter 3 of the Choctaw Tribal Code, was ENACTED - 14 YES (*R. Anderson, Sr., C. Eaves, N. Gibson, R. Henry, Sr., A. Hundley, S. John, D. Martin, H. Nickey, G. Shoemake, R. Sockey, T. Thomas, Sr., K. Wallace, D. Wilson, & K. Wesley*); 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT (*L. Ahshapanek, D. Mingo, & B. Steve*).

SUMMARY: *For more information, please contact the Office of Public Information.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-068 (B), approving an absolute relinquishment of membership in the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *Section §22-4-1 of the Tribal Enrollment Code provides that 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 24-069(B), approving a name change for a previously enrolled Tribal Member, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *Section §22-3-11 of the Tribal Enrollment Code provides that MBCI Tribal members may change their names as they appear in MBCI’s enrollment records by submitting certain documents. For more information, please contact the Office of Tribal Enrollment.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-070(B), enrolling Tribal Members, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Resolution approves the Tribal enrollment of the MBCI for 16 members beginning with the name I. Bell & ending with Y. Willis. Sections §22-2-10 & §22-2-14 of the Tribal Enrollment Code provide that new Tribal members are to be enrolled by Tribal Council Resolution upon recommendation by the Tribal Enrollment Committee & to ensure that those new members meet the membership criteria set forth in Article III of the Revised Constitution Bylaws of the Tribe. With the adoption*

of this Resolution, there are 11,051 enrolled MBCI Tribal members. For more information, please contact the Office of Tribal Enrollment.

RESOLUTION CHO 24-071, approving the 2024 Choctaw Community Fund Budget, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Resolution approves the 2024 Choctaw Community Fund Budget in the amount of \$85,233 to provide opportunities that will benefit Choctaw youth & elders. For more information, please contact the Development Division.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-072, approving a budget for Opioid Settlement Funds, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The settlement agreements require that the proceeds of the settlement are on certain activities that will remediate the impact of opioid drugs. For more information, please contact the Office of the Attorney General.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-073, authorizing the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians to apply for a Competitive Indian Housing Block Grant from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Tribe intends to apply*

Gibson displays as first Native American Artist at Biennale Arte Exhibition

Jeffrey Gibson, a member of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, was selected as a solo presenter at the Biennale Arte 2024 for the 60th International Art Exhibition at the United States Pavilion at the Giardini della Biennale in Venice, Italy.

Mr. Gibson is the first Indigenous artist to represent the United States. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben travelled to Italy in support and recognition of Gibson's milestone achievement.

"Jeffrey's installation *the space in which to place me* couldn't be more appropriate in describing the existence of Native Americans within our country," said Chief Ben. "We are still here but are rarely brought to the forefront of focus in mainstream society. Jeffrey brings Native culture out of the shadows and into the spotlight with his artwork and this installation."

Tribal Chief Ben was an invited guest of Mr. Gibson and attended the pre-opening activities which included a guided tour

of the exhibition, a dinner program, and a press conference held at the United States Pavilion. Chief Ben spoke at both the dinner and press conference.

An accomplished artist, Gibson has many permanent collections at some of the nation's most prestigious museums, including the Museum of Modern Art, Whitney Museum of American Art, Museum of Fine Arts Boston, Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, among many others.

Mr. Gibson's recent solo exhibitions included: *Burning World: Jeffrey Gibson* (ICA San Francisco, 2022); *Jeffrey Gibson: The Body Electric* (SITE Santa Fe, 2022); *Jeffrey Gibson: They Come From Fire* (Portland Art Museum, 2022); *Jeffrey Gibson: INFINITE INDIGENOUS QUEER LOVE* (deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, 2022).

It was announced in July 2023 that Mr. Gibson would represent the United States



Chief Cyrus Ben, left, & Jeffrey Gibson.

at the 2024 Venice Biennale, making it the first time in the American Pavilion's more than 90-year history that an Indigenous artist has done it solo.

Jeffrey is the son of James Gibson of the Conehatta Community. He has fond memories of visiting Choctaw Tribal lands as a youngster. He credits his grandmother, Lilly, and his aunt, Lamona, with keeping his ties strong to his Choctaw heritage.

for the competitive grant that would fund up to \$6 million of the initial phase of a proposed apartment complex in the Pearl River Community. The proposed apartment complex will reduce overcrowding, provide a safe & affordable alternative to deteriorating housing units, & be designed to accommodate the needs of individuals with disabilities, veterans, & first responders. For more information, please contact the Choctaw Loan Program.

RESOLUTION CHO 24-074(B), approving a residential lease for M. Clemmons in the Pearl River Community, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Resolution approves a one-year land lease permit for M. Clemmons in the Pearl River Community. For more information, please contact the Realty Program.*

RESOLUTION CHO 24-075, authorizing the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians to accept grant funding from the First Nations Development Institute's Native Arts Initiative Program, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The awarded grant funds*

will be allocated to the Chahta Immi Cultural Center to be used to support organizational sustainability & efforts to preserve & promote traditional Native arts & cultural assets, knowledge systems, & lifeways in the community for the benefit of future generations. For more information, please contact the Department of Chahta Immi.

RESOLUTION CHO 24-076, approving a Commercial Land Assignment between the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians d/b/a Choctaw Shopping Center Enterprise & Wilson Morataya d/b/a WM Auto Body Shop, LLC, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Resolution approves a commercial land assignment to Wilson Moratoya d/b/a WM Auto Body Shop, LLC to operate its business of providing services located in the Red Water Community, Leake County, Miss. For more information, please contact Choctaw Shopping Center.*

RESOLUTION 24-077, approving a Commercial Land Assignment between the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians d/b/a Big Creek, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Resolution approves a*

commercial land assignment to Zaki Elnaham d/b/a Big Creek to operate its business of providing food, drinks, fuel, & general merchandise located within the Bogue Chitto Community, Neshoba County, Miss. For more information, please contact Choctaw Shopping Center.

RESOLUTION CHO 24-078, authorizing Jernigan Copeland Attorneys, PLLC to perform legal services for the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, was ADOPTED - 14 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAIN; 3 ABSENT.

SUMMARY: *The Resolution approves Jernigan Copeland Attorneys, PLLC to be placed on the list of attorneys authorized to perform legal services for the Tribe. For more information, please contact the Office of the Attorney General.*

To request a copy of the Resolution and/or attachment, please fill out a request for a Resolution/Ordinance form & submit it to the Policy & Legislative Office at krystina.thompson@choctaw.org or cheriena.ben@choctaw.org.

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

Tribe observes Memorial Day with wreath laying ceremony

In observance of honoring our nation's fallen warriors, the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MBCI) hosted the annual Laying of the Memorial Wreath Ceremony on Friday, May 24, 2024, at the Choctaw Veterans Memorial Wall in Choctaw.

Former Choctaw Indian Princess and current Neshoba County Miss Hospitality Alice Keats served as emcee as she welcomed attendees to

pay tribute to the brave men and women who answered the call of duty and nobly laid their lives for their country and freedoms we enjoy today.

"We gather this morning and remember the old saying, 'freedom is not free.' It is my hope that we never forget our military men and women, past and present, as we will always honor their service," Keats said.

The Choctaw Veterans Col- or Guard presented the U.S. &

MBCI flags as Tribal Veteran Nana Frazier performed the National Anthem in Choctaw. U.S. Army Colonel (Ret.) Don Ahshapanek, of Hopewell Baptist Church, offered the invocation.

Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben reminded the audience to always remember and memorialize those we have lost, as they are not forgotten. He thanked the Choctaw Veterans Association for recently visiting local Tribal

community cemeteries to place American flags on the graves of Tribal Veterans.

"I'm thankful for the veterans committee that worked diligently to make sure we acknowledged them," said Chief Ben. "Remember those families that carry the burden of losing their loved ones. Pray for them and lift them up in the days going forward. Let's also remember those currently serving away from their homelands, that safety be upon them so they will come back to their loved ones."

U.S. Air Force Veteran William "Dan" Isaac served as guest speaker. A proponent of healing ceremonies and his association with pow wows, Isaac said every living being has a spirit and, in death, the spirit still lives on.

"All fallen warriors have a spirit, and it is not dead or gone. Physically they are not here, but we can feel them. Today, their spirits are being honored, and they are dancing."

As a member of the Mystic Wind Social Dancers and Southern Pine Singers, Isaac

continued next page



Honoring our fallen warriors

Prior to the Memorial Day Holiday, members of the MBCI Choctaw Veterans Association traveled to cemeteries in the Tribal communities to place American flags on the grave sites of Choctaw Tribal Veterans in honor & remembrance of their sacrifices for our freedoms. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben & reigning Choctaw Indian Princess Nalani LuzMaria Thompson joined association members & several families at several sites as they paid tribute to our fallen warriors.



Alex appointed to veterans advisory committee

CHOCTAW, Miss. – U.S. Air Force Chief Master Sergeant (Ret.) Ricky Alex was appointed to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Advisory Committee on Tribal and Indian Affairs for a two-year

term. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben nominated Mr. Alex to be the representative for the Indian Health Service (IHS) Nashville Service Area.

The Committee is composed of 15 voting members - one

member from each of the 12 IHS Service Areas, one from the Native Hawaiian Veteran Community, one from an Urban Indian Organization, and an at-large member.

“I am pleased that our nominee Ricky Alex was appointed to the VA Advisory Committee on Tribal and Indian Affairs,” said Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben. “Mr. Alex is a man of great integrity and commitment and has served his country admirably as a proud member of the U.S. Air Force. I am confident that he will be an outstanding advocate for the issues and needs facing our Native Veterans throughout the IHS Nashville Service Area.”

The Advisory Committee on Tribal and Indian Affairs was established in accordance with section 7002 of Public Law 116-315 (H.R.7105 – Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020). In accordance with Public Law 116-315, the Com-



U.S. Air Force Chief Master Sergeant (Ret.) Ricky Alex

mittee provides advice and guidance to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on all matters relating to Indian tribes, tribal organizations, Native Hawaiian organizations and Native American Veterans.

The Committee serves in an advisory capacity and advises the Secretary on ways the Department can improve the programs and services of the Department to better serve Native American Veterans. Committee members make recommendations to the Secretary regarding such activities.

said the drum signifies the heartbeat and first connection to the Creator. Songs are sung for the people, their spirits, and the Great Spirit.

“When we honor our warriors, we are also honoring God. The honor of one is the honor of all,” said Isaac. “The Creator has given us a short time to be here. When that time is over, He calls us home. It doesn’t matter how we pass into the spirit world we call heaven, it doesn’t matter the time we’re given, we’re suppose to do our best everyday to protect and provide for our families. That’s what a warrior did.”

“A Victory Song is sung at the end because we believe when the warriors leave here, they arrive in that heavenly place where everyone is laughing and happy. A big drum is

playing in heaven as the warriors come into the big arena with honor and victory.”

Chief Ben, along with Choctaw Veteran Affairs Director Sammie Wilson, placed the wreath at the base of the memorial wall as members of the MBCI Protective Services discharged a 21-gun salute, followed by a flute rendition of TAPS performed by James Willis on the hill overlooking the memorial. A Memorial Song and Victory Song were performed by the Southern Pine Singers.

A reception was held afterwards at the Pearl River CERF Building. Attendees enjoyed light refreshments and viewed a panel listing all fallen Choctaw Tribal Veterans, their home communities and branch of service.



Memorial Day Golf Tournament

The Choctaw Veterans Association hosted their 2nd Annual Memorial Day Golf Tournament at the Dancing Rabbit Golf Club's Azaleas course on Monday, May 27, in Choctaw. Dozens of teams took part in the 3-man golf scramble to raise funds for future projects & to remember the sacrifices our fallen warriors have provided for our freedoms today.



Honors law enforcement personnel

In observance of National Correctional Officers Week (May 5-11) & National Police Week (May 11-17), Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben hosted an appreciation luncheon to all MBCI Department of Public Safety personnel (Dispatch, Security, Detention, Wildlife & Parks, & Police) on Friday, May 10, at the Smith John Justice Complex in Choctaw. The luncheon, provided by Pearl River Resort, was in recognition for the honorable service provided by dedicated Tribal law enforcement officials. Chief Ben presented gift certificates to all law enforcement officials & support personnel & thanked them for protecting & serving our Tribal community.

CHC, Nurses honored

Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben visited the Choctaw Health Center on Friday, May 17, & offered special recognition to the staff in observance of National Nurses Week (May 6-12, 2024) & National Hospital Week (May 12-18, 2024). Since 1953, National Hospital Week has been an occasion to acknowledge hospitals, both big & small, & the more than 7 million people who work inside & beyond their walls. It's a time to reflect on the indispensable role of more than 6,000 hospitals across the nation that admit over 30 million patients each year.



SDPI Hosts 2 Mile Walk/Run

The 19th Annual Spring Into Fitness 2-Mile Fun Walk/Run was held on Saturday, March 23, at the parking lot of Geyser Falls Water Theme Park and on Blackjack Road in the Pearl River Community. This event was hosted by the Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI).

Overall winners were Cameron Rodriguez (male) & Jennaya Steve (female). Listed below are the 1st & 2nd place finishers in each age category.

7-Under Division - (male) 1st, Daylan Rodriques; 2nd, Alex McMillan; (female) 1st, Telayli Smith; 2nd, Meilani Ben.

8-10 Division - (male) 1st, Grayton Dixon; 2nd, Jayzn Dixon; (female) 1st, Onna Morris.

11-15 Division - (male) 1st, Camden Rodriquez; 2nd, Kenzariah Chickaway; (female)

1st, Onyx Bobo; 2nd, Kaylene Willis.

16-19 Division - (male) 1st, Keyon Willis; 2nd, Conner Willis; (female) 1st, Lexi Rodriguez; 2nd, Catherine Thomas.

20-29 Division - (male) 1st, Kina Brings Plenty; 2nd, Dregan Joe; (female) 1st, Allison Meely; 2nd, Hannah Wallace.

30-39 Division - (male) 1st, Kyle Thompson; 2nd, Nehemiah Lewis; (female) 1st, Jasmine Comby; 2nd, Kara Williams.

40-49 Division - (male) 1st, Jerod Thompson; (female) 1st, Dyranda Jimmie; 2nd, Lou Alex.

50-59 Division - (male) 1st, Gaylon Williams; 2nd, Don Ahshapanek; (female) 1st, Marion Sockey; 2nd, Gloria Willis.

60-64 Division - (male) 1st, Gordon Willis, Jr.; 2nd, Ricky



Observes NSNCW Week

Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben visited the Choctaw Residential Center on Thursday, May 16, to recognize the nurses & staff in observance of National Skilled Nursing Care Center Week (NSNCW) May 12-18, 2024. Held annually since 1967 & always beginning on Mother's Day, the observance is sponsored by the American Health Care Association & recognizes the role of skilled nursing care centers in caring for America's seniors & individuals with disabilities. Chief Ben spent time with the residents as they all shared the delicious cake that was baked for the occasion.

Thompson, Sr.; (female) 1st, Brenda Trosie; 2nd, Betty Dodd.

1st, Adolph Vivian; 2nd, Leonard Jimmie, Jr.; (female) 1st, Cheryl Denson; 2nd, Josephine Morris.

65-Over Division - (male)



Mosquito control spraying schedule announced

The Choctaw Health Center's Environmental Health Services department will be conducting monthly Ultra Low Volume (ULV) mosquito spraying in the following Tribal communities during either the dawn hours (5:00 a.m.-8:00 a.m.) or dusk hours (5:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.) Please do not attempt to contact the driver directly.

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

Road, Lewis Road, Cemetery Road, Wolf Trail, Park Place, Sunset, & Rolling Hills.
2nd Tuesday - Red Water.
2nd Thursday - Tucker.
3rd Tuesday - Bogue Chitto & Crystal Ridge.
3rd Thursday - Conehatta.
4th Tuesday - Standing Pine.
4th Thursday - Bogue Homa.
The schedule is subject to

change due to adverse weather conditions & unforeseen events. A community wide mosquito spraying will be in operation from May through September of 2024.
For more information, please contact Jeremaine Jim or Joshua M. Weaver, Ph.D., at the CHC Environmental Health Services department at 601-389-4142.

Billy attends NAFOA Leadership Summit

Congratulations to Emerson Billy, of the Conehatta community, as he was one of ten young Native American professionals selected for NAFOA's 2024 Leadership Summit, held on April 28 at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel in Florida. The Summit offers young Native American professionals the opportunity to accelerate their professional development. Of the most competitive pool of applicants to date, NAFOA selected participants based on leadership experience & strong interest in finance, accounting, business, & tribal economic development policy. Each participant demonstrated a commitment to the well-being & advancement of Indian Country. Emerson has a B.S. in Accounting from Fort Lewis College in Colorado & is employed in the MBCI Finance Department as an accountant.



Princess visits Early Childhood Centers

Reigning Choctaw Indian Princess Nalani LuzMaria Thompson traveled to the Tribal Early Childhood Centers in the communities to visit with the infants, toddlers, Head Start children, & staff members. The children enjoyed the visits, especially receiving hugs & having their pictures taken with the princess.



DOECE March Madness Winners

Congratulations to Conehatta Head Start's Little Cubs as they won this year's Department of Early Childhood Education (DOECE) March Madness Basketball Tournament on Friday, March 22, at the Pearl River Community Gymnasium. They defeated Tucker Head Start's Space Jam 8-6 in the finals. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben & 2023-2024 Choctaw Indian Princess Nalani LuzMaria Thompson were in attendance to congratulate the teams & present them with their trophies & medallions.



Thompson retires from CTS

A retirement reception was held at the Entertainment House in Choctaw on Wednesday, May 22, for Roseanna Thompson, Choctaw Language/ Cultural Integration Program Director for the Choctaw Tribal Schools.



Ms. Roseanna has given 38 years of dedicated service in various roles to the Choctaw Tribal Schools. Family members, friends, & colleagues wished her well in her retirement as she begins a new chapter in her life. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben thanked Roseanna for her service & presented her with a token of appreciation on behalf of the Tribe.



Thomas retires from Finance Dept.

With many years of dedicated service to the Tribe in the Finance Department, Wendy Thomas announced her retirement. A reception was held at the Entertainment House in Choctaw on Monday, March 25 as Wendy & her husband Scott, were joined by Tribal officials, Finance colleagues, & other Tribal employees as they gathered to celebrate

her career achievement. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben presented a token of appreciation for her distinguished service & offered her well wishes on her retirement & a new chapter in her life.



CTS District Lower Science, Engineering Fair results

Conehatta Elementary School hosted the Choctaw Tribal Schools' Lower Science & Engineering Fair on Wednesday, March 27. Seventy-three projects were entered representing Conehatta (CES), Pearl River (PRES), Red Water (RWES), Tucker (TES), Bogue Chitto (BCES), & Standing Pine Elementary Schools (SPES).

First – third place winners advanced to the Region V Lower Science & Engineering Fair, hosted by Mississippi State University on April 23.

Educators honored during Teacher Appreciation Week

Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben visited all Tribal Elementary Schools, Choctaw Central Middle & High Schools, Career & Technical Education Center (C-TEC), Choctaw Virtual Learning Center, Tribal Early Childhood Centers, & the Adult Education Program during Teacher Appreciation Week (May 6-10) to recognize all our outstanding educators. For their tireless efforts & dedication in educating our Tribal students, Chief Ben presented them with delicious cookies & tokens of appreciation that included Geysers Falls gift certificates. During his visits to the Early Childhood Centers, Chief Ben presented goody bags to our youngest Tribal members!

continued next page

Winners & their respective schools are listed below.

KINDERGARTEN

Inorganic Chemistry: 1st place, Brinaylin Thomas, TES; 2nd place, Kayelin McMillan, TES; 3rd place, Benicio Mingo, TES.

Organic Chemistry: 1st place, Aria Jenkins, CES.

Physics & Astronomy: 1st place, Sydus Willis, CES; 2nd place, Savanna Frazier, SPES.

Engineering Mechanics: 1st place, Ava Gibson, TES; 2nd place, Mattie Montoya, PRES; 3rd place, Karder Steele, TES.

Mathematics & Systems Software: 1st place, Jacaiya Willis, TES.

Robotics & Intelligent Machines: 1st place, Xavier Wishork, TES.

Plant Sciences: 1st place, Vatinna Issac, TES.

GRADE 1

Inorganic Chemistry: 1st place, Sydney Isaac, PRES; 2nd place, Darrell Thomas, TES; 3rd place, John Isaac; Honorable Mention, Zeitler Farmer, TES.

Organic Chemistry: 1st place, Julyssa Willis, TES.

Earth & Environmental Sciences: 1st place, Onnesy McMillan, TES.

Animal Sciences: 1st place, Torrence Farmer, PRES.

Engineering Mechanics: 1st place, Bryncess Thomas, TES; 2nd place, Zoey Jim, CES; 3rd place, Koide Isaac, TES.

Robotics & Intelligent Machines: 1st place, Kelise Perry, TES.

Plant Sciences: 1st place, Lillian Farve, SPES; 2nd place, Janna Pablo-Lewis.

GRADE 2

Inorganic Chemistry: 1st place, Kasey Nickey, TES; 2nd place, Cheri Hicks, CES; 3rd place, Cliff Willis, TES; Honorable Mention, Knox Bell.

Biochemistry: 1st place, Kayzlee McMillan.

Organic Chemistry: 1st place, Anakin Mitch, PRES; 2nd place, Jayston Fields-Amos, TES; 3rd place, Jaycee Shoemake, CES.

GRADE 3

Inorganic Chemistry: 1st place, Kari Hicks, CES; 2nd place, Faithlyn Mingo, TES; 3rd place, Logan Hickman, PRES; Honorable Mention, Kennedi Fields, TES.

Biochemistry: 1st place, Cainen Reynolds, PRES.

Earth & Environmental Sciences: 1st place, Riley Isaac, PRES; 2nd place, Pad-

mae Billie, PRES.

Organic Chemistry: 1st place, Caylea Farmer, PRES.

Physics & Astronomy: 1st place, Cornelia Bell, BCES.

Plant Sciences: 1st place, Keilani Gibson, TES.

Class I Best of Fair: Riley Isaac, PRES.

GRADE 4

Inorganic Chemistry: 1st place, Jeriana Frazier, CES; 2nd place, Jacaius Willis, TES.

Organic Chemistry: 1st place, Mariah McBeath, PRES; 2nd place, Kayden Thomas, CES.

Earth & Environmental Sciences: 1st place, Anna Layia Tubby, PRES.

Biomedical & Health Sciences: 1st place, Eva Willis, PRES.

Microbiology: 1st place, Cerulean Lewis, SPES; 2nd place, Rainee Billy, PRES.

Physics & Astronomy: 1st place, Adelyn Daniel, PRES; 2nd place, Jayzon Shoemake, CES.

Engineering Mechanics: 1st place, Bailee Frazier, SPES; 2nd place, Alice Ferris, PRES; 3rd place, Keianna Lewis, TES.

Mathematics & Systems Software: 1st place, Renaya Farmer, TES.

Plant Sciences: 1st place, Kamea Mitch, PRES.

GRADE 5

Inorganic Chemistry: 1st place, Zaydrian Reynolds, CES; 2nd place, I'zden Charlie, SPES; 3rd place, Tamina Jim, BCES.

Organic Chemistry: 1st place, Alistar King, CES; 2nd place, Brazilian Davis, CES.

Earth & Environmental Sciences: 1st

place, Anzaerius Huddleston, PRES; 2nd place, Paycen Comby, TES; 3rd place, A'Ria McMillan, TES; Honorable Mention, Laiya Willis, PRES.

Biomedical & Health Sciences: 1st place, Kaitlyn Edwards, RWES.

Microbiology: 1st place, Crisney Perry, TES; 2nd place, Jaciryn Vaughn, PRES.

Physics & Astronomy: 1st place, Bella Steve, TES; 2nd place, Maizelyn Chickaway, RWES.

Engineering Mechanics: 1st place, Jay Shoemake, CES; 2nd place, Braydon Farmer, TES.

Plant Sciences: 1st place, Serena Tubby, RWES; 2nd place, Ava Waiter, PRES.

Mathematics & Systems Software: 1st place, Mylah Gibson, TES.

Class II Best of Fair: Anzaerius Huddleston, PRES.

Thank you to the following professionals for judging our future scientists & engineers. They include Elray King, Dwight McMillan, Shaun Jimmie, Amy Pauls, Matthew Bell, Wes Wallace, Jessica Lewis, Raven Mingo, Julian Roach, & Autumn McMillan.



Best of Fair winners, from left to right, Riley Isaac (Class I) & Anzaerius Huddleston (Class II).



BETA Club members place at convention

Members of the Choctaw Tribal School's Elementary & Junior Beta Clubs attended the 32nd Annual Elementary/Junior Beta Convention at the Mississippi Coast Coliseum & Convention Center in Biloxi, February 21-23. Congratulations to Tribal students who placed in their respective categories in the elementary or junior division, making them eligible for national competition.

Apparel Design (Elementary) - Standing Pine Elementary School (SPES) placed 3rd.

Black & White Photography (Elementary) - Bailee Frazier, SPES, placed 3rd; (Junior) - Nylah Wilson, Red Water Elementary School (RWES), placed 1st & Kaelynn Chickaway, Pearl River Elementary School (PRES), placed 2nd.

Club Trading Pin (Elementa-

ry) - SPES placed 5th; (Junior) - SPES placed 3rd.

Color Photography (Elementary) - A'Ria McMillan, Tucker Elementary School (TES), placed 1st & Madalynn Jimmie, PRES, placed 3rd; (Junior) - Jacelynn Clemmons, PRES, placed 5th.

Digital Portfolio (Elementary) - SPES placed 4th.

Digitally Enhanced Photography (Elementary) - Jack John, SPES, placed 1st; (Junior) - Jaiyelynn Bell, PRES, placed 3rd.

Drawing (Elementary) - Braden Sam, SPES, placed 2nd & Shohmalaliy Dixon, PRES, placed 3rd; (Junior) - Mel'Laney Lindsey, SPES, placed 5th.

Fiber Arts (Elementary) - Grayson Tangle, SPES, placed 1st & Payton Meely, PRES, placed 2nd.

Hand Drawn Anime (Ele-

mentary) - Avery Hardy, SPES, placed 2nd; (Junior) - Xavi Vargas, SPES, placed 5th.

Jewelry (Elementary) - Laiya Willis, PRES, placed 1st; (Junior) - Shaylee Alex, SPES, placed 3rd, Shanshia Mingo, Conehatta Elementary School (CES), placed 4th, & Amaya Isaac, PRES, placed 5th.

Language Arts (7th Grade) - Reggie Edwards, Bogue Chitto Elementary School (BCES), placed 1st; (8th Grade) - Chacelyn Dixon, BCES, placed 2nd.

Math (4th Grade) - Grayson Tangle, SPES, placed 4th; (7th Grade) - Caramillo Frazier, BCES, placed 1st.

Mixed Media (Elementary) - Riley Wilson, SPES, placed 4th.

Onsite Art Drawing (Elementary) - Hazelin Joe, PRES, placed 3rd; (Junior) - Hadley

Mack, RWES, placed 3rd.

Painting (Elementary) - Kady Hickman, PRES, placed 4th.

Performing Arts (Elementary Small Group) - PRES placed 3rd; (Junior - Solo, Duo, Trio - Dancer) - RWES placed 5th.

Quilling (Junior) - Neveah McCool, BCES, placed 2nd.

Science (8th Grade) - Ameryn Robinson, BCES, placed 1st.

Scrapbook (Junior) - SPES placed 3rd.

Sculpture (Elementary) - Hazzen Thomas, PRES, placed 4th.

Service Learning Showcase (Elementary) - SPES placed 4th.

Spelling Bee (Elementary Oral) - Shyne Chickaway, CES, placed 3rd.

Three Dimensional Design (Elementary) - SPES placed 4th.

Two Dimensional Design (Junior) - SPES placed 5th.



Competes at FIRST Magnolia Regional

Choctaw Central High School's Robotics Team, Team #590 Chahta Warriors, participated in the FIRST Robotics Magnolia Regional Competition at the Fairgrounds in Laurel, Miss., on March 13-16. A total of 37 teams competed as students learned engineering & problem-solving skills that can be applied to the competition & real-world situations in the future. Teams create an identity, raise funds to meet goals, & work to promote STEM in their community. Chahta Warriors team members included Memphis Wilson, Kaiya Cotton, Akaylin Bell, Connor Vaughn, Kalvenlena Bell, Kaydence Bell, Ryleigh Anderson, Anniston Billy, Shaleah Amos, Alesia Roa, Zaymian Williamson, Aiden Alex, & Damian Billie.

Sockey attends Cooperative Leadership Workshop

Katie Sockey, a junior at Leake Academy in Mad-den, Miss., was one of 85 high school juniors from all over the state to participate in the 37th Electric Cooperatives of Mississippi Cooperative Leaders Workshop in Jackson from Feb. 21-23.

The workshop, held at The Westin in downtown Jackson, instills leadership skills, inspires creative thinking, encourages community service, & introduces students to legislative elected officials from their communities.

Students earned the trip to the workshop following a competitive selection process sponsored by their local electric cooperative. They will



Katie Sockey

travel to Washington, D.C. in June for a seven-day youth leadership tour.

Katie, along with fellow Central Electric student representatives Abreale

Leflore & Mitch Pucklitsch, met with state lawmakers, toured the state capitol, participated in problem solving activities, & attended speeches by motivational speakers including political cartoonist Marshall Ramsey (who urged them to serve their communities), Lt. Gov. Delbert Hosemann, & Secretary of State Michael Watson.

Katie is the daughter of Richard & Marion Sockey of the Standing Pine Community.

GRADUATION continued from page one

that regardless of where their next journey in life will be, they are headed towards a very bright future.”

Choctaw Tribal Council Tucker Representative and MBCI Education Committee Chairperson Demando Mingo urged the seniors to continue their pursuit of learning.

“Today marks the process in your journey where you take your reins and begin focusing on your own journey and direction your life will lead. There will be stumbling blocks along the way, but if you continue to strive and focus on the journey, the destination will eventually be clear. You have tested and proved ready to take the next step.”

Department of Schools Director Delnita Jones reminded the seniors that graduation is their start on a new path with unlimited opportunities, as long as they always give their best.

“Whatever you choose to do, you not only represent yourself, but your parents, your Tribe, and those who forged the path you now walk on. The knowledge you gained is the only thing no one can take from you. No matter how far away you go, you always have a home here as part of the great Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, and we will always be here to support you.”

Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben acknowledged the seniors and their families as they can finally celebrate a special night for all their successes.

“As you take in tonight, take in that love and how much support has brought you to tonight. As you flip the chapter to whatever paths you may take, that support continues for you for successes of tomorrow.”

Chief Ben added that as we mature, our priorities may

change, but your focus does not have to.

“Some people constantly change goals, but the focus will not change because all of it requires effort. When you wonder which direction to go, just reflect on yourself and search your soul, your mind, and put forth your hands to fly.”

Salutatorian Nataysia Willis said this is the day she has been waiting for, but it is also a bittersweet moment to say goodbye to this chapter in their lives.

“Turning a page on our chapter doesn’t mean the story can’t be revisited. The memories and experiences from our four years here will stay with us forever, and we will carry these memories with us always.”

She added, “My time here has shown me one undeniable truth, we embody resilience.

Graduation isn’t just a celebration of passing classes and juggling responsibilities, it’s about doing all the right things despite the challenges in between. God has an individual purpose for each of us, and I hope you all recognize your own strengths and use them as your tools on your next part of your journey.”

Valedictorian Keondrae Anderson said his achievements were a result of support from his family and friends.

“I’ve been incredibly lucky to have what seems like mountains of people supporting my dreams in everything I do. Family, friends, teachers, and others have all paved the road I walk today. They have all given me the encouragement, skills, and mindset to achieve anything I strive for. They have all helped me to become a better man.”

Anderson added that every-

one is capable of great things, even if they have to struggle with school, work, or life in general. As they push to achieve their goals, he sees a victory for the Tribal community.

“I believe that with every success, our future as a Tribe is more secure. To all of our graduates, I’m proud of you. I hope to see the excellence I see today mirrored in our next graduating class, and the class after them, and all the classes graduating from Choctaw Central. I can see our future reflected in each and every one of them, and the future of this community and Tribe is very bright.”

After the presentation of diplomas by Chief Ben, senior Talayah Kinsolving offered the benediction. Principal Keams then announced to the audience the proud graduates of CCHS’s Class of 2024.



Graduates from ECCC's Middle College program

East Central Community College (ECCC) in Decatur hosted graduation ceremonies in Huff Auditorium on Friday, May 3, as several Choctaw Central High School (CCHS) seniors & former students were the first class of the Middle College program to graduate. These CCHS students made history as the first graduating students of CCHS to receive an associate's degree while simultaneously getting their high school education. Congratulations to seniors Anya Anderson, Keondrae Anderson, Aisha Bell, Buford Billie, Gabriel Chitto, Natalee Eaves, Nataysia Willis, & former students Elliana Ben, Thomas Ben & Kaisen Edwards for achieving this amazing feat. These students were dual enrolled at ECCC while enrolled at CCHS. Middle College students are 11th & 12th grade students who spend a portion of the academic day at high school & a portion at the ECCC campus where classes are taught. Middle college students must meet college academic expectations with the end goal to earn an associate degree or advanced national certification, as well as a diploma from their high school. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, along with several Choctaw Tribal Council members & officials from CCHS & Department of Schools, witnessed these students' great accomplishments, along with the students' families, friends, & supporters. Congratulations also to Choctaw youth & regular-track ECCC students Annalise Bell, Tyus Bell, Allandra Dunaway, & Kyla Farmer as they received their Associate's degrees.

Congratulations

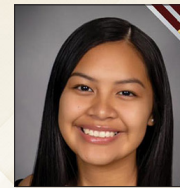
Class of 2024



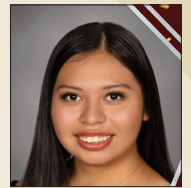
Randi Adams
Germantown High School



Aiden Alex
Choctaw Central High School



Chesney Amos
Choctaw Central High School



Shaleah Amos
Choctaw Central High School



Anya Anderson
Choctaw Central High School



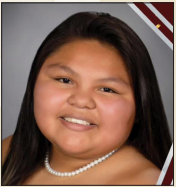
Keondrae Anderson
Choctaw Central High School



Raylen Bark
Dartmouth College



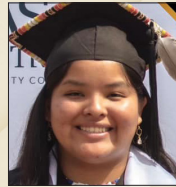
Abeanna Bell
Choctaw Central High School



Aisha Bell
Choctaw Central High School



Ameryn Bell
Choctaw Central High School



Annalise Bell
East Central Community College



Dayrean Bell
Choctaw Central High School



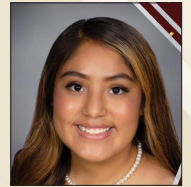
Ehven Bell
Neshoba Central High School



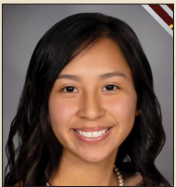
Jocelyn Bell
Riverside Indian School



Kalvenlena Bell
Choctaw Central High School



Kylinn Bell
Choctaw Central High School



Mattison Bell
Choctaw Central High School



Talon Bell
Choctaw Central High School



Tolbert Bell
Choctaw Central High School



Tyus Bell
East Central Community College



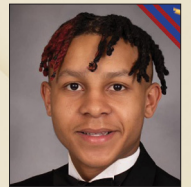
Gilbert Bell, Jr.
Choctaw Central High School



Anthony Ben
Choctaw Virtual Learning Center



Brodie Ben
Neshoba Central High School



Jordan Ben
Neshoba Central High School



Logan Ben
Choctaw Central High School



Maeli Ben
Newton County High School



Mateo Ben
Choctaw Central High School



Michael Ben
Neshoba Central High School



Noah Ben
Neshoba Central High School



Taleik Ben
Choctaw Virtual Learning Center



Tialenia Ben
Choctaw Virtual Learning Center



Zander Ben
Choctaw Central High School



Apple Billie
Neshoba Central High School



Buford Billie
Choctaw Central High School



Buford Billie
East Central Community College



Miley Billie
Choctaw Central High School



Delaiah Billy
Choctaw Central High School



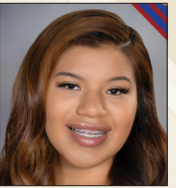
Hailey Briscoe
Choctaw Central High School



Autumn Brown
Neshoba Central High School



Kezmond Carter, Jr.
Choctaw Central High School



Hannah Charlie
Neshoba Central High School



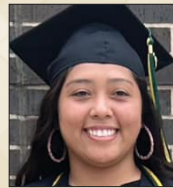
Alannaysia Chickaway
Choctaw Virtual Learning Center



Daylia Chickaway
Neshoba Central High School



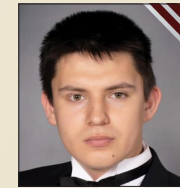
Kagel Chickaway
Choctaw Central High School



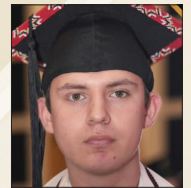
Kambree Chickaway
Belhaven University



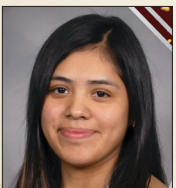
Lakenton Chickaway
Choctaw Central High School



Gabriel Chitto
Choctaw Central High School



Gabriel Chitto
East Central Community College



Aaliyah Clemmons
Choctaw Central High School



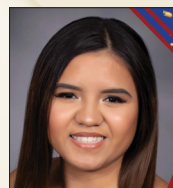
Yahnish Clifton
Northeast Jones High School



Alexander Comby
Choctaw Central High School



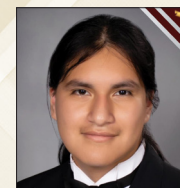
Andrew Cotton
Choctaw Central High School



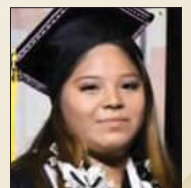
Raziya Cumberland
Neshoba Central High School



Jordan Davis
Neshoba Central High School



Acarnan Denson
Choctaw Central High School



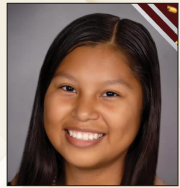
Brianna Denson
Choctaw Virtual Learning Center



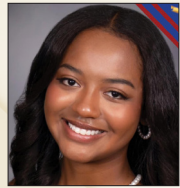
Jabari Denson
Choctaw Central
High School



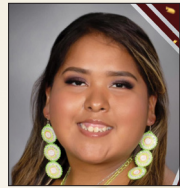
Chailyn Dixon
Choctaw Central
High School



Lakaysia Dixon
Choctaw Central
High School



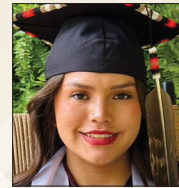
Ruth Dixon
Neshoba Central
High School



Taylor Dixon
Choctaw Central
High School



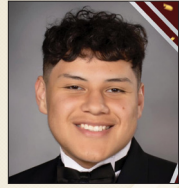
Natalee Eaves
Choctaw Central
High School



Natalee Eaves
East Central
Community College



Titan Edwards
Choctaw Central
High School



Kristopher Espinosa
Choctaw Central
High School



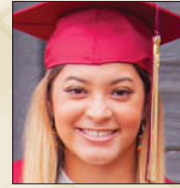
Ansley Evans
Neshoba Central
High School



Ja'Keisha Farmer
Standing Pine
Elementary School



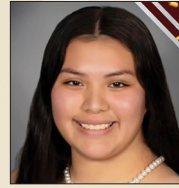
James Farmer, Jr.
Pearl River
Elementary School Pre-K



Hama'ya Fielder
Pearl River
Community College



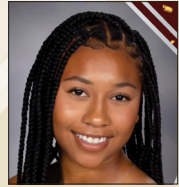
Lexi Flint
Leake Central
High School



Belinda Frazier
Choctaw Central
High School



Cameron Frazier
Choctaw Central
High School



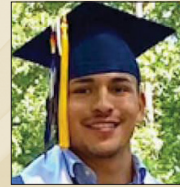
Kaniya Frazier
Choctaw Central
High School



Christopher Gentry
Neshoba Central
High School



Zeya Gomez Valadez
Choctaw Central
High School



Kashton Grisham
Mississippi Gulf Coast
Community College



Dexton Hall
Choctaw Central
High School



Macaden Hall
Choctaw Central
High School



Baxter Hall, III
Choctaw Central
High School



Cassidy Harris
Choctaw Central
High School



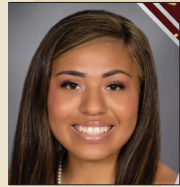
Brennan Henry
Choctaw Central
High School



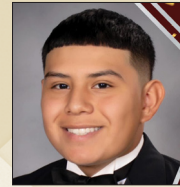
Kaeleigh Henry
Neshoba Central
High School



Lamont Henry
Neshoba Central
High School



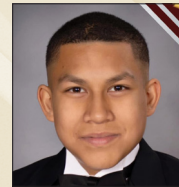
Tori Henry
Choctaw Central
High School



Tristen Henry
Choctaw Central
High School



Nathan Hession
Petah
High School



Emmanuel Hudson
Choctaw Central
High School



Brannon Isaac
Choctaw Central
High School



Rick Isaac
Neshoba Central
High School



Shaud Isaac
Neshoba Central
High School



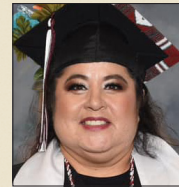
Zaiyah Isaac
Choctaw Central
High School



Sa'Nya Jackson
Neshoba Central
High School



Arishanda Jefferson
Mississippi State
University



Dawnena Jefferson
Mississippi State
University



Aria Jenkins
Conehatta Elementary
School Kindergarten



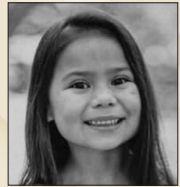
Dalayla Jenkins
Choctaw Central
High School



Ellie Jenkins
Conehatta
Head Start



Breyonce Jim
Neshoba Central
High School



Harper Jim
Cherokee
Pre-K School



Layla Jim
Choctaw Central
High School



Dakota Jimmie
Choctaw Central
High School



Kodi Jimmie
Choctaw Central
High School



Aven Joe
Choctaw Central
High School



Day'breon Joe
Neshoba Central
High School



Justice Joe
Choctaw Central
High School



Dustin John
University of
Southern Mississippi



Seth John
Choctaw Central
High School



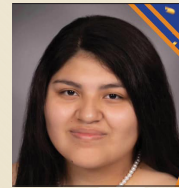
Taywah John
Choctaw Central
High School



Trishelle John
Choctaw Central
High School



Alan John, Jr.
Choctaw Central
High School



Hailey Johnson
Newton County
High School



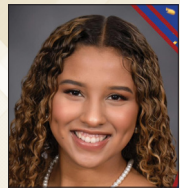
Kayden Johnson
Choctaw Central
High School



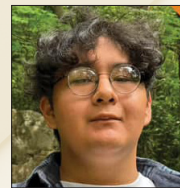
Kaysa Johnson
Choctaw Central
High School



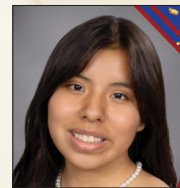
Kiezer Johnson
Mississippi State
University



Cara Jones
Neshoba Central
High School



Brannen Keams
Kennewick
High School



Savannah Ketcher
Neshoba Central
High School



Olajuwon King
Morton
High School



Talahay Kinsolving
Choctaw Central
High School



Raven Kirk
Neshoba Central
High School



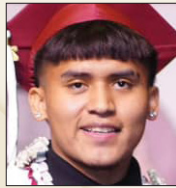
Fantasia Lewis
Choctaw Central
High School



Julisa Lewis
Choctaw Central
High School



Truman Lewis
Choctaw Central
High School



Christopher Lewis, Jr.
Choctaw Central
High School



Erica Lyons
Neshoba Central
High School



Eric Martin, Jr.
Choctaw Central
High School



Jayden Martin
Choctaw Central
High School



Krystin Martin
Mississippi State
University



Lorena Martinez
Choctaw Central
High School



Logan Maxwell-McArthur
University of
Southern Mississippi



Jamie McCarty
Choctaw Central
High School



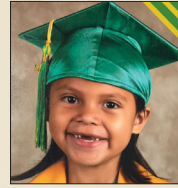
Amare McMillan
Choctaw Central
High School



Kameron McMillan
Neshoba Central
High School



Kaya McMillan
Tucker
Head Start



Kayelin McMillan
Tucker
Head Start



Rayna Mendez
Riverside
Indian School



Brandon Mesteth
Choctaw Central
High School



Jaliah Mingo
Neshoba Central
High School



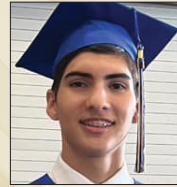
Kodin Mingo
Choctaw Central
High School



Peyton Mingo
Choctaw Central
High School



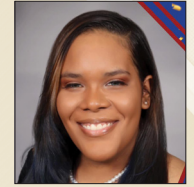
Tyrece Mingo
Choctaw Central
High School



Zain Mitch
Vandebilt Catholic
High School



Tessney Morris
Choctaw Central
High School



Jaliyah Negrete
Neshoba Central
High School



Isaiah Newton
Neshoba Central
High School



Kayla Paul-Irwin
Neshoba Central
High School



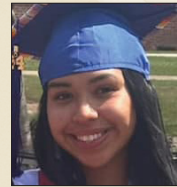
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Choctaw Central
High School



Melanie Perez
Choctaw Central
High School



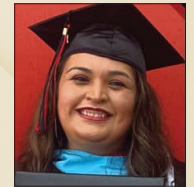
Cera Phillips
Choctaw Central
High School



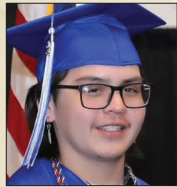
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Cophiah-Lincoln
Community College



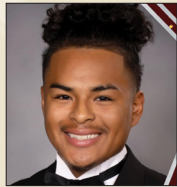
Alesia Roa
Choctaw Central
High School



Samantha Roach
Arkansas State
University



Anthony Robinson
Hartshorne
High School



Jayden Rush
Choctaw Central
High School



Jayce Sam
Choctaw Central
High School



India Samuels
Mississippi State
University



Amilia Sebastian
Choctaw Central
High School



Richie Shoemake
Choctaw Central
High School



Amlee Shumake
Leake Central
High School



J'Haven Smith
Choctaw Central
High School



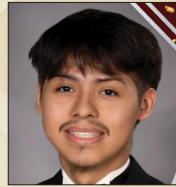
Ashlynn Stephens
Choctaw Central
High School



Delayna Steve
Choctaw Central
High School



Rocky Steve
Choctaw Central
High School



Miles Taylor
Choctaw Central
High School



Joshua Tejada
Bridgeland
High School



Sharon Thames
East Central
Community College



Boyce Thomas
Neshoba Central
High School



Hayden Thomas
Neshoba Central
High School



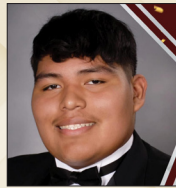
Keira Thomas
Neshoba Central
High School



Kenyun Thomas
Choctaw Central
High School



Rodgrick Thomas
Choctaw Central
High School



Tazzden Thomas
Choctaw Central
High School



Zyler Thomas
Choctaw Central
High School



Cassius Thompson
Choctaw Central
High School



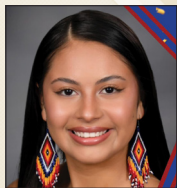
Chloe Thompson
Neshoba Central
High School



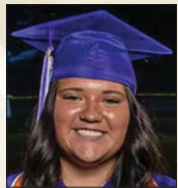
Joseph Thompson
Jourdanton
High School



Maggie Thompson
Neshoba Central
High School



Nalani Thompson
Neshoba Central
High School



Searra Thompson
Ripley
High School



Trysten Thompson
Neshoba Central
High School



Adrellius Tubby
Choctaw Central
High School



Destini Tubby
Choctaw Central
High School



Isaiah Tubby
Choctaw Central
High School



Ladainian Tubby
Choctaw Central
High School



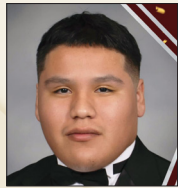
Treyden Tubby
Newton County
High School



Zavian Tubby
Choctaw Central
High School



Connor Vaughn
Choctaw Central
High School



Jorgan Vaughn
Choctaw Central
High School



Lonnie Waiter
Choctaw Central
High School



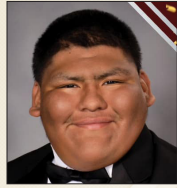
Hunter Wakefield
Ripley
High School



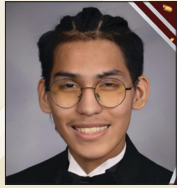
Iverson Wallace
Choctaw Central
High School



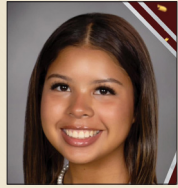
Chloe Wesley
Mississippi School
for Math & Science



Jalon Wesley
Choctaw Central
High School



Jamarcus Wesley
Choctaw Central
High School



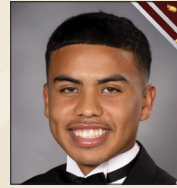
Destinee Williams
Choctaw Central
High School



Dreshawn Williams
Jones
Academy



Katelin Williams
Neshoba Central
High School



Koie Williams
Choctaw Central
High School



Maverick Williams, Sr.
University of
Oklahoma



Casey Willis
University of Mississippi
Medical Center School of Nursing



Eliza Willis
Choctaw Central
High School



Fichik Willis
Hartshorne
High School



Jalen Willis
Choctaw Central
High School



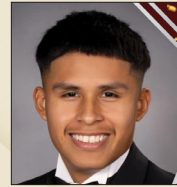
Kaily Willis
Riverside
Indian School



Kailyn Willis
Neshoba Central
High School



Kambridge Willis
Choctaw Central
High School



Malcolm Willis
Choctaw Central
High School



Markus Willis
Choctaw Central
High School



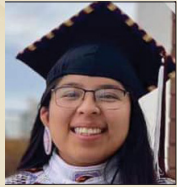
Mya Willis
Neshoba Central
High School



Nataysia Willis
Choctaw Central
High School



Sequoia Willis
Choctaw Central
High School



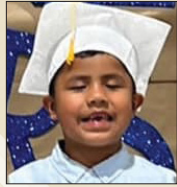
Tatiana Willis
Mississippi State
University



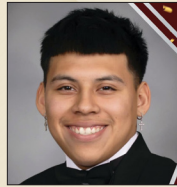
Tayla Willis
Choctaw Central
High School



Taylan Willis
Choctaw Central
High School



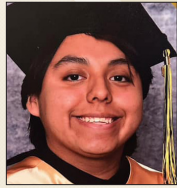
Simeon Willis, Jr.
Pearl River Elementary
School Kindergarten



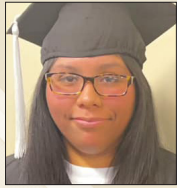
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High School



Joslian Winters
Neshoba Central
High School



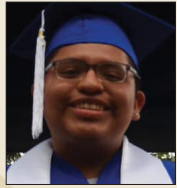
Haydn Wofford
Broken Arrow
High School



Diajah York
Meridian
Community College



Diaz York
Choctaw Central
High School



Iysiahs York
Mississippi School
for Math & Science



Jakaylin York
Neshoba Central
High School



CVLC holds May 21 graduation ceremony

The Choctaw Virtual Learning Center (CVLC) held graduation ceremonies for members of the Class of 2024 on Tuesday evening, May 21, at the Silver Star Convention Center in Choctaw.

With families and supporters in attendance, the graduates came into the center as "Pomp and Circumstance" played overhead. Bogue Chitto Elementary School student Tayber Thomas then performed the National Anthem in the Choctaw language, followed by an opening prayer by 2023-2024 Choctaw Indian Princess Nalani LuzMaria Thompson.

CVLC Administrator Nell Adkins welcomed the audience, followed by remarks from Tribal Council Committee on Education Chair Demando Mingo, MBCI Director of Schools Delnita Jones, and Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben.

They included Zaynah Shoemaker (English), Kah-Shun Isaac (Science), Kenyon Comby (Social Studies), & Lindsey Navarro Ortiz (Math).

Gene Cilburn, former CVLC administrator and current Director of Client Experience for Grade Results, offered the graduates words of encouragement.

The students then walked across the stage as they received their diplomas from Chief Ben. Pastor Mark Patrick offered the closing prayer, followed by the presentation of the Class of 2024 by CVLC Administrator Adkins.

This year's graduates include Teddy Allen, Callie Amos, Marc Anderson, Sebastian Anderson, Sereney Anderson, Brooklyn Bell, Fahlon Bell, Jarvis Bell, Kaden Bell, Quintiniya Bell, Rannella Bell, Shilayah Bell, Talisha Bell, Vonda Bell, Anthony Ben, Taleik

Several graduates received subject

see CVLC GRADUATES, pg. 24

Students sign college letters of intent

Several Tribal students recently signed letters of intent to continue their educational, athletic, or extracurricular careers at their respective collegiate institutions. The following is a listing of students, college destination, and sport or activity.

CHOCTAW CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

- Kylinn Bell, Copiah-Lincoln Community College (Wesson, MS), Basketball.
- Mattison Bell, Pearl River Community College (Poplarville, MS), Basketball.
- Miley Billie, Holmes Community College (Goodman, MS), Softball.
- Brennan Henry, Haskell Indian Nations University (Lawrence, KS), Cross Country.
- Tori Henry, Blue Mountain College (Blue Mountain, MS), Softball.
- Tristen Henry, Southeastern Baptist College (Laurel, MS), Baseball.
- Kodi Jimmie, Millsaps College (Jackson, MS), Softball.
- Alan John, Jr., Northwest Community College (Senatobia, MS), Golf.
- Peyton Mingo, Haskell Indian Nations University (Lawrence, KS), Golf.
- Delayna Steve, East Central Community College (Decatur, MS), Band.
- Koie Williams, Mississippi College (Clinton, MS), Basketball.

- Nataysia Willis, Meridian Community College (Meridian, MS), Basketball.

NESHOBA CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

- Brodie Ben, Mississippi College (Clinton, MS), Football.
- Jordan Ben, Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas (Hele-

- na, AR), Basketball.
- Noah Ben, Mississippi State University (Starkville, MS).
- Sa'Nya Jackson, Copiah-Lincoln Community College (Wesson, MS).
- Breyonce' Jim, Southeastern Baptist College (Laurel, MS), Basketball.
- Erica Lyons, East Central Community College (Decatur, MS), Basketball.

continued next page



Kylinn Bell Mattison Bell Miley Billie Brennan Henry Tori Henry Tristen Henry Kodi Jimmie



Alan John, Jr. Peyton Mingo Delayna Steve Koie Williams Nataysia Willis Jordan Ben Breyonce' Jim

CVLC GRADUATES continued from page twenty-three

Ben, Tialenia Ben, Connor Billy, Ashaun Chapman, Kanneisha Charlie, Myleia Chickaway, Keontray Clemons, Veronica Clemons, Zeylon Clemons, Jada Comby, Jimmy Comby, Kenton Comby, Kenyon Comby, Princess Comby, Tenishia Comby, Makayia Cotton, Tayeasha Cotton, Yvonne Dan, Damian Davila, Kentrelle Davis, Marcia Davis, Brianna Denson, Dallatesha Dixon, Kyzier Dixon, Isis Eaves, Kitisha Farmer, Bryant Frazier, Evain Frazier, Tymara Frazier, Betty Fuller, Keyunte Fuller, Brittany Gibson, Martisha Hickman, Alicia Isaac, Isiah Isaac, Kah-Shun Isaac, Tye Jaramillo, Alicia Jefferson, Chrisinda Jefferson, Deshayna Jefferson, Vincent Jefferson, Desmond Jim, Heather Jim, Kelsey Jim, Laci Jim, Lindy Jim, Malinda Jim, Melanie Jim, Naliyah Jim, R'Linda Jim, Roylean-

na Jim, Sagel Jimmie, Adam Joe, Kiyus Joe, Patricia Joe, Tammy Joe, Daley John, Elizabeth John, Janet John, Lynnaiyah John, Richard John, Jr., Sarron Johnson, Kaiden King, Ryland King, Santana King, Kabreana Lewis, Tyra Lewis, Destini Marshall, Alejandro Martin, Braycie McMillan, Caydan McMillan, Gabriella McMillan, Jimmy McMillan, Jr., Jontay McMillan, Lakenya Miller, Xavier Miller, McKala Mingo, Willeam Mingo, Nathanael Nickey, Rachel Nickey, Richard Nickey, Lindsey Navarro Ortiz, Odessa Pennington, Dale Phillips, Jr., Day'Leon Phillips, II, Damion Polk, Tomeh Reed, Asha Robinson, Jakyla Robinson, Melton Robinson, Jr., Dante Sam, Garrick Sam, Kenobi Sam, Mason Schrock, Arlana Shoemake, Dalladaysia Shoemake, Leslie Shoemake, Torah Shoemake, Zayan-

na Shoemake, Zaynah Shoemake, Veltina Shumake, Brooklyn Sockey, Dearryl Solomon, Andrew Stell, Nema Steve, Tiana Stewart, Kyla Tanyan, Hope Thomas, Juanokia Thomas, Shane Thomas, Jr., Sunshine Thomas, Gina Thompson, LaRosa Thompson, Maria Trejo, Corian Triplett, Amelia Tubby, Deondre Tubby, Dreydon Tubby, Jeremiah Tubby, Lois Tubby, Makila Tubby, Sheene Tubby, Talaiha Tubby, Milo Vaughn, Jasmine Velez, Connie Wallace, Jennifer Wallace, Kenneth Wallace, Kirahanna Wallace, Vanda Wallace, Gavin Williams, LaShundra Williams, Ayden Willis, Cecilia Willis, Denyunhia Willis, Koden Willis, Lacey Willis, Larisa Willis, Martin Willis, Jr., Meka Willis, Quintin Willis, Taylor Willis, & Ervin Wishork.

- Kameron McMillan, Johnson & Wales University-Charlotte (Charlotte, NC).
 - Chloe Thompson, University of Southern Mississippi (Hattiesburg, MS).
 - Nalani Thompson, University of Southern Mississippi (Hattiesburg, MS).
 - Katelin Williams, Coffeyville Community College (Coffeyville, KS), Basketball.
 - Kailyn Willis, Coffeyville Community College (Coffeyville, KS), Basketball.
 - Mya Willis, Union University (Jackson, TN).
 - Jakaylin York, East Central Community College (Decatur, MS), Basketball.
- NORTHWEST RANKIN HIGH SCHOOL**
- Bryson Jones, Jones College (Ellisville, MS), Baseball.
- PHILADELPHIA HIGH SCHOOL**
- Brady Parkerson, Itawamba Community College (Fulton, MS), Football.
- LAKE HIGH SCHOOL**



Erica Lyons Kameron McMillan Mya Willis Nalani Thompson Chloe Thompson Sa'Nya Jackson Noah Ben Brodie Ben



Katelin Williams Kailyn Willis Jakaylin York Bryson Jones Brady Parkerson Lyric Lay Jocelyn Bell

- Lyric Lay, East Central Community College (Decatur, MS), Softball.
 - Jocelyn Bell, Coffeyville Community College (Coffeyville, KS), Basketball.
- RIVERSIDE INDIAN SCHOOL**

SENIOR NIGHTS 2024



CCHS Seniors honored

Choctaw Central High School (CCHS) hosted Senior Night activities on Friday, April 12, for those participating on the Powerlifting, Track & Field, & Softball Teams. Seniors honored were Anya Anderson, Kaniya Frazier, Andrew Cotton, Richie Shoemaker,



Brannon Isaac, Kristopher Espinoza, Aaliyah Clemmons, Dalayla Jenkins, Keondrae Anderson, Brennan Henry, Jayce Sam, Kylinn Bell, Miley Billie, Delaiah Billy, Natalee Eaves, Belinda Frazier, Tori Henry, Kodi Jimmie, Tessney Morris, Tayla Willis, & Mattison Bell (not pictured). Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, along with family members, friends, & supporters, recognized these outstanding senior Warriors & Lady Warriors.

RIGHT, Senior Night activities were held on Tuesday, April 16, for the Warriors Baseball Team. Recognized were Talon Bell, Tristen Henry, & Aven Joe. On behalf of Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, 2023-2024 Choctaw Indian Princess Nalani LuzMaria Thompson presented gifts for their achievements. Family members, friends, & supporters celebrated with the seniors as they offered best wishes on their future endeavours.





Northwest Rankin Senior honored

On Tuesday evening, April 9, Northwest Rankin High School held Senior Night activities for the Cougars Baseball Team. Amongst the seniors honored was student-athlete Bryson Jones. Family members, friends & supporters celebrated the recognition with him & offered best wishes for his future successes.



Lake Senior honored

Lake High School held Senior Night activities for softball on Monday, April 15. Amongst the seniors honored was Lady Hornet student-athlete Lyric Lay. On behalf of Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, Red Water Tribal Council Representative Sam John presented a gift in recognition of her achievement & joined family members, teammates, coaches, friends, & supporters as they offered her best wishes in her future endeavours.



Neshoba Central Seniors honored

Neshoba Central High School held their Senior Night activities for the Lady Rockets Softball Team & Rockets Baseball Team on Monday, April 15. Amongst the seniors honored for softball were student-athletes Sa'Nya Jackson, Erica Lyons, Chloe Thompson, Mya Willis, & fellow Lady Rocket Dakota Williamson. For the Rockets Baseball Team, Tribal student-athletes honored included Ehven Bell



& Jordan Davis. Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, Mrs. TaRita Ben, Vice Chief Ronnie Henry, Sr., & 2023-2024 Choctaw Indian Princess Nalani LuzMaria Thompson were in attendance to celebrate the occasion with family members, friends, & supporters. Best wishes to all in your future endeavours.



Newton County Seniors honored

Newton County High School held Senior Night activities for the Lady Cougars Softball Team & Cougars Baseball Team on Tuesday, April 16. Amongst the seniors honored included student-athletes Maeli Ben for softball & Dominic Bell for baseball. On behalf of Tribal



Chief Cyrus Ben, 2023-2024 Choctaw Indian Princess Nalani LuzMaria Thompson presented them gifts for their achievements. She joined family members, friends, & supporters as they offered them their best wishes in their future endeavours.

Tribal student-athletes bring home state titles

Several Tribal student-athletes brought home the gold as they claimed Mississippi High School Activities Association State Championships in their respective sports.

The Neshoba Central Lady Rockets claimed their second state basketball championship in three years as they defeated the Terry High School Lady Bulldogs 53-39 in the Class 6A finals at the Mississippi Coliseum in Jackson on Saturday, March 2. The Lady Rockets concluded their season with a 32-1 overall record and a #1 ranking in Mississippi.

Choctaw Central Lady Warrior Anya Anderson claimed the school's first ever state powerlifting title at the Class 4A powerlifting championships on Friday, April 5, at the Mississippi Coliseum in Jackson.

Anderson, a senior, competed in the 198 lb. weight division as her best lifts included 330 lbs. squat, 115 lbs. bench press, and 340 lbs. deadlift for a total of 790 lbs. lifted.

At the track and field championships, held at Pearl High School, Neshoba Central Lady Rocket Kyli Truss captured gold on Saturday, May 4, as she won the Class 6A 1600 meter run finals with her time of 5:41.61. She also won silver in the 3200 meter run finals with her time of 13:06.03.

In Class 4A, Choctaw Central Warrior Andrew Cotton won his second consecutive shot put championship on Monday, May 6. His distance of 50 feet-10 inches garnered him a new state record in Class 4A.

In the state softball championships, Courtney Lewis and the West Lauderdale Lady Knights defeated the Purvis Lady Tornados 7-6 to win the Class 4A title on Thursday, May 16, at the University of Southern Mississippi Softball Complex in Hattiesburg.

In the state baseball championships, Jamaurion & Trey McQueen and the Brandon

CONGRATULATIONS!

2024 Mississippi State Champions

BASKETBALL • POWERLIFTING • TRACK & FIELD • SOFTBALL • BASEBALL



Neshoba Central Lady Rockets CLASS 6A GIRLS BASKETBALL STATE CHAMPIONS



Anya Anderson
Choctaw Central Lady Warriors
CLASS 4A POWERLIFTING STATE CHAMPION



Kyli Truss
Neshoba Central Lady Rockets
CLASS 6A TRACK & FIELD STATE 1600M CHAMPION



Andrew Cotton
Choctaw Central Warriors
CLASS 4A TRACK & FIELD STATE SHOT PUT CHAMPION



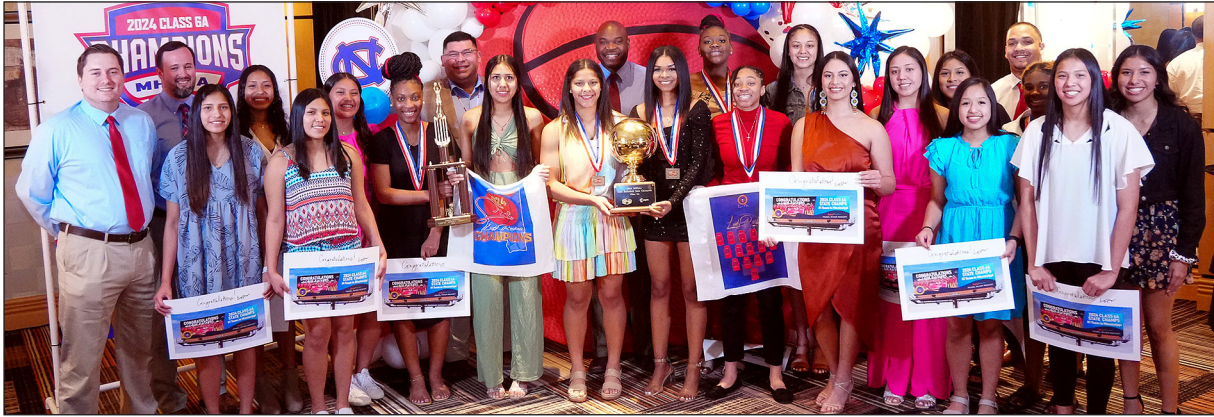
Courtney Lewis
West Lauderdale Lady Knights
CLASS 4A SOFTBALL STATE CHAMPIONS



Jamaurion & Trey McQueen
Brandon Bulldogs
CLASS 7A BASEBALL STATE CHAMPIONS

Bulldogs defeated the Hernando Tigers 1-0 to win the Class 7A title on Thursday, May 23, at Trustmark Park in Pearl. Jamaurion made the lone score in the first inning and

was named game MVP. He was recently selected to the 7A First Team All-State. Congratulations to all our state champions!



Lady Rockets honored

A celebration banquet honoring the 2024 MHSAA Class 6A Girls State Basketball Champions Neshoba Central Lady Rockets was held on Wednesday evening, March 20, at the VIP Room at the Golden Moon Hotel & Casino in Choctaw. The event was hosted by Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben & the Tribal Administration as the dinner was provided by

Pearl River Resort. Remarks were given by Lady Rocket Coaches Jason Broom & Shannon Ruffin, & Chief Ben. A team highlight video was shown & a championship banner by the Tribe was presented to the team. It was the Lady Rockets' second state championship in three years as they concluded the 2023-2024 season with a 32-1 overall record & a #1 ranking in Mississippi.



CCHS teams honored

Choctaw Central High School's Powerlifting and Track & Field teams were honored during a celebration banquet hosted by Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben & the Tribal Administration on Wednesday evening, May 8, at the VIP Room at the Golden Moon Hotel & Casino in Choctaw. The meal was provided by Pearl River Resort. Other officials in attendance included Vice Chief Ronnie Henry, Sr., MBCI Director of Schools Delnita Jones & Assistant Director of Schools Trina Cheatham. Honored were Lady Warrior Anya Anderson as she claimed the school's first Class 4A state championship in powerlifting & Warrior Andrew Cotton won back-to-back Class 4A track and field state championships in the shot put event.



Tribal & school officials with members of the CCHS Powerlifting team (above) & CCHS Track & Field team (below).



RIGHT, Pictured in front of their championship banners are Anya Anderson (left photo) & Andrew Cotton (right photo). Pictured with them are powerlifting coaches Edward Routh & Amanda Reed, track & field coaches Gwynn Grant & Anthony Thames, 2023-2024 Choctaw Indian Princess Nalani LuzMaria Thompson, & Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben.





CCHS teams honored with luncheon

Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben & the Tribal Administration hosted a congratulatory luncheon for the CCHS Lady Warriors & Warriors basketball teams, Lady Warriors soccer team, & their coaches on Wednesday, March 6, at Stats Restaurant in the Silver Star Hotel & Casino in Choctaw. Both basketball teams claimed the 4-4A regular season & tournament titles & reached the semifinals of the MHSAA Class 4A State Tournament on Feb. 28 at the Mississippi Coliseum in Jackson. The Lady Warriors (27-4) were defeated by Morton 47-40 in OT & the Warriors (27-6) lost 66-53 to Raymond. The Lady Warriors soccer team (14-3-1) made their first appearance in the North State title game as they hosted West Lauderdale on Feb. 13, but were



defeated by the score of 3-2. All student-athletes received a congratulatory gift from Chief Ben on their excellent seasons.



Bell named Miss Basketball 4A

Choctaw Central Lady Warriors basketball standout Mattison Bell was one of 14 stellar student-athletes recognized as MHSAA/MAC Mr. & Miss Basketball honorees on Tuesday, March 5. The awards luncheon, sponsored by C Spire, was held at the MHSAA/MAC Office Conference Center in Clinton. Mattison was named Miss Basketball for Class 4A. This is the first time a student-athlete from Choctaw Central has ever achieved this honor. In attendance for the ceremony included Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben, CCHS Principal Alaric Keams, Athletic Director Brent Farmer, CCHS Lady Warriors Basketball Head Coach Elyse Willis, & Mattison's mother Shelvie Dixon.



State Medalists

Congratulations to Choctaw Central's Andrew Cotton as he placed third in the 308+ weight division of the MHSAA Class 4A State Powerlifting Championships on Saturday, April 6, at the Mississippi Coliseum in Jackson. His best lifts included 550 lbs. squat, 340 lbs. bench press, & 650 lbs. deadlift for a total of 1540 lbs. lifted. Congratulations also to the Choctaw Central Lady Warriors track & field team as they placed 2nd in the 4x800 meter relay finals at the MHSAA Class 4A Track & Field Championships on Monday, May 6, at Pearl High School in Pearl. The Lady Warriors team, comprised of Caitlyn Bounds, Zayna Hudson, Delayla Jenkins, & Reanna Thomas, finished with a time of 10:47.40.

Participates in All-Star Game

Congratulations to Choctaw Central's Koie Williams (left) & Mattison Bell (center) as they participated in the Magnolia Sports Association 2024 MAG Senior All-Star Game, & to Leake County's Treyton Ricks & Nanih Waiya's JaQuirious Hughes (not pictured) who participated in the MSA Rising Juniors Game. The games were played at East Central Community College in Decatur on Sunday, April 14. Mattison, named MVP, had a game high 23 points, 5 assists, 3 rebounds, 6 steals, & a block for Team Cruise as they defeated Team Pope 65-49. Koie had 7 points, 2 assists, 6 rebounds, & a steal for Team Luckett as they were defeated by Team Porter 71-57. Treyton had 5 points, an assist, & 7 rebounds for Team Johnson as teammate JaQuirious had 3 points, an assist, rebound, steal, & a block. They were defeated in a tight contest 69-68 to Team Thedford.



Howell, Gillom, Ferriss Trophies awarded

The Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame & Museum announced winners of the 2024 Howell & Gillom Trophies at the Golden Moon Casino's VIP Room in Choctaw on Monday, March 11.

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

The 2024 Howell Trophy went to Josh Hubbard of Mississippi State. The 2024 Gillom Trophy went to Jessika Carter of Mississippi State.

"The Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame is proud to recognize Jessika, Josh, & all of the finalists on their tremendous accomplishments this season," said Bill Blackwell, Executive Director. "We appreciate the partnership of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians & Pearl River Resort, as well as their commitment to honoring our state's outstanding college athletes in both basketball & baseball."

Josh Hubbard, the 5'10" freshman Guard, had a stand-out freshman season for the Bulldogs as the team's leading scorer. He averaged 16.8 points per game with a career high 34 points against Kentucky. He was named SEC Freshman of the Week five times this season.

The other finalists for the Howell Trophy were Matthew Murrell of Ole Miss & Austin Crowley of Southern Miss.

Jessika Carter, the 6'5" graduate student Center, has been a staple for the Bulldogs this season as their leading rebounder & second-leading scorer. She averaged 14.7 points & 10.1 rebounds per game with a season high 20 rebounds against Kentucky. She was named Second-Team All-SEC this season for the third time in her career.

Other finalists for the Gillom Trophy were Marquasha Davis of Ole Miss & Dominique Davis of Southern Miss.

On Monday, May 20, the winner of the 2024 Ferriss Trophy was announced at the Golden Moon Casino's VIP Room.

The award, sponsored by the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians & Pearl River Resort, is presented annually to the most outstanding college baseball player in the state of Mississippi. The 2024 Ferriss Trophy went to Dakota Jordan of Mississippi State.

Jordan, a sophomore outfielder, had a

standout season for the Bulldogs as he started all 55 games & led his team in five different offensive statistics. He recorded 74 hits, 61 RBI's, & 17 homeruns this season. He was also named SEC Co-Player of the week during the 2024 season.

"Recognizing the excellence of college athletes in Mississippi is a priority for the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame and Museum," stated Bill Blackwell, Executive Director. "Since its inception in 2004, recipients of the Ferriss Trophy have consistently pursued remarkable careers in baseball.

We extend our congratulations to all finalists for their outstanding seasons, & we celebrate Dakota's well-deserved honor."

Finalists & winners of this prestigious honor were selected by a panel of coaches & professional scouts. Other finalists for the 2024 Ferriss Trophy were Brett Sanchez of Belhaven, Ethan Lege of Ole Miss, Dalton McIntyre of Southern Miss, & RJ



Pictured, from left to right, are Howell Trophy winner Josh Hubbard, Ferriss Trophy winner Dakota Jordan, & Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben. Not pictured is Gillom Trophy winner Jessika Carter.

Stinson of William Carey.

The Ferriss Trophy is a part of the Outstanding Player Awards Series which also recognizes the top college athlete in football with the C Spire Conerly Trophy & the top college men's & women's basketball players with the Howell & Gillom Trophies presented by MBCI & Pearl River Resort.

Throws ceremonial first pitch

Reigning Choctaw Indian Princess Nalani LuzMaria Thompson traveled to the University of Mississippi (Ole Miss) in Oxford on Saturday, March 30, as she was invited to throw out the ceremonial first pitch at Swayze Field prior to Ole Miss' baseball game against Kentucky. She got to meet the Rebels baseball players & Head Coach Mike Bianco before the pitch.



Williams named to All-KCAC Team in bowling

Tribal student-athlete Allie Williams, sophomore member of the Ottawa University Braves women's bowling team, along with five of her teammates were named to the All-KCAC (Kansas Collegiate Athletic Conference) First Team. She appeared in 10 events & averaged 183.3 across 57 games. In early March, the Braves captured the KCAC Women's Bowling Invitational championship in Junction City, Kan., as they swept Saint Mary 3-0 & Kansas Wesleyan 3-0 for the title.



Wesley Bound For Professional Ranks

SAN MARCOS, Texas – Mississippi State's Aspen Wesley has signed a professional contract with the newly formed Texas Monarchs, which will compete in Women's Pro Fast-pitch (WPF). She joins her teammate from the last four years, Brylie St. Clair, on the Monarchs' first roster.

Wesley is the third member of the 2024 Mississippi State softball team to sign a professional contract this summer, joining St. Clair & Madisyn Kennedy (Florida Vibe). She becomes the 26th professional player in program history, & head coach Samantha Ricketts has now mentored 14 of those pros over her decade-plus spent in Starkville.

The 2024 trio were all also members of the Bulldogs' 2020 & 2021 teams, which held a school-record seven future pros on the roster (Fa Leilua, Mia Davidson-Smith, Annie Willis & Chloe Malau'ulu).

"I'm thrilled for Aspen as she embarks on her professional career," Ricketts said. "She has worked tirelessly as a Bulldog to earn this opportunity to represent MSU and her home state at the highest level. Aspen will remain a role model for young girls across Mississippi & in her tribe as she pursues her journey as a professional softball player."

Wesley is coming off of a Second Team All-SEC selection in her final collegiate season. The Philadelphia, Miss., native led the team in appearances, ERA, opposing batting average & wins while also leading the squad & setting career highs in strikeouts & innings pitched. She tied the school record with nine wins in SEC play this season, including a no-hitter at Ole Miss, & became the first Bulldog to hold SEC hitters below a .200 batting average in a

season. Wesley also closed her career holding program records for NCAA Tournament wins & shutouts.

"Playing professional softball has always been a dream since I could pitch, but I thought that would always be a dream," Wesley said. "I never thought it would happen, but the Lord has

bigger & better plans. I'm so incredibly blessed to be playing pro, & I couldn't be more excited about representing MSU in this new adventure."

Wesley & St. Clair will open the WPF season on June 20. The Texas Monarchs will join the Texas Smoke, Coastal Bend Tidal Wave & Hub City Adeli-

tas for an eight-week schedule. The Monarchs will play the Tidal Wave & Adelitas in four-game series three times & the Smoke in two four-game series for a total of 32 games.

The regular season will end on Aug. 11, & the WPF Championship series is slated to begin on Aug. 13.

By Brian Ogden, Associate Director/Communications



Wesley recognized

Mississippi State University (MSU) Softball hosted the Tennessee Lady Volunteers at Nusz Park in Starkville on Sunday, April 14. It was also Native American Heritage Day as Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians' member & outstanding MSU pitcher #28 Aspen Wesley was recognized by Trib-

al officials, family members, fans, & supporters. In pre-game activities, Tribal member Nana Frazier sang the National Anthem in Choctaw and 2023-2024 Choctaw Indian Princess Nalani LuzMaria Thompson threw out the ceremonial first pitch. A beautifully-designed flag in honor of Native American Heritage Day was distributed to attendees.

UA's NASA hosts stickball tournament

The Native American Student Association (NASA) of the University of Arkansas (UA) held its 2nd annual UARK Choctaw Stickball Tournament & Shootout on Saturday, April 27, on the UA campus in Fayetteville. It has grown quickly & was the third stickball tournament of the year!

The 15-vs-15 tournament had six teams from Oklahoma & two teams from Mississippi participating. The referee crew was a mix of Mississippi

& Oklahoma refs (Glen Billie, Sam John, Rodney Ana, BJ Frogg, & Tim Comby). Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MBCI) announcers Jon Denson & Jeremy Bell were present to call the games & Mark D. Williams of Digital Feather Media videoed the game & events.

The weather was almost perfect with many spectators throughout the day. It was truly an outstanding day for all involved!

The winning team, Chahta Warriors, was made up of players from mostly the Durant/Broken Bow/Ada, Okla., area (with a few players from Miss.). The shootout winner was Alonso Henry from Philadelphia, Miss., & the MVP's of the tournament were Brias Bell of Philadelphia, Miss., & Jay Pajaro from McAlester, Okla.

NASA members that played in the tournament included

UARK continued from page thirty-one

Misty Goings, Brayden Bird, Carly Keats, & tournament organizer & director Hayes Murphy.

Carly Keats, a member of the MBCI & also one of the star players for the University of Arkansas' womens basketball team, presented the awards on behalf of NASA & the University of Arkansas Razorbacks.

Carly's brother & sister were both in attendance & also played for team Looney Toons from Choctaw, Miss. Carly's sister plays basketball for Brewton-Parker College in Mount Vernon, Georgia, & her brother plays baseball at Rust College in Holly Springs, Miss. It was a family affair for the Keats family!

Many people from the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma & the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians helped make the tournament possible. A special shoutout out to Dewayne Hornbuckle for helping organize this year's (and last year's) tournament!

Plans & preparations are already being made for next year's UARK Choctaw Stickball Tournament & Shootout! If you, or your team, are interested in being a part of our fun & growing tournament next year, contact Hayes Murphy, Carly Keats, or any University of Arkansas NASA member.

-Article, photos submitted by Mark Drummonds



SPES Herb Garden Fifth grade students at Standing Pine Elementary School (SPES) learned fun facts about growing herbs as they planted a herb garden right outside their classroom! Students learned about growing conditions & maintenance of the herbs & vegetables they planted in their container garden. Students planted herbs such as oregano, rosemary, cilantro, & vegetables like radish, broccoli, & spinach. The container garden was a product of a collaboration among the MSU Extension Office of Nutrition Educa-

tion Community Wellness Planner Laura Huff, Tribal MSU Extension Agent Kaiti Ford, & SPES Teacher Kellet Tonette. Thank you to Choctaw Fresh Produce Manager & Distribution Manager Tomika Bell & Allison McMullan for supporting this herb garden.

- Submitted by Kaiti Ford, Tribal MSU Extension Agent



Animals help so much on a farm!

Students in Pearl River Elementary School's Pre-K class learned how much animals help on a farm. Students learned different animals have different jobs on a farm. Once the lesson was over, students picked out, colored, & took home an animal mask of their choice. Fun was had by all! Thank you to Ms. King & Ms. Cremeen for arranging the Tribal



MSU Extension Service to come & implement this fun activity!
-Submitted by Kaiti Ford, Tribal MSU Extension Agent

PRHS flower planting

It is warmer weather, which means it is perfect for planting flowers & digging in the dirt! Students at Pearl River Head Start had fun as they planted their own flowers by digging in the dirt, with assistance from Tribal MSU Extension Agent Kaiti Ford. Thank you to Ms. Amber & Ms. Rachel for arranging the Tribal MSU Extension Service to come & help with this fun lesson!

-Submitted by Kaiti Ford, Tribal MSU Extension Agent



Animals work so hard on a farm!

Students in Pre-K at Standing Pine Elementary School figured out what kind of jobs animals have on a farm! Students learned that dogs can protect livestock from predators, cows provide milk, pigs provide food, & so much more! Once students completed the lesson, they picked out a mask of their favorite farm animal! It was so much fun! Thank you to Lauren Wilcher for taking time to collaborate with the MSU Extension Agent.

-Submitted by Kaiti Ford, Tribal MSU Extension Agent



MSU Extension hosts heart painting activity

As we celebrated National Heart Month & Valentine's Day, what better activity to do than paint hearts. Participants at the Choctaw Elderly Activity Center created their own masterpieces & also received a MSU Extension publication that discussed ways to have a

healthy heart. There was fun & laughter from all participants as they enjoyed the activity! Thank you to Gary Williamson for arranging the Tribal MSU Extension Service to come & have a great time with the elders! - Submitted by Kaiti Ford, MSU Tribal Extension Agent

Heart activity fun at CRC

A lot of love was shown during the Tribal MSU Extension Valentine's activity at the Choctaw Residential Center in Choctaw. Residents decorated a heart, with assistance from students from the C-TEC Health Science class. It is always wonderful to see the smiles of the residents! Thank you to Tiffane Carter & the C-TEC Health Science students that helped with this activity!

- Submitted by Kaiti Ford, MSU Tribal Extension Agent



Alex, Henry graduate from state fire academy

Firefighter Class 209 of the Mississippi State Fire Academy is making a difference as 24 members graduated from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1001 Firefighter I-II course, held at the Mississippi State Fire Academy in Jackson.

Graduation was held on campus in the auditorium on Thursday, May 23, 2024, & was open to the public. Amongst the graduates were Jaden Alex & Alonso Henry, both of the Choctaw Fire Department.

This intense seven-week course included online, 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 National Fire Protection Association for Firefighter Qualifications & the uniform minimum training standards stated in the Mississippi Code section 45-11-7.

The Mississippi State Fire Academy is a division of the Mississippi Insurance Department. State Fire Marshal Mike Chaney & Academy Executive Director Kelly Elliott believe



Jaden Alex, left, & Alonso Henry of the Choctaw Fire Department

these firefighters will be an asset to the fire departments they represent.

“We are confident the immediate impact & positive difference these firefighters will make, not only within their departments but also in their communities, will truly be substantial,” said Director Elliott.

19th Youth Rabbit Stick Hunt held in Attala Co.

The traditional practice of hunting with Choctaw rabbit sticks was displayed during the 19th edition of the Youth Rabbit Stick Hunt on Saturday morning, February 24.

The event, hosted by the Choctaw Wildlife & Parks Department & held annually at the Attala County property off Highway 35 North near Kosciusko, Miss., brought together hunters, especially the youth,

continued next page



First Responders honored

An appreciation luncheon was held for first responders at South Delta High School in Rolling Fork, Miss., on Friday, March 22. This event was one of several to be held to recognize and commemorate the one-year anniversary of the Rolling Fork Tornado. The City of Rolling Fork and Sharkey County acknowledged the many agencies that came to assist the town during the aftermath of the tornado. The Mississippi TaskForce also presented and returned a U.S. Flag that was found during search and rescue operations back to the city. Members of the Choctaw Fire/Rescue & Choctaw EMA who are members of the Mississippi TaskForce in attendance included Firefighter Peyton Bell, Sergeant Bracey Bell, EMA Coordinator Chris Simpson, Fire Inspector Glen Dixon, and Choctaw Fire/Rescue Director Gabriel Bell. Thank you to the City of Rolling Fork and Sharkey County for the recognition of our first responders, and thank you to the TaskForce for always being at the ready to assist our communities in times of need.

Tribe awarded Transportation-HUD funding

The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians is receiving \$1 million in funding due to the the passage of the FY2024 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies (T-HUD) Appropriations Bill. The money will go towards improvements on Indian Campus Drive.

In total, the bill will fund over \$23 million in improvements to ports, airports, roads and bridges across the state. Other T-HUD funded transportation projects include:

\$8.17 million for the Rosedale-Bolivar County Port Commission Multimodal Expansion;

\$3 million for the Harrison County Development Commission to construct a Seaway Rail Truck site;

\$3.1 million for MS 2 Connector in Tippah County to be extended to provide better connectivity;

\$2.5 million for Noxubee

County Deerbrook Road and bridge improvements;

\$2 million for Delta State University Statesmen Park Boulevard improvements;

\$1.8 million for the City of Cleveland airport improvements;

\$1.5 million for Monroe County airport runway extension.

Nationally, the measure funds grant programs used by Mississippi cities and counties, including RAISE grants, Essential Air Service grants, Airport Improvement Program grants, and Community Development Block Grants. Through the Federal Highway Administration, the bill also provides \$250 million for a new bridge bundling program targeted at rural states, for which Mississippi is eligible.

For more information about Mississippi's transportation system, projects and programs, visit GoMDOT.com.

to revive a traditional hunting experience utilizing rabbit sticks. Nearly 140 individuals took part in this year's event.

Prior to the hunt, seasoned hunters explained hunting methods & etiquette to the youth & first-time hunters. They also emphasized that any hunter making contact with the rabbit first with their stick, whether it was harvested or not, will be credited for the harvest.

Hunting dogs were used to track the rabbit scents as hunters followed their movements through heavy thickets & wooded areas. After several hours on the hunt, & unfortunately no rabbits harvested, the event concluded with a traditional meal prepared on-site.

Door prizes were awarded to youth & adult participants in attendance. Donors & prizes included: Office of the Tribal Chief Cyrus Ben - numerous gifts; Office of the Tribal Council - five \$25 gift cards; Pow-Wow Store - two \$25 gift cards; Pearl River Resort - four gift certificates for meals at their restaurants; Marshall Ford - works package for oil-change/tire rotation; Piggly Wiggly - three packs of drinks; Yates - 2 quart water cooler;

Neshoba Co-Op - two fishing poles; Northside Animal Clinic - \$100 gift certificate; Trustmark Bank (Choctaw Town Center branch) - fleece blanket; Willis Engineering - eight \$20 gift cards; Beem's Pawn & Gun - four \$50 gift certificates, nine beanies, four hats, & thermal socks; Philadelphia Pawn & Gun - five rabbit sticks; Weav-

er Insurance - \$100 donation towards door prizes; Williams Bros. Grocery - cap & T-shirt; & Cyrus & Jimmy Ben - two gallons of hominy.

Special thanks to Bradley Isaac, Jr. & Stacey Billy for crafting & donating rabbit sticks, Dudley Denson & volunteers for preparing the lunch, K&M Portable for providing a

portable & hand washing station, the Department of Natural Resources for bushhogging path lanes around the hunting grounds, & the Choctaw Wildlife & Parks staff & volunteers for helping to organize this wonderful event promoting cultural traditions to future generations.



Inframark partners with MBCI for water, wastewater services

Inframark, a leader in infrastructure solutions focused on water and wastewater contract operations and maintenance across the U.S., is proud to announce its service agreement with the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians.

The multi-year operation and maintenance contract was executed late last year and Inframark is actively engaged with Tribal leadership and staff to provide water and wastewater services in all MBCI communities served by the Choctaw Public Works Department.

"We are sincerely proud of this partnership and the opportunity to work with the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians," said John Stallard, Inframark's Vice President of Operations in the

South. "We are honored to add the Mississippi Choctaw to our other Native American clients. This is a unique opportunity for Inframark not only to bring our water and wastewater management expertise but also to be true partners to this community, serving its thousands of members and being good see INFRAMARK, pg. 36

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Applications & guidelines can be picked up at the Office of Economic Development. If you have any questions, call DeeSandra Ben at 601-650-1612.



MONICA SUE GIBSON

Funer- al services for Monica Sue Gibson, 57, was held on Monday, February 12, 2024, at the Pearl River CERF Building. Deacon Ricky Edwards, Sr. & Rev. Carl Wilson officiated.



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

Ms. Gibson passed away on Feb. 8 at the Choctaw Health Center in Choctaw.

She was a member of Mt. Zion Baptist Church & enjoyed being with family & friends, & watching TV.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Steve & Sissie Wilson Gibson; sisters, Lou Jane Lewis & Eveline Gibson;

brother, Daniel Gibson; nieces, Crystal Martinez & Zion Dixon & a nephew, Daniel Wayne Gibson.

Survivors include her daughter, Martika Lewis; sons, Harold Harrison Sockey, Jr. & Dakota Bautista; sister, Sarah Dixon; brother, Jerry Wilson; companion, Bobby Phillips; 5 grandchildren; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

TOMMY COTTON, JR.

Funer- al services for Tommy Cotton, Jr., 56, was held on Thursday, February 15, 2024, at the Bogue Chitto CERF Building. Deacon Joseph Wesley & Pastor Jordan Kanagy officiated.



Burial was in the Nanih Waiya Mennonite Cemetery.

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

Mr. Cotton passed away on Feb. 9 at the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson.

He was a mechanic & logger. He enjoyed playing baseball & softball, telling jokes, & being a Mississippi State fan.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Tommy Cotton, Sr. & Judy Jackson Cotton; guardians, Bob & Luceline Bell; wife, Belinda Charlie Cotton; daughter, Elaina Frazier Wesley; step-daughter, Keshia Hickman Perez; sister, Dewanna Gail Lewis; & brothers, Gary Tubby, Sr., Milton Chapman, & Ronald Dale Cotton.

Survivors include his daughters, Betsy Cotton Philyaw, Ellen Cotton Young, & Mindee Cotton Gibson; step-daughters, Alana Hickman & Kaneshia Ray; sons, Adrian Frazier, Tommy Cotton III, & Taylor Cotton; brothers, Donald Cotton & Jeffrey Cotton; companion, Melinda Amos; special sisters, Verna Bell, Jennifer Mingo, & Diane Mingo; an aunt, Mary Jane Branning; uncle, Andrew

Danny Jackson; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

KYVERSON ARRON SIMMONS

Funer- al services for Kyverson Arron Simmons, 4, was held on Monday, February 19, 2024, at the Bogue Chitto Community Gymnasium. Bro. Max Anderson, Pastor Thomas Ben & Rev. Toni Cole officiated.



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

Master Simmons passed away on Feb. 11 at Neshoba General Hospital in Philadelphia.

He loved being with family, singing & dancing, watching YouTube, Paw Patrol, Spiderman, Curious George, & Wednesday Addams.

He is preceded in death by a sibling, Baby Simmons; grandparents, James Cotton & Mazelle Morris John, Paul Simmons; great-grandparents, David Lee Amos & Alma John Bell, Otis Windham & Daisynn Windham; & an uncle, Garcia Dixon II.

Survivors include his parents, Makeishia Amos & Timothy Simmons; sisters, Kylianne Simmons & Kaybrii Dixon; brothers, Kyrie Simmons, Kamari Dixon, & Brian Dixon; grandparents, April & Sebastian Lewis, Camisha Windham & Andris Simmons; great-grandparents, Debra Bell, Marcelene Simmons; godparents, Joey Benamon & Sara Billy; & a host of relatives & friends.

INFRAMARK continued from page thirty-five

stewards of the environment.”

Inframark, LLC, is an industry-leading applied technology and solutions firm, specializing in water and wastewater infrastructure operation and maintenance (O&M) across the U.S. By integrating automation and intelligent data solutions in water and wastewater O&M, management of community infrastructure, and data systems integration, Inframark can provide unparalleled service.

“I am pleased to have the Inframark team assisting with our water and wastewater operations,” stated Chief Cyrus Ben. “They bring the talent and commitment that we are looking for in a partner to help us manage our facilities and support our efforts to provide reliable and quality water services to our members.”

Eddy Russell, Inframark’s Regional Manager who was instrumental in forging this new partnership, commented, “It is a privilege to serve the Mississippi Choctaw community. I have enjoyed visiting their sites and working with the team to understand their needs. Our team has developed a comprehensive solution and we’re excited to bring Inframark’s operational excellence commitment and expertise to bear to enhance operations here for the long term.”

With over 40 years of experience managing water-related infrastructure, the company employs approximately 3,000 people, serving over 400 clients in 30 states. Inframark manages facilities that can treat a billion gallons of drinking water and wastewater daily.

continued next page

BRANDON LA TODD CHICKAWAY

Funeral services for Brandon La-Todd Chickaway, 37, was held on Friday, February 23, 2024, at the Conehatta Community Gymnasium. Bro. Max Anderson & Rev. Robert Patrick officiated.



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

Mr. Chickaway passed away on Feb. 17 at Anderson Regional Medical Center in Meridian.

He was employed at Big G Supermarket, then the Conehatta Facility Building. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, being a Conehatta Hunting Club member, making stickball sticks & rabbit sticks, playing sports & stickball, drumming, & watching wrestling.

He is preceded in death by his grandparents, Nancy Chickaway Willis, Otto & Francis Jefferson; parents, Gary & Mary Nell Jefferson Chickaway; a brother, Jason Chickaway; & two nephews.

Survivors include his sisters, Adrianna Chickaway, Brandy Chickaway, Tedra White, & Tonya Billie; a brother, Hugh Billie, Jr.; & a host of aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

INFANT

SHILOH O'NAIYA McMILLAN

Funeral services for Shiloh O'Naiya McMillan, 11 month old infant, was held on Friday, March 8, 2024, at the Macedonia Indian Baptist Church in Conehatta. Bro. Marco Patrick



& Bro. Mark Patrick officiated.

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

Infant McMillan passed away on Feb. 22 at her residence.

She loved being held, laughing, & watching CoComelon.

She is preceded in death by her sister, Kazelynn Haize McMillan.

Survivors include her parents, Michael & Cherylah Dixon McMillan; sisters, Grace Lynn McMillan & M'Kazelynn McMillan; brothers, Kycen McMillan, Zy'Kysten Dixon, Dracen McMillan, Tracen McMillan, & Kingston McMillan; grandparents, Glen Dixon, Sr., Julie Shumake, & Rochella McMillan; & a host of aunts, uncles, relatives, & friends.

DONOVAN GRANT HICKMAN

Funeral services for Donovan Grant Hickman, 50, was held on Thursday, February 29, 2024, at the Pearl River CERF Building. Pastor Ricky Thompson, Sr. & Bro. Leonard Jimmie, Jr. officiated.



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

Mr. Hickman passed away on Feb. 24 at Baptist Medical

Center in Oxford.

He enjoyed playing basketball, stickball, & landscaping.

He is preceded in death by his sons, Jalen Grant Hickman & Draven Keyes Hickman; father, Harrison Hickman; brother, Davian Chase Hickman, Sr.; niece, Kailyn Hickman; & nephew, Kalen Hickman.

Survivors include his mother, Judith Adelle Wesley; stepfather, Joseph Wesley; brothers, Dustin D. Hickman & Delanie H. Hickman; stepsisters, Shannon Renee Wesley & Tashina Whitehead; stepbrothers, Savion Willis & Antonie Willis; 5 grandchildren; 5 aunts; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

CHERYL MARIE COTTON McMILLAN

Funeral services for Cheryl Marie Cotton McMillan, 46, was held on Thursday, March 7, 2024, at the Bogue Chitto CERF Building. Deacon Randy Jim & Rev. Charles Doby Henry officiated.



Burial was in the Simon Isaac

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

Ms. McMillan passed away on March 2 at Regency Hospital in Meridian.

She was employed with Tribal Schools Security, Pearl River Resort & Tribal Security. She enjoyed being with family, baking, beadwork, going to the casino, & being an Alabama Crimson Tide fan.

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

Survivors include her daughter, Alexandria Martin; sons, Dallis Steve, III, Tristen Steve,

see OBITUARIES, pg. 38

Welcome To

NANIH WAIYA
INDIAN
Mennonite Church

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

Come & Worship with us

MACEDONIA BAPTIST CHURCH
130 Campus Drive
Conehatta, MS 39057

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

10:00 a.m. Sunday School
11:00 a.m. Worship Service
5:00 p.m. Evening Service

1st Sunday Service 4:00 p.m.
Pastor: Rev. Samuel Dixon

WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE

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

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

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

Come Join Us...

Spirit of Life
CHRISTIAN CENTER

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

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

OBITUARIES continued from page thirty-seven

& Colin Martin; sisters, Solvia Cotton & Antonia Steve; brothers, Garrison Joe, Marlon Bell, & Luppie Cotton; 3 grandchildren; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

CRAIG MATTHEW DIXON

Funeral services for Craig Matthew Dixon, 32, was held on Wednesday, March 20, 2024, at Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Red Water. Rev. Carl Wilson officiated.

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

Mr. Dixon passed away on March 15 in Leake County.

He was a member of Mt. Zion Baptist Church & enjoyed playing stickball, basketball, & fishing.

He is preceded in death by his mother, Lawanda Dixon; & grandparents, Neil & Cora Wilson.

Survivors include his mother, Sherri Wilson; daughters, Nylah Wilson & Mirah Dixon; son, Westyn Dixon; sister, Savannah Wilson; brothers, Tristan Dixon & Cory Wilson; grandmother, Virginia Stevens; aunt, Sabrina Wilson; & a host of relatives & friends.

CLAUDE JAMES CHAPMAN

Funeral services for Claude James Chapman, 66, was held on Thursday, March 21, 2024, at the Bogue Homa CERF Building. Bro. Rich Hollingsworth officiated.



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

arrangements.

Mr. Chapman passed away on March 15 at Anderson Regional Medical Center in Meridian.

He was a Catholic in faith & enjoyed western movies, gardening, hunting, fishing, socializing, rummaging, taking walks, & being with his grandchildren.

He is preceded in death by his wife, Abbie Mae Nickey Chapman; parents, Frank & Mary McMillan Chapman; daughters, Sonya Nickey & Leah Hamilton; son, Myron Chapman; sisters, Teresa Willis, Mary Jane Vaughn, Rosie Sorrells, Shirley Briscoe, & Trudy Chapman; & brothers, John Mingo, Clifton Chapman, & Gene Ray Chapman.

Survivors include his daughter, Alison Barnes (Octavius); sons, Curtis Chapman (Allie) & Douglas Chapman (Crystal); sisters, Norma Davis, Annie Jalalzadeh, & Betty Sutton; 6 grandchildren, 1 great-grandchild, & a host of relatives & friends.

INFANT

ABRAM SEKANI HEIZE JOHN

Funeral services for Abram Sekani Heize John, 2 month old infant, was held on Monday, March 25, 2024, at the Pearl River CERF Building. Bro. Jack Foster officiated.



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

Infant John passed away on March 16 at the Choctaw Health Center in Choctaw.

He is preceded in death by his grandparents, Arrah John

& Naveon Willis; great-grandfathers, Edward John & James Thomas, Sr.; great-great grandparents, Johnson & Annie May Williams, Adam & Annistine Billy; & an uncle, Sylilus Thomas.

Survivors include his parents, Arylynn John & Christensen Thomas; brothers, Bryson John, Addison Satepauhoodle, & Syus Thomas; grandparents, Christine Billy & Stewart Thomas; great-grandmothers, Laura John & Roberta Tubby; 4 aunts, 6 uncles, & a host of relatives.

GLADYS CHAPMAN

Funeral services for Gladys Chapman, 60, was held on Thursday, March 28, 2024, at the Bogue Chitto CERF Building. Deacon Randy Jim & Rev. Charles Doby Henry officiated. Burial was in the Crystal Ridge Cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements. Ms. Chapman passed away on March 21 at Anderson Regional Medical Center in Meridian.



She was a member of the Choctaw Christian Church & enjoyed being with family & friends, cooking outdoors, fishing, & watching TV. She retired from Pearl River Resort.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Jerry Lee Chapman & Mary Mattie Willis Chapman; an infant daughter; son, Gabriel Chapman; sister, Phyllis Chapman; & a special nephew, Melton Chapman.

Survivors include her son, Hamilton Chapman; sister, Serena Chapman; 1 grandchild; an aunt, Pauline Lewis; a special niece, 6 special nephews, & a

host of relatives & friends.

TANNER MILES HENRY

Funeral services for Tanner Miles Henry, 26, was held on Monday, April 1, 2024, at the Pearl River CERF Building. Bro. Marco Patrick & Bro. Mark Patrick officiated.



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

Mr. Henry passed away on March 19 in Tulsa, Okla.

A graduate of Hartshorne High School, he enjoyed playing video games, especially Mario Brothers, all things Marvel, playing sports, & taking walks. He cared for his family.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Milton Henry, Sr. & Malesia Polk.

Survivors include his sisters, Lalyta Henry, Kennedi Henry, Melendez Steve, & Taurean Willis; brothers, Milton Henry, Jr., Titan Edwards, Ramirez Steve, & Sez Willis; 2 nieces, 2 nephews, & a host of relatives & friends.

WALTER FRANK JIM

Funeral services for Walter Frank Jim, 82, was held on Thursday, April 4, 2024, at the Tucker CERF Building. Bro. Curtis Willis, Sr. officiated.



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

continued next page

Mr. Jim passed away on March 29 at the Choctaw Residential Center in Choctaw.

He enjoyed reading the Bible, listening to gospel music, Elvis & CCR, fixing vehicles, hunting, going to flea markets, & dining with his family.

He is preceded in death by his mother, Lou Billie Isaac; stepfather, Dixon Jim Isaac; son, Bronson Jim, Sr.; sisters, Mandy Lou Isaac, Elsie Jim Steve, Rainee Jim, & Lester Chitto; grandchildren, Rae Tucker, Jason Trey Jim, Julia Espinoza, Infant Oklatayshia Delanya Jim; & nephews, Alfred Lee Jim, John E. Isaac, Dallis Steve, Sr., Algie Steve, & Preston J. Steve.

Survivors include his daughters, Karla Jim Espinoza, April Jim, & Liza Ketcher; sons, Bruce Jim & Lance Jim; & a host of grandchildren, great-grandchildren, relatives, & friends.

KIMATHY ELTON MINGO

Funeral services for Kimathy Elton Mingo, 48, was held on Thursday, April 11, 2024, at the Tucker CERF Building. Pastor Thomas Ben officiated.



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

Mr. Mingo passed away on April 5 at the Choctaw Residential Center in Choctaw.

He was a member of Holy Rosary Catholic Church & enjoyed being with family & friends, fishing, traveling, & listening to music.

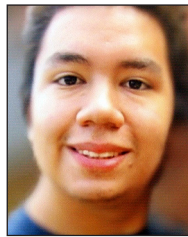
He is preceded in death by his mother, Joan Mingo Chick-away; father, Elon Bell; brother, Christopher Ryan Bell; 9

aunts & 4 uncles.

Survivors include his daughter, Mahalia Mingo; sons, Anfernee Mingo, Kenyon Dixon, Cylas Mingo, & Dustin Stoli-by; stepfather, John Lee Mingo; sister, Jenny Mingo; brother, Demando Mingo; aunts, Bessie Willis, Rena Bell, & Brenda Bell; uncle, CJ Mingo; 7 grandchildren; several nieces, nephews, & a host of relatives & friends.

MATTHEW BRIAN WILLIS

Funeral services for Matthew Brian Willis, 35, was held on Wednesday, April 17, 2024, at the Pearl River CERF Building. Bro. Marco Patrick & Rev. Mark Patrick officiated.



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

Mr. Willis passed away on April 7 at his residence.

He enjoyed reading books, watching movies, & writing stories. A 2007 graduate of Neshoba Central, he played trombone in the band. He was employed with Pearl River Resort.

He is preceded in death by his father, Wendall Willis; sisters, Annabelle Juliet Willis & Natalie Willis-Anderson; grandparents, Foreman Bull & Quinnie Nickey, Earle Morton & Geraldine Palacios.

Survivors include his mother, Roberta Willis; sister, Jamie Radcliffe (Colby Jones); brother, Adam (Dena) Radcliffe; 4 nieces, a nephew, & a host of relatives & friends.

EDWARD WAYNE PHILLIPS

Funeral services for Edward Wayne Phillips, 58, was held on Friday, April 19, 2024,

at the Pearl River CERF Building. Bro. Marco Patrick & Rev. Mark Patrick officiated.



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

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

He lived most of his life in Chicago, Ill., until his family returned to Mississippi & made Pearl River community their home. He enjoyed watching the Chicago Cubs play, going to his grandson's ballgames, traveling, & being with family & friends.

He is preceded in death by his parents, John & Betty Tubby Phillips; son, Brandon Edward Phillips; brother, Gregory Phillips; & grandparents, W.C. Tubby & Audie Day, Riley & Arlester Phillips.

Survivors include his daughter, Teara Phillips; grandson, D'Kylon Marshall; sisters, Jenny Billy, Pamela Phillips Anderson (Randy), Misty Phillips Simmons (Jermaine), Lori Phillips, & Tanya Phillips; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

DERRICK LEE WILSON

Funeral services for Derrick Lee Wilson, 66, was held on Monday, April 22, 2024, at the Pearl River CERF Building. Deacon Ricky Edwards, Sr. & Rev. Carl Wilson officiated.



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

Mr. Wilson passed away on April 13 at his residence.

He was a U.S. Army Veteran.

After graduation in 1977 from Choctaw Central, he served 6 years & 3 years in the reserves. He returned home & worked at Chahta Enterprises then the poultry business. He enjoyed telling stories, watching football, especially Alabama Crimson Tide, watching western movies, & being with family & friends.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Lee & Mable Dixon Wilson; grandparents, Jim & Sarah Dixon, John Wilson & Eva Barnett; sisters, Susan Wilson, Marion Willis, & Rebecca Wilson; brothers, Edwin Wilson, Kenneth Wilson, Nelson Wilson, & Raymond Wilson, Sr.; & a grandchild, Quinntan Wilson.

Survivors include his daughters, Kimberly Wilson & Natasha Wilson; sisters, Maria Wilson, Gloria Wilson, & Sandra Wesley; brothers, Tony Wilson, Charles Wilson, Sr., & Randolph John; & a host of grandchildren, nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

LE JAMES WILLIS

Funeral services for Le James Willis, 33, was held on Sunday, April 21, 2024, at the



Bogue Homa CERF Building. Rev. Lee Farmer & Rev. Carl Wilson officiated.

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

Mr. Willis passed away on April 14 at his residence.

He enjoyed being with family & friends, watching wrestling, & listening to music.

He is preceded in death by his father, Harold James Willis;

continued next page

& grandparents, Mary Willis, Russell & Salina Willis.

Survivors include his mother, Jolene Willis; daughter, Carlanna Anderson; sisters, Cheyenne Willis & Brandi Frazier; brother, Thunder James Willis; 4 aunts, an uncle, & a host of relatives & friends.

MATTHEW GLENN MARTIN

Funeral services for Matthew Glenn Martin, 61, was held on Tuesday, April 23, 2024, at John E. Stephens Chapel.

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

Mr. Martin passed away on April 15 at The University of Alabama at Birmingham Hospital.

He was a maintenance aide at Bogue Homa Facilities & was a former security guard at Pearl River Resort. He was a member of Calvary Indian Baptist Church & enjoyed being with friends, listening to music, having fun with family & friends, & fishing.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Anthony William Martin, Sr. & Hazel Agnes Stephens Martin; brother, Raymond Martin; aunts, Bertha Stephens Henry, Cecilia Stephens, & Annie Mae Martin Tubby; grandparents, Willie & Mary Steve Martin, Felix & Martha Farmer Stephens.

Survivors include his special companion, Dorothy Nickey; daughters, Shilia Dianne Willis & Joslynn Shanice Willis; son, Arrius Martine Martin; stepchildren, Kedrian Nicole Willis, Vernandall Nickey, Nanthea Nickey McMillan, & Nandolyn Nickey; brother, Anthony "Tony" William Martin Jr.; 12 grandchildren; 3 great-grandchildren; aunts, Elizabeth Stephens Denson, Mary Frances Stephens Isom, & Shirley Ste-

phens Sherman; & a host of relatives & friends.

TARA TERESE DIXON

Funeral services for Tara Terese Dixon, 38, was held on Thursday, April 25, 2024, at the Pearl River Community Center. Rev. Mark Patrick officiated.

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

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

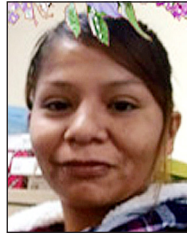
She was a housekeeper & enjoyed being with family, fishing, coloring, traveling, & dining out.

She is preceded in death by her father, Hester York, Jr.; sister, Dinika Dixon; grandparents, Grace Lewis, Horace Dixon & Evelyn Jefferson; 3 aunts, & 6 uncles.

Survivors include her mother, Angie Dixon; daughters, Sirena Townsend, Alexaia Townsend, & Tarlaysha Dixon; son, Braden Townsend; sisters, Toyah Willis, LaTonja Dixon, & Tashima Dixon; brothers, Terrence Dixon, Dimitri Dixon, Keenan Dixon, Tawaski Dixon, Hester Dixon, & Trevor York; companion, Jackie Stokes; 3 grandchildren; & a host of relatives & friends.

PATRICIA KAY JOHNSON

Funeral services for Patricia Kay Johnson, 60, was held on Friday, April 26, 2024, at Macedonia Baptist Church in Conehatta. Bro. Ronnie Henry & Bro. Brian Parkman officiated.



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

Mrs. Johnson passed away on April 22 at the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson.

She obtained her GED in 1985 & AA degree from East Central Community College in 2004. She was employed with the Early Childhood program then Conehatta Elementary School for 18 years. She was a foster mother & enjoyed being with family, watching her grandchildren play sports, beading, traveling, & selling crafts during the Choctaw Indian Fair.

She is preceded in death by her sons, Garrison Johnson & Garron Johnson; & a baby sister, Verneda Kate Thomas.

Survivors include her husband, Gary Lee Johnson; daughter, Larisha Morris; son, Jamison Johnson; parents, Walter & Esterline Charlie Thomas; sisters, Allison John, Sharon Wilson, & Deanna Anderson; brother, Ferrell Thomas; 14 grandchildren; an aunt, 2 uncles & a host of relatives & friends.

JOHN TAYLOR WESLEY

Funeral services for John Taylor Wesley, 32, was held on Friday, April 26, 2024, at the Bogue Chitto CERF Building. Bro. Joseph Wesley & 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. Wesley passed away on April 22 in Philadelphia.

He was a member of the



Bogue Chitto Hunting Club & enjoyed listening to music, hunting, fishing, playing stickball, & sitting by the fire.

He is preceded in death by his father, John Clemmons; & a son, Baby Wesley.

Survivors include his son, Xavien Tade Wesley; mother, Myrtis Clemmons; sisters, Lee Anne Wesley, Dianna Wesley, Neka Wesley, Jessica Mack, & Liza Ketcher; brothers, Leon Wesley, Nicholas Wesley, & Rocky Clemmons; & a host of relatives & friends.

THERMAN PHIL ISAAC

Funeral services for Therman Phil Isaac, 60, was held on Thursday, May 2, 2024,



at the Bogue Chitto Baptist Church. Deacon Williamson Isaac & 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. Isaac passed away on April 23 in Philadelphia.

He was a member of the Horizon Family Band & enjoyed walking, meeting people, playing the guitar, listening to music, & being adventurous.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Philmon Isaac, Suzanne & Hugh Stoliby; sisters, Amanda Isaac & Venisia Overland; brothers, Delmon Isaac, Randall Isaac, Sr., & Gary Jefferson; a grandson, Tayib Willis; & a niece, Miakota Barrack.

Survivors include his daughter, Stacey Isom; sons, Joshua Hickman & Isaiah Isaac; sisters, Martesha Barrack & Amanda Frazier; brothers, Darris Isaac, Darren Isaac, Harold Stoliby, & Gerald Stoliby; 5

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grandchildren; & a host of relatives & friends.

DONAVAN NEIL McMILLAN

Funeral services for Donovan Neil McMillan, 56, was held on Monday, May 6, 2024, at the Tucker Community Gymnasium. Bro. Glen Pace officiated.



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

Mr. McMillan passed away on May 2 at his residence.

He obtained his GED in 1988 & joined the Mississippi State Guard in 2013. He worked at Williams Bros. General Store for seven years & had a passion for his family, community work, drumming, playing basketball & stickball, attending pow wows, being outdoors, cooking, telling jokes, & being a Pittsburg Steelers & Oklahoma Sooners fan.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Lawrence & Joy Sampson McMillan; & a brother, James Edward Sampson.

Survivors include his wife, Jackie McMillan; sons, Sammy Jefferson, Tristain McMillan, Dakota Jefferson, & Kendrick Jefferson; bonus daughters, Jeanene Boyd, Misty Sutton, & Corrine Wade; sister, Laura Sam; aunt, Shirley Dean Sampson; uncle, Jasper Ronald Sampson; 19 grandchildren; & numerous nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

ANNIE LEE GIBSON HENRY

Funeral services for Annie Lee Gibson Henry, 86, was held on Thursday, May 9, 2024, at the Bogue Chitto Baptist Church. Deacon Kendall Wallace & Rev. Charles Doby

Henry officiated.

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

Ms. Henry passed away on May 3 at the Choctaw Health Center in Choctaw.

She was a member of Bogue Chitto Indian Baptist Church & was church treasurer for 26 years. She earned an associates degree from Clark College, Bachelor's Degree in Education from the University of Southern Mississippi & Master's Degree in Education from Mississippi State University. She was a nurse's assistant before becoming a kindergarten & pre-K teacher at Tucker Elementary School for over 40 years. She enjoyed reading, crossword puzzles, being at the beach, & being with grandchildren & great-grandchildren.

She is preceded in death by her parents, John Lee Gibson & Allie Farmer Gibson; husband, Frank Henry; son, Paul Henry; sister, Laura Gibson Hernandez; & a granddaughter, Kaeleen Anderson.

Survivors include her daughters, Jennifer Henry & Jessica Henry; step-daughter, Georgia Ann Maret; sister, Abbie Gibson Phillips; 4 grandchildren; 4 great-grandchildren; & a host of relatives & friends.

REXALENE SHUMAKE STEVE

Funeral services for Rexalene Shumake Steve, 74, was held on Saturday, May 11, 2024, at St. Catherine Catholic Church in Conehatta, with cremation to follow. John E. Ste-



phens Chapel Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.

Rexalene Shumake Steve was born on March 19, 1950, to Dempsey Shumake & Zulene Dixon. On Sunday, May 5th, she passed away at her daughter's home in Mount Juliet, Tenn.

Known for her humor, spirituality, & beauty, she was a devoted member of Saint Edward Catholic Church in Nashville, Tenn., & instilled Catholic morals & values in her children & grandchildren. Her faith was so strong that she never considered anyone a stranger. She will be remembered for her love for laughter, as well as bringing joy & laughter to others.

She grew up in the Conehatta community & after completing high school, she pursued higher education in Okla. She graduated from college & dedicated her career to public service, working with the Department of Health & Human Services, Indian Health Service, & The Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs in Nashville, Tenn.

Rexalene cherished her time with family, whether it was watching her grandchildren play sports, traveling, cooking, engaging in word searches, playing games, or shopping. Her presence will be deeply missed.

She is preceded in death by her father, Dempsey Shumake; mother, Zulene Dixon; brothers, Infant Randall Crenshaw Shumake, Infant John Randall Shumake, Hurley Russell Shumake, & Alex Randy Shumake; & a sister, Annie Merle Isaac.

She is survived by daughters, Denise Steve (Dwight Isaac) of Spring Hill, Tenn., Vandy (husband Julian) Mitchell, & Sherree Steve of Mount Juliet, Tenn.; sisters, Glorianna Wilson of Carthage, Miss., & Maybelline Shumake of Tahlequah, Okla.; brothers, Leonard Shumake of

Conehatta Miss., Garland Shumake of Philadelphia, Miss., & Jerry Lee Shumake of Conehatta, Miss.; five grandsons, Trajan Isaac, Trevor Isaac, Troy Isaac, Jalen Mitchell, & Jaxson Mitchell; one granddaughter, Juliana Mitchell; & a multitude of nieces, nephews, family, & friends.

TOMMY GENE BRISCOE

Funeral services for Tommy Gene Briscoe, 68, was held on Sunday, May 19, 2024, at the Standing Pine CERF Building. Bro. Marvin Rosales officiated.



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

Mr. Briscoe passed away on May 6 at Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital in Dallas, TX.

He was Baptist by faith & enjoyed listening to music, woodworking, & being with his grandchildren & great-grandchildren.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Jim & Elsie York Briscoe; sisters, Olivia Williams, Sophia Briscoe, Georgia A. Briscoe, Lena Briscoe John, & Linda Walker; & brothers, Jimmy Briscoe, Curtis Briscoe, Lester J. Briscoe, James Briscoe, & Vernon Briscoe.

Survivors include his wife, Brenda Ann Briscoe; daughters, Brenda Ibarra, Amanda Williston, & Crystal Salas; sisters, Debra Starr & Dianne Briscoe; 10 grandchildren; 3 great-grandchildren; & a host of nieces, nephews, family, & friends.

SHARON YORK HOCKETT

Funeral services for Sharon York Hockett, 64, was held on Friday, May 10, 2024, at Hope Indian Baptist Church in Pearl River. Rev. Leonard Jimmie & Rev. Travis Willis officiated.



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

Mrs. Hockett passed away on May 7 at Baptist Hospital in Jackson.

She was a lab technician before pursuing a nursing degree. She graduated in 1999 & was a Registered Nurse at the Choctaw Health Center in 2000. She retired in 2018 as a Public Health Nurse. She enjoyed reading, crossword puzzles, watching RomCom & Victorian era movies, & online shopping.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Beamon & Annie Faye Guess York; sisters, Beverly Dibiasi & Karen Burns; & a brother John Scott York.

Survivors include her husband, Billie Hockett; daughter, Isabella Brescia; half-sister, Judy Lockheart; furbabies, Bandit & Maiden; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

**FREBEN GENE MINGO
KINSOLVING**

Funeral services for Freben Gene Mingo Kinsolving, 57, was held on Friday, May 17, 2024, at the Pearl River CERF Building. Deacon Kendall Wallace & Rev. Charles Doby Henry officiated.



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

Mr. Kinsolving passed away on May 9 at Cox Hospital in Springfield, Missouri.

He enjoyed watching old movies, listening to music, & playing games on his phone.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Coleman Mingo & Dorothy Mae Dixon; sister, Linda Gibson; & brothers, Charles Mingo, Billy Gene Mingo, Jerry Mingo, & Troy Mingo.

Survivors include his daughter, Addison Kinsolving; sisters, Marianne Wishork & Bobbie Jean Frazier; brother, Jerry Kinsolving; & host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

EZALINE POLK

Funeral services for Ezaline Polk, 74, was held on Wednesday, May 22, 2024, at the Pearl River CERF Building. Bro. Marco Patrick & Rev. Mark Patrick officiated.



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

Ms. Polk passed away on May 14 at the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson.

She was a retired custodian with the MBCI. She enjoyed gospel music, singing, reading the Bible, & being with her children & grandkids.

She is preceded in death by her husband, George Polk, Sr.; daughter, Malesia Polk; parents, Sullivan Tubby, Sr. & Mary Mingo Tubby; sisters, Maryana Tubby, Merna Willis, & Madonna Willis; brothers, Alfred Lee Tubby, Sullivan

Tubby, Jr., & Samuel Ray Tubby; grandchildren, Raekayla Wallace & Tanner Miles Henry; a niece & 2 nephews.

Survivors include her daughters, Virginia York (Ryan), Georgiana Polk, Latoya Willis (Kristen Willis), & Audriana Thomas (Darrell); sons, Christopher Tubby & George Polk, Jr.; sister, Donna Kay Ben (Christopher); 35 grandchildren; 6 great-grandchildren; 7 nieces, & a host of relatives & friends.

LILLIE BELL WALLACE

Funeral services for Lillie Bell Wallace, 66, was held on Monday, May 20, 2024, at the Bogue Chitto CERF Building. Deacon Randy Jim & Rev. Charles Doby Henry officiated.



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

Ms. Wallace passed away on May 15 at the Choctaw Residential Center in Choctaw.

She was Baptist by faith & attended Nanih Waiya Mennonite Church. She enjoyed crossword puzzles, fishing, cooking, & being with family.

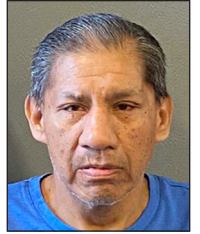
She is preceded in death by her husband, Robert Travis Wallace; parents, Homer Bell & Zula Joe Bell; sisters, Linnie Bell & Sandra Bell Willis; brothers, Russell Bell, Emmitt Bell, Ronnie Bell, James Bell, & Jimmy Bell.

Survivors include her son, David Bell; a special friend, Martha Hall; several nieces & nephews, & a host of relatives & friends.

LAVERETTE DELANE WILLIAMS

Funeral services for Laverette Delane Williams, 57, was held

on Thursday, May 23, 2024, at the Conehatta CERF Building. Rev. Mark Patrick officiated.



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

Mr. Williams passed away on May 17 at the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson.

He was Catholic by faith & a custodian at Conehatta Elementary School for 12 years. He enjoyed listening to music, watching sports, & being with family & friends.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Phillip Williams & Martha Shoemake Williams; sisters, Carolyn J. Farmer, Clara M. Williams, Lorena Williams, & Mary Williams; brothers, John H. Williams, Jackie L. Williams, Leroy Williams, & Dallas R. Williams; & grandparents, Rufus Williams & Nellie Solomon Williams, Buck Shoemake & Annie Billy Shoemake.

Survivors include his daughter, LeAnna Charlie; son, Mitch Shoemake; sisters, Nellie M. Chickaway (Billy), Loretta Williams, & Emaline Thompson; 8 grandchildren; & a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, & friends.

GARETH EDGAR CAUTHEN

Funeral services for Gareth Edgar Cauthen, 35, was held on Saturday, May 25, 2024, at the Pearl River Baptist Church. Pastor Thomas Ben & Rev. Ricky Thompson, Sr. officiated.

Burial was in the Pearl River Community Cemetery. John E. Stephens Chapel Funeral

continued next page

Services was in charge of arrangements. Mr. Cauthen passed away on May 18 in Carthage.



Bri'Naya Nichole Thomas; nephew, Lakobe Jhaze Thomas; & a host of relatives & friends.

TABATHA MARLENE CHARLIE

Funeral services for Tabatha Marlene Charlie, 42, was held on Monday, June 3, 2024, at the Tucker Community Gymnasium. Rev. Robert Patrick officiated.



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

Ms. Charlie passed away on May 30 at Baptist Anderson Hospital in Meridian.

She was a member of Corinth Baptist Church & enjoyed playing volleyball, listening to music, fishing, & being with her son.

She is preceded in death by her father, Leran Jefferson, Sr.; brothers, Marcus Jefferson, Arman Jefferson, Sr.; grandparents, Necie Jean King, Thomas Ray Charlie, Wilma Jean Bell, Garland Bell, Sr., Millie Jefferson, & Goldman Jefferson; an aunt, three uncles, two nieces, & a nephew.

Survivors include her mother and step-father, Melinda Charlie Bell & Harlan Bell; son, Chandler Devonte Bell; companion, Shawn Williams; sisters, Tasha Mayfield, Maylene Hewlin, Melanie Bell; brothers, Jobie Charlie, Leran Jefferson, Jr., & Javon Jefferson; & a host of relatives & friends.

He is preceded in death by his grandparents, Zan Willis & Aubrey Cauthen.

Survivors include parents, Antoniel Thomas, Sr. & Joyce Cauthen; sisters, Jerrica Lewis & Mari'Yanna Thomas; brothers, Antoniel Thomas, Jr., Boyce Thomas, Jerithan Willis, & Antsen Thomas; grandparents, Belfree Willis, Sarah Willis, & Fred Thomas; niece,

CELEBRATION OF LIFE FOR BOBBY THOMPSON

FEBRUARY 21, 1946 - DECEMBER 14, 2023



Born to Nathan & Eula Thompson in Neshoba County, Bobby was raised by his Grandma Bonnie, along with Uncle Curtis & Sonny Boy Wallace.

He graduated from Meridian Community College, the University of Southern Mississippi, then Mississippi State University where he received his master's degree. He was an advocate for continuing Choctaw language & traditions. He enjoyed stickball & a variety of sports, stick games, card games, & family events. He enjoyed traveling to various states, meeting new friends, & playing golf with his wife, kids, in-laws, & the many friends he made along the way. He enjoyed visiting all his relatives when he returned to Mississippi & the home cooked meals. He enjoyed cooking & making food from scratch.

He had jobs within the government & various Tribal communities, including Human Resource Director, Education Specialist, & Superintendent. He also was on the Choctaw Tribal Council. He was a member of the Pearl River Community Baptist Church & enjoyed hunting, fishing, & participating in various traditional activities. He supported his family with the Traditional Sunrise Dance in Arizona where he danced proudly. He participated in the sweat lodge with the men & helped with building camps & tearing them down. He promoted Native preference while working for numerous Tribal governments & was a proud supporter of all Native American cultures & traditions.

He is survived by his children, Mazie Moses-Parker (Ojay), Lester Moses, Jr., Raymond Moses (Lola), Nicholas Moses, Nicky Charlie, Wendy Thompson, Marla Steele, Felecia Scott (Mike), Serena Stoliby, & Annalise Gilbert; & his siblings, Ricky Thompson, Sr. (Sharron), Benny Thompson, Joy Alex (Rick), Sharon Isaac, & Doris Thompson. He has many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nephews, & nieces. We all loved him & he loved us all.

Bobby is preceded in death by his parents, Nathan & Eula Thompson; grandmother, Bonnie Thompson; siblings, twin sister Betty Thompson Steve, Mary Kay Thompson, Gary Thompson, Kookie Thompson, Dora Jean, Carolyn; & his beloved wife, Rae Ann.

He was laid to rest next to his wife Rae Ann in Desmet, Idaho.

In Loving Memory of Kobie De'Shay Wesley

MAY 31, 2001 DECEMBER 7, 2021

Kobie,
Friday, May 31, 2024, would have been your 23rd birthday. So I just wanted to say "HAPPY BIRTHDAY!" to my angel above. You are missed each and everyday since you left this world. I know you are well and taken cared of with love and comfort, but it was not easy to let you go so quickly. We were blessed to have you with us for 20 years.

I would give anything to have you back. I miss a lot of good times we had with you, all the laughter and the jokes you played on people. But I know you are still around in spirit and to check up on us. I can feel that when someone is playing with my hair and arms, but nobody is around doing it!! That is when I know you are home with us and that gives me a great feeling you are still around.

Shay, we will never see your baby girl here, but know that she is loved very much like you right now. We talk about both of you like you are home. We bring toys and gifts on you and baby's birthdays to your grave. Both of you are missed very much, but will never be forgotten!

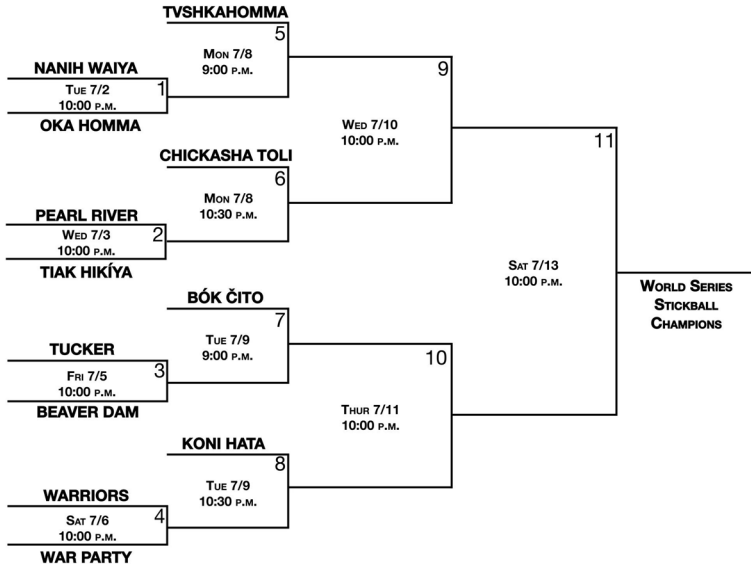
HAPPY BIRTHDAY my dear angel, with continued love everyday!
- From your Auntie Tina



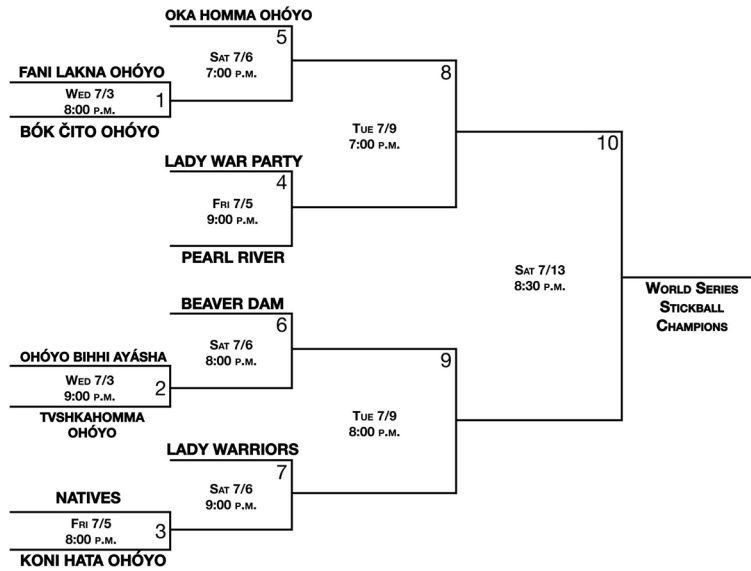
STICKBALL DIVISION BRACKETS



MEN'S DIVISION

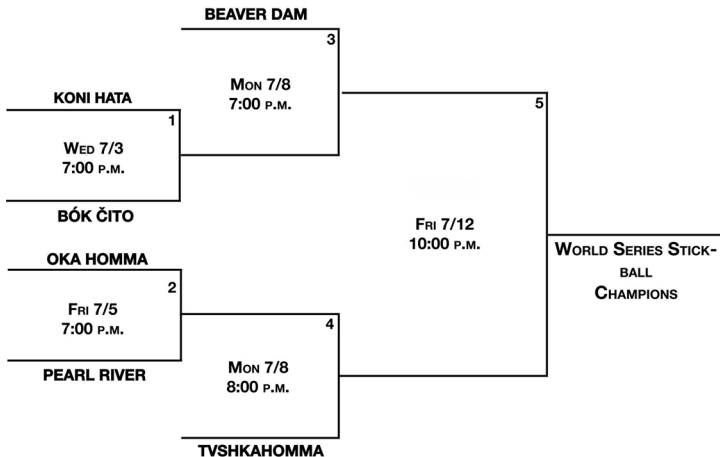


WOMEN'S DIVISION



Women's 35+ (North vs. South) exhibition game will take place Tuesday, July 2 at 9:00 p.m. immediately after the Legends game.

MEN'S 35+ DIVISION



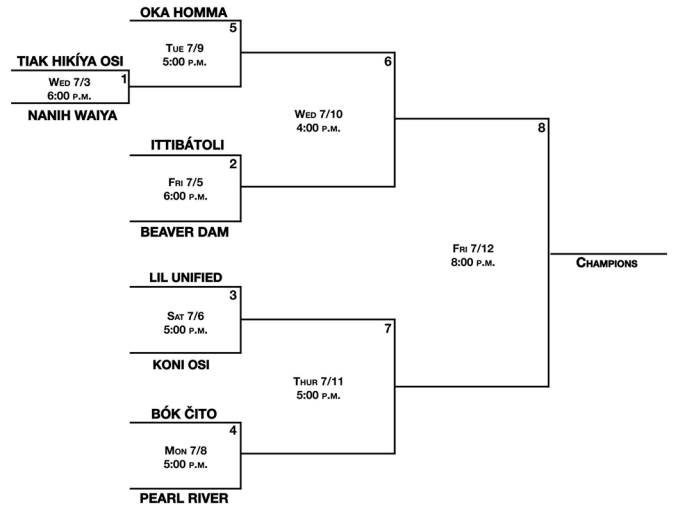
Legends (North vs. South) exhibition game will take place Tuesday, July 2 at 8:00 p.m. immediately following the Youth Exhibition.

CHOCTAW COMMUNITY NEWS

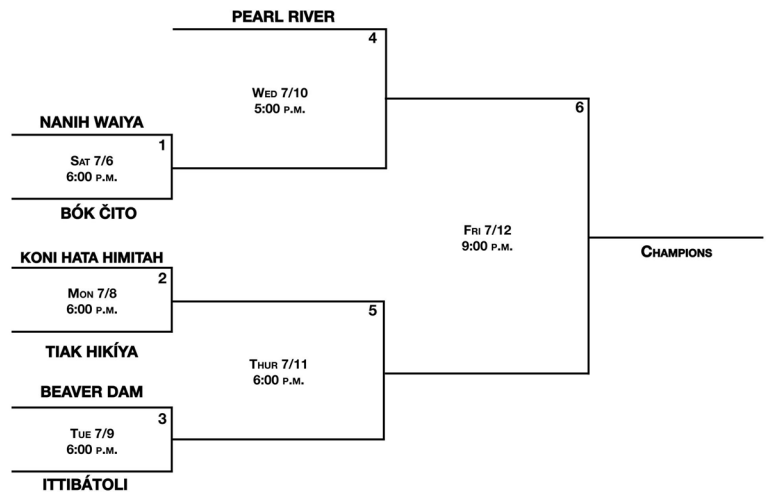
FEBRUARY-MAY 2024

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PUSHMATAHA DIVISION (AGES 10-13)



TULLI OKCHI ISHKO DIVISION (AGES 14-17)



All Girls (Allatik Toli) exhibition game will take place Tuesday, July 2 at 7:00 p.m. immediately following the Fallen Tushka Ceremony.