



# THE MVSKE NEWS

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## LPD ENTER AGREEMENT WITH OKMULGEE CO. FULL COUNCIL APPROVES THE AGREEMENT FOR LOCAL AGENCIES TO WORK TOGETHER

**Morgan Taylor**  
REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma – On Jan 30. Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council approved TR 21-021 approving an Intergovernmental Cross-Deputization Agreement between the United States, The MCN and the County of Okmulgee.

After the McGirt ruling the MCN reservation had never been disestablished, law enforcement has been a priority for the tribe.

MCN Lighthorse Police Department has engaged in cross-deputization agreements for many years with other agencies existing within the jurisdiction and

more agencies have joined agreements since McGirt.

These agreements provide cross-deputizations of extra-agency law enforcement officers and deputies to be authorized to assist LPD in its duties to provide law enforcement services by permitting lawful arrests of Native Americans from other agencies within the jurisdiction.

MCN LPD Acting Chief of Police Richard Phillips claims this agreement is detrimental to the agencies and community.

"It will be great that we all get to work together, it just gives us more avenues that they can go down and vice versa," Chief Phillips said. "It will add more deputies

LPD – 2



MCN LPD continues to cross-deputize with agencies across the reservation.

(Submission)

## PANDEMIC AFFECTS TRIBAL ELDERS

MCN CONTINUES TO EXPERIENCE LOSS DUE TO THE COVID-19



Vaccination distributions are taking place throughout the Muscogee Creek Reservation to prevent the spread of the virus.

(Submission)

**Morgan Taylor**  
REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma – The COVID-19 pandemic has affected members of all tribal nations as deaths due to virus continue.

Thlopthlocco Tribal Town Historic Preservation

Officer Galen Cloud works directly with elders in his community. Cloud made a visit to Mvske Radio on Jan. 27 to discuss the tragedy regarding the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We have lost a lot of elders and if we named them

ELDERS- 2

## TRIBAL COLLABORATION MAKES OKEMAH STORM READY

JOINT VENTURES PROVIDED A NEW ALERT SYSTEM IN THE CITY OF OKEMAH

**Morgan Taylor**  
REPORTER

OKEMAH, Oklahoma – On Feb. 1, the Muscogee (Creek) Nation in conjunction with the City of Okemah installed an early warning siren system near the MCN Community Hospital.

According to MCN Emergency Management Supervisor Bobby Howard the hospital area was considered a "dead spot."

"Emergency sirens cover a radius around them to send an early warning alert to individuals incase there are high winds or tornado or anything that the municipality puts out," Howard said. "When the hospital was built, the City of Okemah didn't have any primary coverage over the hospital."

"Once the need was identified and planned, a joint venture between agencies came together to provide this for the hospital

and community."

This early warning siren system will cover a two-mile radius. It will provide primary coverage to the MCN Community Hospital and secondary coverage to the Okemah Indian Community Center, the Okemah Casino and residents within the radius.

Howard says the funding for this came out of the annual budget that is approved by the MCN National Council for the Emergency Management Department. "This money is set aside annually to provide direct assistance to the citizens," Howard said.

The MCN Emergency Management Department will conduct a needs assessment throughout in 2021 as a part of the hazard mitigation plan to assess the hazardous area needs of the reservation.

This project will be funded by FEMA in the amount of \$200,000 and will be completed



An early warning alert system goes into place near the MCN Community Hospital in Okemah on Feb. 1.

(Submission)

by Dec. 2021. Results from the assessment will be available for citizens to view online and will outline all hazardous area of the MCN reservation. According to Howard, the department will be addressing all immediate needs.

## TOURISM EXPANDS TO INCLUDE MARKETING THE NEW DEPARTMENT IS OVER THE FESTIVAL, WHICH REMAINS IN QUESTION FOR THE YEAR



Pictured is MCN Food Drive Giveaway that was managed by new MCN Department of Marketing and Tourism.

(Submission)

**Morgan Taylor**  
REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma – The Muscogee (Creek) Nation introduces new department, Marketing and Tourism, previously Recreation and Tourism before Recreation branched off on its own.

According to Director Kyle Lee, this department will be a mix of things that were already under Tourism and will add some of the duties that were

under Public Relations.

"Creating this department will focus on the marketing efforts for the Muscogee Nation," Lee said.

The marketing will cover branding, graphic design, creative, and also event management for all departments.

"We will be overseeing all the advertising and sponsorship signs for the tribe," Lee said. "In the past there have been multiple departments buying advertising causing duplicate spending and this will help con-

solidate it to one area and save the tribe money while optimizing our standards as far as advertising and sponsorship goes."

The department will continue to promote tourism and cultural sites of the MCN.

"The main focus of bringing this department to the Nation is to create strong awareness across the region, state, and the world about the Creek Nation," Lee said.

Though the department was

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LPD

Continued from Page 1

to serve our citizens as well as our neighbors and it will work the same for our deputies working with them.”

According to Chief Phillips and Okmulgee Co. Sheriff’s Department Sergeant Aaron Swayze, there is no training required from either agency to implement agreements.

“Ultimately, the sheriff deputies will have our commission to be dually sworn officers,” Chief Phillips said. “This will allow them to deal with a Native American perpetrator within the jurisdictional boundaries that way they don’t have to wait on the Lighthorse to assist.”

The agreement will imme-

diately include all officers/deputies of both agencies.

“This will basically allow for us full jurisdiction throughout the county,” Sgt. Swayze said. “I believe this will help bridge a gap in the community.”

“We are essentially trading cards here,” Chief Phillips explains. “They will be able to act under our umbrella and we will be able to act under theirs as well. We plan to assist them in any way possible.”

There are rumors of resistance from local agencies.

“I cant speak for former administrations and whatever happened before me, but as far as now everything is transitioning smoothly,” Chief Phillips. “I expect nothing less than professionalism from our officers and to

do everything to help other agencies.”

According to Swayze, he is unsure of the nature of resistance. “There is now willingness to work and definitely bridge that gap.”

This agreement does not include the City of Okmulgee Police Department.

“I don’t know that they will entertain the aspect of cross-deputization but I definitely extend our courtesy to them as I would love to work with them,” Chief Phillips said.

Chief Phillips says there are plans in the near future to meet with officials from the City of Okmulgee in hopes of creating an agreement.

This legislation regarding the agreement between LPD and Okmulgee Co. can be viewed at [www.mcnn.com](http://www.mcnn.com).

MARKETING

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still under development during the later part of 2020, it helped oversee the Food Drive Giveaways as one of the first projects under the department.

Due to COVID-19 there is uncertainty about upcoming events but the department will still plan to manage them as opportunities approach.

“Things like ribbon cuttings or employee events that we’ve had before will now go through us,” Lee said. “For 2021, we just have to wait and see how the world goes.”

There are questions about the MCN Festival for 2021 as the summer season approaches. According to Lee, those questions still remain unanswered though there is constant discus-

sion.

“Will there be something in the summer, or in the fall, or wait until next year,” Lee explained. “We just don’t really know at this point.”

“We hope to create events as things become more normal and as more people get vaccinated.”

With this developing department, Lee hopes to create more job opportunities.

“We created this department using the budget from last year, but we hope as opportunities grow and things become more normal we can add more staff on.”

Currently, the department has small projects underway.

“We are working on creating a cohesive look for all departments across the tribe and bringing the tribe and reservation together,” Lee said.

ELDERS

Continued from Page 1

off in a list it would be long,” Cloud said. “Recently we have lost some really good men down that way.”

Recent devastating loses in the Thlopthlocco community included tribal members Lumber Proctor, Leom Bell, and Mekko Bobby Yargee.

“The importance of these men is that they took a lot with them that we try to carry on,” Cloud said. “As Mvskoke People, that’s our life and when they go all of that goes with them.”

“It is like a library that’s shut down as they say.”

Mvskoke culture is based on oral traditions and passing them down from generation to generation that can only be learned by being apart of traditional ceremonies.

“These particular men had been in their roles of their ceremonial grounds for

50 plus years,” Cloud said. “Not only does this affect ceremonial grounds but the traditional churches we have out there.”

“The elders out there that have been taught the songs from their mothers and from their grandmothers, when they go who do we turn to and where do we go for that guidance?”

With the pandemic, memorial services and funerals for the lost loved ones have been somewhat of another type of challenge.

“It been difficult because some of the funeral homes and churches have been shut down and they limit the amount of people that can be there,” Cloud said. “The majority of the ones I have been too have been outside and have taken precautions by supplying hand sanitizers and masks.”

“The ones I have attended, the Creek Nation has provided the stuff for that and I appreciate that.

Cloud grew up attending Nuyaka ceremonial ground, where he learned the ways of his elders as a young man.

“Its oral traditions, you see things and that’s how you are taught,” Cloud said. “Nothing is written down so when you see it you learn it.”

“The men, the elders that are there, when they tell you to do something you don’t question them you just get up and you do it and that’s how you learn.”

Cloud said its how the majority of our elders were brought up. “Losing our elders to the sickness that has come over our community, that’s gone...it goes with them.”

Mvskoke Radio show host Gary Fife asked about the impact on language speaking elders.

“Its hard to say how many language speakers we have out there because I have never seen an assessment saying how many we have out there,” Cloud said.

“To keep the language going we have to keep passing it down.”

“We have to reach the young people because that’s where it starts.”

Cloud is a fluent speaker of the Mvskoke language and frequently interacts with elders using the language especially during this time of the pandemic trying to influence elders to get the COVID-19 vaccine.

“When the vaccine was coming out I was hoping it would reach our ceremonial people and elders at our traditional churches,” Cloud said. “I wanted them to know that this was out there.”

According to Cloud, elders had questions regarding the pandemic.

“I met with an elder lady who lived out past Ryal area and she asked me ‘Why do we need a shot,’ and ‘Why do we have to wear masks,’” Cloud said. “They don’t hardly know because they

don’t tell them; the elders in rural areas are wondering why they are sitting at home and what is going on.”

Cloud has tried to get information to these rural area elders when he is able to see them.

“When I do see them, I try to explain to them in language so they better understand,” said Cloud. “I want to talk to them as long as possible but also just want them to handle whatever business they are taking care of and go about their way.”

Keeping the remaining elders and language speakers safe is a top priority for Cloud in his community.

“We have to put them first and take care of them,” Cloud said.

For those who have questions regarding the COVID-19 vaccine and distribution are encouraged to call the hotline at 918-758-3550. Many have received the vaccine with little to no side effects.

STATE OF THE NATION

THE FOLLOWING STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS WAS PRESENTED BY PRINCIPAL CHIEF DAVID HILL ON SATURDAY, JAN. 30

Guest Column

Second Chief Beaver, Speaker Hicks, Second Speaker Proctor, representatives of the National Council, our honorable tribal Judges and to our fellow Muscogee Creek citizens, after a year unlike any we’ve ever seen before, I am happy to report to you today that once again we’ve endured!

It is my honor to declare that not only is the State of our Nation strong, it is unbreakable! At the end of December, we had over 90,000 Muscogee citizens. Our Permanent Fund currently sits at \$478 million, an increase of over \$47 million from this same quarter last year. Quarterly Reports with detailed analysis from

all of our departments and programs are available on our website [[www.mcn-nsn.gov](http://www.mcn-nsn.gov)] I encourage all citizens to visit each quarter and see how we’re doing.

Before I go on, I want to acknowledge and honor those who are no longer here today.

We have lost our traditional people, our grandparents and our fathers and mothers, our sisters and brothers. We lost our best friends and neighbors and we have lost our aunts and uncles and many more. To all that have passed on, we mourn your death and we celebrate your lives. With our heavy hearts, we must press on.

Our legacy of survival has prepared us for these

trying times, and through our core values of tradition, integrity, dignity and excellence we remember the lessons from our elders to not look back but keep moving forward.

I have said many times, there was no playbook on my desk on how to deal with a year like 2020. We’ve experienced historic victories and devastating losses encompassing a virus that has threatened the loss of our people and culture and the affirmation of our Reservation by the Supreme Court. But I’m proud of our response and accomplishments to these moments and would like to share some with you now.

We began the year with disease and sickness testing

our people.

In late February, we assembled a Coronavirus Task Force to address our readiness and planning and took an aggressive approach with our response. Shortly after, we declared a State of Emergency in our Nation doing so even before the U.S. Government. We closed tribal headquarters to the public and sent home the most at-risk employees and initiated teleworking protocol throughout all departments. We made the difficult decision to temporarily shut down all of our gaming facilities to minimize exposure. Through these interruptions, employees never experienced a loss of pay or their health benefits. We also were able to keep essen-

tial services such as Child Care, Elderly Nutrition and Food Distribution open and serving our citizens. And the development of our Play It Safe initiative and safety protocols in gaming allowed us to quickly reopen to the public. I am proud to report that our gaming operations have maintained steady contributions to the Nation.

In mid-year we received a historic distribution of funds from the federal government through the CARES Act. We received approximately \$312 million to address economic impact and prepare for building tribal infrastructure for current and future situations. We have allocated \$99.8 million to

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To submit a change of address or a letter to the editor, call: 918-732-7720 or email: [info@mvskokemedia.com](mailto:info@mvskokemedia.com).



NATION

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education, social services, direct assistance and food distribution; \$93.7 million to MCN and citizen-owned enterprises; \$25.5 million to construction and to building a safer workplace and \$17.3 million to our Health Department in addition to their own CARES Act disbursement.

We utilized CARES money for three major construction projects including a Meat Processing Facility to stabilize our food security and promote food sovereignty, a PPE Warehouse facility to manage and safely store our inventory and a Safe Space Facility to accommodate the need for our employees and guests to be social distanced.

We know that with the loss of jobs during these times; housing has been a significant issue. Our housing department also received approximately 4 million in CARES funding. With these funds we purchased two existing apartment complexes to be used for low-rent housing. The complex in Coweta has 8 units and the complex in Okmulgee has 48 units. We also provided PPE for all of our inventoried home tenants, elderly housing, and rental units. We are also working to create new systems to collect payments that allow for social distancing by building a payment annex that will be a drive thru and installing new drop-off locations. In the future we will be adding online payments as a con-

venience for our citizens. Through the CARES funding we recognized a need to provide smaller units for isolation when our critical population is in a crowded home. We are underway with the creation of a 4-unit tiny home addition. The units will eventually be used for homeless and elderly populations.

Another exciting development from Housing, is the development of the 3 ponds elderly housing subdivision. The work began in 2020 and will be complete this year with 72 cottages here in Okmulgee.

When it came to providing immediate need and support, we contributed funds to 4 major food distribution and giveaway events, which included family meals for the holidays. Thank you to all of our volunteers that stepped up and helped in this time of need. We are grateful for your generous time and effort and without you, these events would not have been possible.

From the beginning stages of the pandemic, our Department of Health was proactive and rapidly mobilized to combat this disease and protect our communities. They devised triage tents to mitigate the spread at our facilities, developed a Protect Our People return-to-work plan, made testing and screening readily available to the public and have vaccinated over 6,000 people through our mass distribution events, which received excellent feedback. I feel our health team is leading the way in vaccination efficiency and it's a great feel-

ing to hear so many people acknowledge how smooth the process has been. Mvto to all of our frontline health care workers and our staff, who have met this incredible challenge and continue to work tirelessly to combat this virus.

While we undoubtedly experienced many historic lows, 2020 also brought historic victory. In July, the Muscogee Reservation was affirmed by the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court's decision acknowledged what we've always known that Congress never disestablished the Muscogee Nation's Reservation.

Since the Court's decision, we have established the Mvskoke Reservation Protection Commission, to strategize and offer solutions to meet the responsibilities that our status requires. Our Lighthorse Police Department has been diligent in pursuing and finalizing over 60 cross-deputization agreements with fellow agencies that are crucial to maintaining public safety on our Reservation. We increased the budget of the department by over \$6 million and have added more officers to patrol our lands.

The Attorney General's Office has increased capacity in tribal code and have added additional prosecutors. We have also partnered with the US Attorney's Offices of the Northern and Eastern Districts of Oklahoma to create a pilot program to address Missing and Murdered Indigenous People.

As we look to the future, this administration has out-

lined our goals to achieve better efficiency in our service delivery to citizens. We plan to achieve this by streamlining our process, reviewing and evaluating our performance and by listening and learning from our citizens where we can improve.

This year we offered paid maternity leave for the first time in tribal history, becoming the second tribe in Oklahoma to do so, we returned the sick leave donation program and we offered a buy-back option on earned annual leave. These are just a few examples of our pledge to employees to continually grow our training programs, update policies and procedures, and evaluate salary and benefit packages.

To our veterans, we are proud to advance key projects of the previous administration including plans for a national veteran's cemetery and for the first time in history, the announcement of a US Naval Ship that will carry the name of the USNS Muscogee Creek Nation.

Our economic goals are to diversify our approach and our partnerships. Through planning and research, we want to seek revenue streams that grow jobs, attract businesses and expand our ability to serve our citizens through returns on sound investment.

We will continue to honor our commitment to our culture and tradition.

For our Muscogee and Euchee people the language, the ceremonial grounds and the churches are what make us who we are! Those values set us apart, and call us to

remember the teachings of our ancestors. Those values are of tradition, integrity, dignity and excellence. Those values are timeless. They carried us through the devastation of Removal, through allotment and forced assimilation, through boarding schools and the attempted destruction of our spirits. Those same values also inspire us. They inspired our Constitution, our self-determination, our economic growth and eventually laid the foundation for us to press on and overcome the challenges of 2020.

We all are a part of the fabric of this legacy. We have a responsibility to build upon that legacy by serving in our communities, supporting our families, educating ourselves to the highest extent possible, and asking ourselves what we can do to help this Nation prosper. Can you serve as a foster family for our children? Can you participate in your local JOM program? Can you mentor our tribal youth and show them a path to reach their greatest potential? Can you check in often with your elders and make sure they have everything they need? We owe our ancestors who survived on the Trail. Without them, we would not be here today.

At Muscogee Nation, we are honoring the past and planning for the future; for our people, for our communities, for the next generation. Mvto.

The video can be viewed in its entirety online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sPwEv-DZsQQI&t=104s>

SAM ALEXANDER: ELDERS V. FLAT BELLIES, GAME ON

FAST BREAKS AND STEALS CONTINUE ON FOR LIFELONG ATHLETES

By Stacy Leeds,

GUEST COLUMNIST

WAGONER, Oklahoma – I have known Sam Alexander for many years. Watched him as a member of the Muscogee (Creek) National Council, actually the Speaker of that House, and as a CPA. I have much respect for his contributions to Indian country and the local community, but I am really inspired by something else about him. Sam is a lifelong athlete. For the long haul, he has been a runner and an Indian baller. He also writes and mails actual hard copy letters. We should try to recover that lost art, too.

This morning at the Mvskoke District Court, I got a piece of official looking mail, file stamped by the court clerk, from the Alexander CPA Firm. It was a letter from Sam, following through on my request for him to write up his health story for this blog. My smile will be a bit brighter for the rest of the day, and I think yours will be too.

Here's Sam's story on - BEING AN ATHLETE . . . not just in fits and starts, but forever.

"Some of my earliest fun memories are hanging with my older brother and his friends. When I was in 2nd grade, they let me play football with them with the understanding they would cut me no slack and there would be no tears. As the smallest member of all my sports teams, the toughness the older boys instilled served me well.

During my early adult years, I played sand lot softball and no pads tackle foot-



Muscogee Creek citizen Sam Alexander (Wagoner) teams up with two of his “core members”, Mark Higgins (Tulsa) in the center and Steve Cassidy (Broken Arrow) on the far right. (Submission)

ball. At age 36, a friend and I began training for the Tulsa Run one spring and completed this life changing event in good fashion. I was addicted to the endorphins, hooked by the weight loss and getting in shape once again. Ever local 5K or 10K featuring beer afterward got my participation.

One of my clients was an oral surgeon and his wife brought in his monthly accounting. One day she mentioned his moving like he was 90 years old due to playing basketball the night before. When she left, I told her I was available if they ever needed a sub; this was December 1991 (I was astounded hearing these words come out of my mouth). The following Wednesday morning he called

and asked if I could sub that night, that the boys might be short a player or two. Sitting in the parking lot of the Salvation Army gym in Broken Arrow I determined it had been 20 years since touching a basketball. I was in my mid-40s.

Running enabled me to get up and down the court playing good defense. I could hear my high school coach yelling GET BACK. If the ball came to me, I immediately passed it on to an open player. One night after about three months, I go the ball around the free throw line and everyone in the gym said in unison, “shoot it, god dammit.” I did and it went in. What a rush!

Did I mention that ultimately the players were sub-

stantially younger than me with most being half my age? They became known affectionately as the “flat bellies.”

For the next 28 years my health routine was set. Starting Friday nights, I began running six miles knowing my basketball was complimented, repeating the runs on Saturday, Sunday, Monday and often Tuesday. My shooting and no-look passing abilities began to return and my conditioning improved the most. The three-point shot deep from the corners became my favorite weapon and I loved hearing opponents swearing at their teammates to get out there and guard that old man. “HE'S GONNA PUT IT UP AGAIN.” The only skills that did not adequately return were left -handed dribbling

and layups while blazing relentlessly down the court.

Over the years, an estimated 100 players have come and gone. The core group consisted of four or five guys, and we always had the requisite 10 players. We have had several lawyers, a judge, a bank president, multiple business executives, marathon runners, Joe Sixpacks galore and more than a few Native Americans involved in tribal gaming. We had a butcher who lost 100 pounds over a couple of years. We played lots of man-to-man defense, and when a chubby guy was assigned to me, I would mention he could not possibly keep up and predict accurately the moment this was provided to him (usually the middle of the 2nd game). Many times, I would fast break or steal the ball, do a layup and no one would bother chasing me. “Bring the ball back when you're done, all right Sam?

During this time, I have confronted a heart attack, cancer biopsy, and prostate removal surgery. My initial question was this: How much basketball will I miss? When may I return to the courts? The heart doctor made me take off six weeks and the surgeons asked for a month each time. A piece of cake!

All good things must come to an end, and I wondered how long I could continue playing basketball at a high level without hindering the flat bellies as I aged. When the Arkansas River flooded the River Spirit Casino a couple of years ago, the same storm trashed the roof of our gym. It took nine months to repair, and when

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GAME

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the gym reopened, the Salvation Army was reluctant to let us restart Wednesday night basketball. We collected \$3 per player each night over the years, I estimate we gave \$40,000. The core guys wrote generous checks at Christmas or whenever they were asked. We respected the property and were well behaved. Any regrouping hope we had was

wiped out by COVID-19, and it will be two years in May since I last played. My exercise has been reduced to slow runs at Haikey Park and shooting a few baskets alone at another gym. However, there are thousands of experiences, even placing in my age group in a few runs. What an enjoyment it has been to meet some of the local athletes and compete strenuously in a positive environment.

Life and Creator have provided multiple opportunities of all kinds and I am fortunate to have professional and tribal accomplishments and attendant acquaintances. My tribal legislative peers elected me as their Speaker, and I got to speak at the Smithsonian Museum. However, being an athlete, the whole time has mean as much to me as any of it.” That, folks . . . is what they mean when they say “a life

well-lived” and I don’t believe for a minute that we won’t see Sam on a basketball court again, once life turns back to “normal.” He’s not one to stay on the sidelines. And even if it really does come down to slower runs or walks in the park, you won’t find Sam on the couch. Hope to see you at a 5k later this year, Sam. The one great thing about being the last man standing is the higher likelihood you will totally smoke your age group.

That’s what I’m counting on someday. Stacy Leeds currently is a member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma and was the first woman to serve as a Justice for the Cherokee Nation Supreme Court. She is currently a Muscogee Creek Nation District Court Judge and an Appellate Court Judge for the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation. Leeds also hosts [www.indigenouslywell.com](http://www.indigenouslywell.com)

BFJ APPROVE OKMULGEE CO. CROSS DEPUTIZATION AGREEMENT

UNITED STATES MARSHAL SERVICE TO ESTABLISH A FUGITIVE TASK FORCE WITH MCN LIGHTHORSE



A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Business, Finance and Justice Committee meeting was held Dec. 10 via teleconference. (MN File Photo)

Rita Courtwright  
MANAGING EDITOR

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma — A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Business, Finance and Justice Committee meeting was held Jan. 21. All passed legislation went before the full Council during the regular session on Jan. 30. BF&J addressed the following legislation, the interpretation of which is attributed to language in the bills: **NCR 21-001** A resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) National Council approving the legal service agreement between the Muscogee (Creek) National Council and Fletcher Law, PLLC. Sponsored by Rep. Joseph Hicks. The Muscogee (Creek) National Council requires independent legal counsel for various duties separate from the duties of the Attorney General and the Department of Justice. This will allow the National Council to enter into a Legal Service Agreement between the National Council, Muscogee (Creek) Nation and Fletcher Law, PLLC. Passed 3-1. Voting ‘No’ was Rep. Travis Scott. **TR 21-020** A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a memorandum of understanding with the United States Marshals Service to establish a fugitive task force with the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Lighthouse Police Department. Sponsored by Rep. William Lowe. Co-Sponsor by Rep. Hufft. DO PASS. If approved the MOU contains a provision that waives the Nation’s sovereign immunity, namely: the MOU provides for the investigation and arrest of persons who are llaed within the reservation boundar-

ies who have active state warrants for their arrest. The MOU however neither expands the jurisdiction of state law enforcement agencies that is not alredy provided under tribal or federal law. Passed 4-0. **TR 21-021** A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation approving an intergovernmental cross-deputizatiom agreement between the United States, the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and the County of Okmulgee, a political subdivision of the State of Oklahoma. Sponsored by Rep. Lowe. DO PASS. The MCN Deputization Agreement will provide for cross-deputization of extra-agency law enforcement officers/deputies within the County of Okmulgee, so they may be authorized to assist Lighthouse Police in its duties to provide law enforcement services. This agreement will also permit officer/deputies to make lawful arrests of Native American Indians within the jurisdiction of the MCN. Passed 4-0. **NCA 21-004** A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the expenditure of the 2020 Aftermath K-9 Grant Program for benefit of the Lighthouse Police Department. Sponsored by Rep. Travis Scott (\$250.00) The grant funds will be used to assist the Lighthouse Police Deptmt K-9 Unit with costs of equipment and food for the K-9’s. Passed 4-0. **TR 21-024** A Tribal Resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation confirming the nomination of Paula Willits to serve on the Gaming Operations Authority Board. Sponsored by Rep. Patrick Freeman. Co-Sponsored by Rep. Robert Huff. Postponed indefinitely in a 4-0 vote. For audio of committee meetings visit: [www.mcncn.com](http://www.mcncn.com)

NATIONAL COUNCIL APPROVES FOR NEW PUBLIC RELATIONS POSITION

APPROVEMENTS FOR GAMING OPERATIONS AND OTHER MCN DEPARTMENTS IN 2021

Lani Hansen  
SENIOR REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma — A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council meeting was held Jan. 30. The National Council addressed the following legislation, the interpretation of which is attributed to language in the bills: **NCA 20-098** A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Amending MCNCA TITLE 16, SS 1-108 titled “Commissions no substitution for joint approval of appointments. Returned as a Veto on Jan. 7 2021. The Muscogee (Creek) National Council voted to override the veto of NCA 20-098. MCN Principal Chief David Hill returned the law stating, “The National Council lacks the authority to increase or diminish the authority of the Principal Chief . The veto called the passing of the law unconstitutional and returned the bill. **NCR 21-001** A resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) National Council approving the legal service agreement between the Muscogee (Creek) National Council and Fletcher Law, PLLC. Sponsored by Rep. Joseph Hicks. The Muscogee (Creek) National Council requires independent legal counsel for various duties separate from the duties of the Attorney General and the Department of Justice. This will allow the National Council to enter into a Legal Service Agreement between the National Council, Muscogee (Creek) Nation and Fletcher Law, PLLC. Adopted. 11-3. **TR 21-001** Execute a certain agreement with the International Health Terminology Standards Development Organization. Sponsored by Rep. Anna Marshall. The agreement with International Health Terminology Standards Development Organization allows MCNDH to access a free download of Systematized Nomenclature of Medicine-Clinical Terms. Serves several purposes including problem list and public health reporting. Adopted 14-0. **TR 21-003** Execute a certain agreement between the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Division of Health and Connectwise, LLC on behalf of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Department of Health. Sponsored by Rep. James Jennings. The agreement with Connectwise, LLC will allow MCNDH access to new software programs to allow the MCNDH better services for citizens. Adopted 14-0. **TR 21-004** Execute a memorandum of understanding between the UNLV William S. Boyd School of Law and the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. Sponsored by Rep.



A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council meeting was held Jan. 30 via teleconference. (MN File Photo)

Joyce Deere. The UNLV School of Law Practicum will assist MCN in revising a Juvenile Code through the Memorandum of Understanding. Adopted 14-0. **TR 21-005** Approving the Casey Family programs letter agreement for grant funds awarded for the benefit of Children and Family Services Administration. Sponsored by Rep. Marshall. The Casey Family Programs Grant of \$45,000.00 will provide support for children in foster care and for the families in crisis due to the pandemic. Adopted 14-0. **TR 21-006** Execute a certain agreement with CVENT on behlf of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Department of Health. Sponsored by Rep. Jennings. The agreement with CVENT will allow MCNDH access to virtual Webinar Wednesday for Behavioral Health. Adopted 14-0. **TR 21-007** Resolution of the MCN authorizing the Principal Chief to execute an engagement letter and terms of engagement with the law firm Foster Garvey for legal services on behalf of the MCN Historic and Cultural Preservation Department. Sponsored by Rep. Thomasene Yahola Osborn. The MCN Historic and Cultural Preservation Department is seeking legal assistance with reviewing applicable historic and preservation laws implicated by the McGirt v. Oklahoma court case and assisting the department with any transition issues that may arise. Adopted 14-0. **TR 21-008** Resolution of the MCN authorizing the MCN Natural Resource Conservation District to enter into a cooperative agreement with the Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts. Sponsored by Rep. Darrell Proctor. The purpose of this agreement is to carry out the tribal districts long-range natural resources plan. The Conservation and Agriculture Reach Everyone (CARE) Project is to increase the number of farmers/ranchers participating in conservation plan-

ning and programs in order to improve soil, health, water quality and the viability of working lands. Adopted 14-0. **TR 21-009** Resolution of the MCN authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a United States Department of Indian Affairs Right-of-Way application and the granting of a Conservation Easement located in Muskogee County, OK, on behalf of the MCN. Sponsored by Rep. Proctor. The MCN is creating a Conservation Easement on owned property known as the Bureau of Indian Affairs Building on Peak Blvd site. The MCN Constitution grants National Council the power to legislate matters involving the management, leasing, and other dealings regarding tribal lands, communal resources or other interests belonging to the MCN or reserved for the benefit of. Adopted 14-0. **TR 21-010** Resolution of the MCN authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a contract with Wilson Excavation, LLC for the civil construction of the Berryhill Acres Housing Project in Okmulgee, OK. Sponsored by Rep. Yahola Osborn. The civil construction (site grading, road and house pads) costs for nine homes is \$327,127.00 and will be funded with NAHASDA funds. Adopted 14-0. **TR 21-011** To submit a Head Start/Early Head Start grantee – communities in the State of Oklahoma application to the administration for Children and Families Office of Head Start. Sponsored by Rep. Mary Crawford. The Nation is in need of a Head Start/Early Head Start Facility and has been made aware of grant funding available of funding for a new facility to be constructed in Tulsa, Ok. Through the Head Start Grantee-Communities in the State of Oklahoma Grant. If the grant is awarded to the Nation, it has been determined that a leveraged resource match in the amount of One Million, Three Thousand, Three Hundred Eighty-Two and 75/100 dol-



QUARTERLY

Continued from Page 4

lars (\$1,003,382.75) will be committed by the Nation. Adopted 14-0.

**TR 21-012** Authorizing the construction of a Head Start/Early Head Start Facility for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Head Start Program. Sponsored by Rep. Anna Marshall.

Should the MCN be awarded the Communities in the State of Oklahoma Grant this resolution allows for the construction of this facility in Tulsa, Ok. Adopted 14-0.

**TR 21-013** Amending TR 13-015 (A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a contract for the purchase of property located in Creek County, Oklahoma). Sponsored by Rep. Darrell Proctor.

There is a need to amend TR 13-015 to change the use of the property and its facilities from the MCN Behavioral Health Building to a multi-purpose building. Adopted 14-0.

**TR 21-014** Amending TR 11-095 (A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a contract for the purchase of property located in Okfuskee County, Oklahoma). Sponsored by Rep. Darrell Proctor.

There is a need to amend TR 13-095 to change the use of the property that previously operated as an adult substance abuse center and will now be for agricultural purposes. Adopted 14-0.

**TR 21-015** Amending TR 11-067 (A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a contract for the purchase of property located in Creek County, Oklahoma). Sponsored by Rep. Patrick Freeman Jr.

There is a need to amend TR 11-067 to change the use of the property in Bristow to be utilized by the Nation for administration offices. Adopted 14-0.

**TR 21-016** Amending TR 11-073 (A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute an agreement for the purchase of property located in Okfuskee County, Oklahoma). Sponsored by Rep. Patrick Freeman Jr.

There is a need to amend TR 11-073 to change the use of property in Okemah to increase land base to be utilized by the Okemah gaming facility to expand their parking lot. Adopted 14-0.

**TR 21-017** Amending TR

16-189 (A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a real estate contract and related documents for the purchase of property in Checotah, Oklahoma for the Nation's gaming operations). Sponsored by Rep. Patrick Freeman Jr.

There is a need to amend TR 16-189 to change the use of property at 822 N. Broadway, Checotah, Oklahoma for the purpose of a new parking lot for the Nation's gaming operations. Adopted 14-0.

**TR 21-018** Amending TR 16-190 (A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a real estate contract and related documents for the purchase of property in Checotah, Oklahoma for the Nation's gaming operations). Sponsored by Rep. Patrick Freeman Jr.

There is a need to amend TR 16-190 to change the use of property at 824 N. Broadway, Checotah, Oklahoma for the purpose of a parking lot. Adopted 14-0.

**TR 21-019** A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) National Council authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a real estate contract and related documents for the purchase of property in Okmulgee, Ok. Sponsored by Rep. James Jennings. Co-Sponsored by Rep. William Lowe.

The MCN is interested purchasing thirty-four (34) acres located at 5401 N. Wood Drive in Okmulgee, Ok. A plan to utilize a portion of the property for expansion of programs and the Department of Health intends to utilize a portion of the property for the Employee Day-care Facility and storage for the Rehabilitation Center. Adopted 14-0.

**TR 21-020** A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a memorandum of understanding with the United States Marshals Service to establish a fugitive task force with the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Lighthorse Police Department. Sponsored by Rep. William Lowe. Co-Sponsor by Rep. Hufft.

If approved the MOU contains a provision that waives the Nation's sovereign immunity, namely: the MOU provides for the investigation and arrest of persons who are llaed within the reservation boundaries who have active state warrants for their arrest. The MOU however neither expands the jurisdiction of state law enforcement agencies that is not alredy pro-

vided under tribal or federal law. Adopted 14-0.

**TR 21-021** A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation approving an intergovernmental cross-deputization agreement between the United States, the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and the County of Okmulgee, a political subdivision of the State of Oklahoma. Sponsored by Rep. Lowe.

The MCN Deputization Agreement will provide for cross-deputization of extra-agency law enforcement officers/deputies within the County of Okmulgee, so they may be authorized to assist Lighthorse Police in its duties to provide law enforcement services. This agreement will also permit officer/deputies to make lawful arrests of Native American Indians within the jurisdiction of the MCN. Adopted 14-0.

**TR 21-022** A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) National Council authorizing the Principal Chief to execute an attorney-Client agreement for Legal Services with the LawFirm of Fields PLLC on behalf of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. Sponsored by Rep. Travis Scott.

MCN and the Office of the Attorney General is seeking advice through the law firm of Fields PLLC on consultation and any necessary legal services relating to potential litigation against manufacturers and sellers of e-cigarettes with the MCN Reservation boundaries. Adopted 14-0.

**TR 21-023** A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) National Council authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a Memorandum of Agreement with the town of Paden, Ok. for the town of Paden Veterans Memorial parking lot project. (\$15,240.00). Sponsored by Rep. Jennings.

The Nation will conduct the preconstruction activities and provide all labor, materials and equipment to complete the construction of a parking lot located at 703 South Main Street in Paden, Ok. next to the Veterans Memorial. Adopted 14-0.

**TR 21-025** Authorizing the Gaming Operations Authority Board ("GOAB") to execute the agreement with Bronze Oak, LLC. Sponsored by Rep. Patrick Freeman Jr.

The agreement is with Bronze Oak, LLC for the Muskogee Drain Project with Wallace Engineering for flood mitigation at the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Casino in Muskogee, Oklahoma. Adopted 13-1.

**NCA 21-001** Authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from Casey Family programs for the benefit of Children and Family Services Administration. Sponsored by Rep. Marshall.

The Children and Family Services Administration will use the grant funds to provide support for children in foster care and for families in crisis due to the pandemic. Adopted 14-0.

**NCA 21-002** Authorizing the expenditure of the American Indian College Fund, Native Pathways to College, Spring 2021 Higher Pathways grant for the benefit of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Youth Services. Sponsored by Rep. Deere.

A grant of \$3,000.00 was awarded to the MCN Youth Services that will provide educational support and mentoring to Native American students, their family members and other supportive adults, within MCN reservation. Adopted 14-0.

**NCA 21-003** Law of the MCN authorizing the expenditure of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation 2020 Community Based Archives Grant for the benefit of the MCN Historic and Cultural Preservation Department. Sponsored by Rep. Mark Randolph.

The grant funds in the amount of \$100,000 will be used for an oral history project titled "A Twenty-First-Century Pandemic in Indian Country: The Resilience of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Against COVID-19." The two-year project will include forty oral history interviews form the Muscogee citizens and community members concerning their experiences with the COVID-19 pandemic. The grant will also aid in the purchase of oral history recording equipment and supplies, creation of digital archive, Oral History research station, and creation of website. Adopted 14-0.

**NCA 21-004** A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the expenditure of the 2020 Aftermath K-9 Grant Program for benefit of the Lighthorse Police Department. Sponsored by Rep. Travis Scott (\$250.00)

The grant funds will be used to assist the Lighthorse Police Deptment K-9 Unit with costs of equipment and food for the K-9's. Adopted 14-0.

**NCA 21-005** Law of the MCN amending MCNCA Title 5, Chapter 1 entitled "Protection and Preservation of Ceremonial Sites" and Chapter 2 entitled "Financial Assistance" to add Land Acquisition Assistance and

Emergency Assistance. Sponsored by Rep. Mark Randolph.

This will allow Ceremonial Grounds to apply for assistance that was not previously outlined in the legislation whereas before the National Council had issues with help with funding in these particular areas. Reps. Joseph Hicks and Charles McHenry requested to be a co-sponsor of this legislation. Adopted 14-0.

**NCA 21-006** A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation appropriating funds to be used toward the purchase of real property located in Okmulgee County, Ok. Sponsor: Rep. Jennings. Co-Sponsor: Rep. Lowe (\$1,910,000.00).

The purpose of this law is to appropriate funds necessary to cover the purchase price and costs of incidental expenses related to the purchase of thirty-four (34) acres located in Okmulgee, Ok. Negotiated price between the owner and the Nation is One million, Nine Hundred Thousand and No/100 dollars (\$1,900,000.00). Adopted 14-0.

**NCA 21-007** A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation appropriating additional funds for the construction of the Okmulgee Indian Community Center. Sponsor: Rep. Jennings (\$405,518.00).

Due to an increase in the cost of materials for the construction project of a new Okmulgee Indian Community Center, there is a need for additional fuds in the amount of Four Hundred Five Thousand, Five Hundred Eighteen dollars (\$405,518.00). The new total cost to construct the community center will be Two Million, Two Hundred Eight-Nine Thousand, Eight Hundred and Eighteen dollars (\$2,289,818.00). Any funds remaining after the project has been completed shall be returned to the Tribal Treasury. Adopted 14-0.

**NCA 21-008** A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing a supplemental appropriation to the Legislative Branch fiscal year 2021 budget for the creation of the Legislative Communications Specialist position of the National Council. Sponsored by Rep. Joyce Deere, Co-sponsored by Rep. William Lowe. (\$121,538.00)

A new law adding a new public relations position for National Council, to keep the Muscogee (Creek) citizens well-informed of going ons in the Legislative Branch. Adopted 9-5.

For audio of committee meetings visit: [www.mcncn.com](http://www.mcncn.com)

BFJ AND LNC COMMITTEE PROPERTIES PURCHASE

MCN SEEKS TO IMPROVE GAMING OPERATIONS FOR OKEMAH

Lani Hansen  
SENIOR REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma — A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Business, Finance and Justice and Land, Natural Resources and Cultural Preservation Committee meeting was held Jan. 26.

All passed legislation went before the full Council during the regular session Jan. 30.

BFJ/LNC addressed the following legislation, the interpretation of which is attributed to language in the bills:

**TR 21-015** Amending TR 11-067 (A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a contract and related documents for the purchase of property

located in Creek County, Oklahoma). Sponsored by Rep. Patrick Freeman Jr.

There is a need to amend TR 11-067 to change the use of the property in Bristow to be utilized by the Nation for administration offices. Passed 8-0. Adam Jones was absent.

**TR 21-016** Amending TR 11-073 (A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute an agreement for the purchase of property located in Okfuskee County, Oklahoma). Sponsored by Rep. Patrick Freeman Jr.

There is a need to amend TR 11-073 to change the use of property in Okemah to increase land base to be

utilitized by the Okemah gaming facility to expand their parking lot. Passed 8-0.

**TR 21-017** Amending TR 16-189 (A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a real estate contract and related documents for the purchase of property in Checotah, Oklahoma for the Nation's gaming operations). Sponsored by Rep. Patrick Freeman Jr.

There is a need to amend TR 16-189 to change the use of property at 822 N. Broadway, Checotah, Oklahoma for the purpose of a new parking lot for the Nation's gaming operations. Passed 8-0.

**TR 21-018** Amending TR 16-190 (A tribal res-



A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Business, Finance and Justice and Land, Natural Resources and Cultural Preservation Committee meeting was held Jan. 26 via teleconference. (MN File Photo)

olution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a real estate con-

tract and related documents for the purchase of property

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JOINT

Continued from Page 5

in Checotah, Oklahoma for the Nation's gaming operations). Sponsored by Rep. Patrick Freeman Jr.

There is a need to amend TR 16-190 to change the use of property at 824 N. Broadway, Checotah, Oklahoma for the purpose of a parking lot. Passed 8-0.

**TR 21-025** Authorizing the Gaming Operations Authority Board ("GOAB") to execute the agreement with Bronze Oak, LLC. Sponsored by Rep. Patrick Freeman Jr.

The agreement is with Bronze Oak, LLC for the Muskogee Drain Project with Wallace Engineering for flood mitigation at the Muskogee (Creek) Nation Casino in Muskogee, Oklahoma. Passed 8-0.

For audio of committee meetings visit: [www.mcnn.com](http://www.mcnn.com)

JOINT COMMITTEE PASSES RESOLUTION FOR LEGAL SERVICES

LAW FIRM OF FIELDS PLLC TO OFFER LEGAL ASSISTANCE MCN IN E-CIG LITIGATION

Rita Courtwright

MANAGING EDITOR

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma — A Muskogee (Creek) Nation National Council Joint session with the Health, Education and Wellness and Budget, Finance and Justice meeting was held via teleconference on Jan. 26.

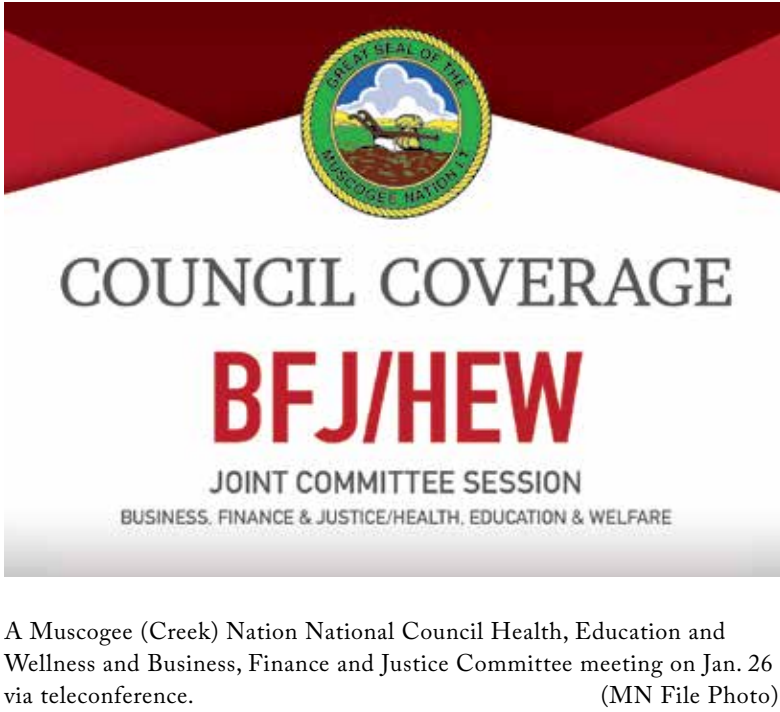
All passed legislation went before the full Council during the regular session on Jan. 30.

The Joint committee addressed the following legislation, the interpretation of which is attributed to language in the bills:

**TR 21-022** A tribal resolution of the Muskogee (Creek) National Council authorizing the Principal Chief to execute an attorney-Client agreement for Legal Services with the LawFirm of Fields PLLC on behalf of the Muskogee (Creek) Nation. Sponsored by Rep. Travis Scott. DO PASS.

MCN and the Office of the Attorney General is seeking advice through the law firm of Fields PLLC on consultation and any necessary legal services relating to potential litigation against manufacturers and sellers of e-cigarettes with the MCN Reservation boundaries. Passed 8-0 with Rep. Jones absent.

For audio of committee meetings visit: [www.mcnn.com](http://www.mcnn.com)



A Muskogee (Creek) Nation National Council Health, Education and Wellness and Business, Finance and Justice Committee meeting on Jan. 26 via teleconference. (MN File Photo)

HEW/LNC JOINT COMMITTEE PASSES RESOLUTION TO PURCHASE PROPERTY IN OKMULGEE

MCN TO PURCHASE THIRTY-FOUR ACRES TO BE USED BY THE MCN AND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH FOR AN EMPLOYEE DAYCARE FACILITY

Rita Courtwright

MANAGING EDITOR

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma — A Muskogee (Creek) Nation National Council Joint session with the Health, Education and Wellness and Land, Natural Resources and Cultural joint meeting was held via teleconference on Jan. 26.

All passed legislation went before the full Council during the regular session on Jan. 30.

The joint committee addressed the following legislation, the interpretation of which is attributed to language in the bills:

**TR 21-011** A tribal resolution of the Muskogee (Creek) National Council authorizing the Principal Chief to submit a head start/early head start grantee-Communities in the state of Oklahoma application to the Administration for Children and Families office of Head Start. Sponsored by Rep. Mary Crawford. DO PASS.

The Nation is in need of a Head Start/Early Head Start Facility and has been made aware of grant funding available of funding for a new facility to be constructed in Tulsa, Ok. Through the Head Start Grantee-Communities in the State of Oklahoma Grant. If the grant is awarded to the Nation, it has been determined that a leveraged resource match in the amount of One Million, Three Thousand, Three Hundred Eighty-Two and 75/100 dollars (\$1,003,382.75) will be committed by the Nation. Passed 9-0.

**TR 21-012** A tribal resolution of the Muskogee (Creek) National Council authorizing the construction of a Head Start/Early Head Start Facility for the Muskogee (Creek) Nation Head Start Program. Sponsored by Rep. Anna Marshall. DO PASS.

Should the MCN be awarded the Communities in the State of Oklahoma Grant this resolution allows for the construction of this facility in Tulsa, Ok. Passed



A Muskogee (Creek) Nation National Council Health, Education and Wellness and Land, Natural Resources and Cultural Joint Committee meeting was held on Jan. 26 via teleconference. (MN File Photo)

9-0.

**TR 21-019** A tribal resolution of the Muskogee (Creek) National Council authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a real estate contract and related documents for the purchase of property in Okmulgee, Ok. Sponsored by Rep. James Jennings. Co-Sponsored by Rep. William Lowe. DO PASS.

The MCN is interested purchasing thirty-four (34) acres located at 5401 N. Wood Drive in Okmulgee, Ok. A plan to utilize a portion of the property for expansion of programs and the Department of Health intends to utilize a portion of the property for the Employee Daycare Facility and storage for the Rehabilitation Center. Passed 9-0.

**TR 21-023** A tribal resolution of the Muskogee (Creek) National Council authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a Memorandum of Agreement with the town of Paden, Ok. for the town of Paden Veterans Memorial parking lot project. (\$15,240.00). Sponsored by Rep. Jennings. DO PASS.

The Nation will conduct the preconstruction activities and provide all labor, materials and equipment to complete the construction of a parking lot located at 703 South Main Street in Paden, Ok. next to the Veterans Memorial. Passed 9-0.

**NCA 21-006** A law of the Muskogee (Creek) Nation appropriating funds to be used toward the purchase of real property located in Okmulgee County, Ok. Sponsor: Rep. Jennings. Co-Sponsor: Rep. Lowe (\$1,910,000.00). DO PASS.

The purpose of this law is to appropriate funds necessary to cover the purchase price and costs of incidental expenses related to the purchase of thirty-four (34) acres located in Okmulgee, Ok. Negotiated price between the owner and the Nation is One million, Nine Hundred Thousand and No/100 dollars (\$1,900,000.00). Passed 9-0

**NCA 21-007** A law of the Muskogee (Creek) Nation appropriating additional funds for the construction of the Okmulgee Indian Community Center. Sponsor: Rep. Jennings (\$405,518.00). DO PASS.

Due to an increase in the cost of materials for the construction project of a new Okmulgee Indian Community Center, there is a need for additional fuds in the amount of \$405,518.00. The new total cost to construct the community center will be Two Million, Two Hundred Eight-Nine Thousand, Eight Hundred and Eighteen dollars (\$2,289,818.00). Any funds remaining after the project has been completed shall be returned to the Tribal Treasury. Passed 9-0.

For audio of committee meetings visit: [www.mcnn.com](http://www.mcnn.com)

FEBRUARY IS AMERICAN HEART MONTH

WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO RECOGNIZE HEART DISEASE FOR THE NATIVE POPULATION



Pictured is a session from the Go Red for Native Women Heart Health Summit in 2020. (Submission)

Lani Hansen

SENIOR REPORTER

TULSA, Oklahoma— Every year the month of February is recognized as Heart Awareness Month through the American Heart Association.

“The American Heart Association uses February to raise awareness of heart disease across the country,” Michael Phillips M.D. of Oklahoma Heart Institute said. “It’s specifically important in some populations such as Native Americans.”

According to Dr. Phillips, in the Native American population the penetration of heart disease is almost three-fold of non-Native American population. The penetration is 70-80 percent within the Native American population with diabetes, versus 20-30 percent in non-Native populations.

“It’s especially important for Native Americans to know this and to know the incident of silent heart disease is much higher,” Dr. Phillips added.

Heart disease can be treatable if it is caught early in someone. Dr. Phillips said early screening for diabetes and heart disease with echocardiogram and non-invasive testing at local clinics will help save lives, and reduce medical cost long-term.

Dr. Phillips breaks out the difference between men and women in the Native American population. In Native women, heart disease is extremely high prevalence and is frequently unrecognized.

“Cigarette smoking and obesity are important to the acceleration in heart disease,

and not just its presence,” Dr. Phillips said. “In summary I would say the most likely causes would be diabetes, smoking, genetics, diet and obesity.”

There are two common types of heart disease in Native Americans that come with fatigue, shortness of breath and chest pain. These are the Coronary Artery Disease and the Valvular Heart Disease.

The Valvular Heart Disease causes more damage to the lungs and the rest of the body. Coronary Artery Disease causes damage to the heart muscle which eventually leads to heart failure, according to Dr. Phillips.

“One of the important things to prevent heart disease is activity,” Dr. Phillips stated for Native Americans. “The second thing is to diagnose and treat diabetes, tobacco sensation and screening.”

Since February is American Heart Month, people can raise awareness by recognizing the incidents of heart disease in their own family. Also, people may show awareness by wearing red.

Because of the pandemic the American Heart Institute will not be doing any events. Dr. Phillips wanted to recognize the tribal governments on the rollouts of the COVID vaccinations.

He added, “COVID brings about blood clots and pulmonary embolism. Part of heart awareness month, I’d like to raise awareness to pulmonary blood clots as well which can lead to chronic lung disease.”

For more information on heart disease visit the American Heart Association at, [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org).



NEW FACES, MASCOTS, CREEK SHIP

NEW NAMES AND FACES IN D.C.; MASCOT NAMES; VIRUS STUFF; MOVIE ROLE?

Gary Fife

Radio Communications

OKMULGEE, Okla-homa- With the change of administration come a new philosophy (we hope) in dealing wit the nation's tribal governments.

Early indications showed the incoming President's intention to re-start the tribal consultation process and meetings. These meetings under the Obama administration had tribal leaders actually meeting with top officials to discuss tribal priorities.

One of the first things Joe Biden intends to do is stop the XL pipeline at the Standing Rock Sioux reservation in North Dakota. So, all those folks who froze their backsides blocking that project paid off.

Deborah Haaland is the nominee for the post of Secretary of the Interior. It controls the lands governed by the government and Haaland will be the first Native American to head the agency. Let's see how much free rein she gets.

Another big change in the government will come at the Indian Health Service. Indi-



anz.com reports that the director appointed by the outgoing administration, Michael Weahkee, will be looking for another job.

According to Native News Online Indian Congress members voted for and against the impeachment of the outgoing President. Native News Online staff reported:

Rep. Tom Cole, (R-OK) – Chickasaw Nation - Nay

Rep. Sharice Davids, (D-KS) – Ho-Chunk Nation - Yea

Rep. Yvette Herrell, (R-NM) – Cherokee - Nay

Rep. Kaialii Kahele (D-HI) – Native Hawaiian - Yea

Rep. Deb Haaland, (D-NM), Laguna Pueblo - Yea

Rep. Markwayne Mullin, (R-OK), Cherokee – Nay

Some of those Congress members issued statements

after the tragic demonstration at the U.S. Capitol.

Speaking of things “D.C.”, the pro football team there still hasn’t mentioned what their name will be. The organization dropped its former, racist name after years of protest. They used “Washington Football Team” for the 2020 season as a “placeholder.” Why not keep that? “The Disneyland-On-The-Potomac Placeholder.” Or maybe: “This space for Rent.”

And for the other, local team that had the R-word for mascots, they’re in the midst of a search for a new name. Union Public Schools finally saw the writing on the wall and dropped that offensive term. Mvskoke Media reporter Taylor Morgan wrote the school is asking parents and the public for suggestions. Interested? mascot@unionps.org

The Muscogee (Creek) Nation is now offering the Covid-19 to tribal members. 918-758-3601 is the information number. During my recent vaccination, I asked

the health officials about the tribal response. They said it’s been pretty good; so, don’t be surprised if it’s busy. Keep trying.

Did you see where the U.S. Navy has named a ship after our Nation? The Navy announced January 15 that a new addition would be named the “USNS Muscogee Creek Nation (T-ATS 10).” Its mission will be towing, salvage and rescue. The top naval guy said the ship “will join the fleet as a symbol of appreciation for the contribution of American Indians and the Muscogee Creek citizens to the defense of our nation.”

It will be the first naval vessel to be named after our tribe. The Navajo, Cherokee and Saginaw Ojibwe have ships named after their tribes.

Principal Chief David Hill stated his appreciation for the naming, but did include: “Despite a complex and sometimes challenging history with the U.S. no race has answered the call of duty and served more than Native

Americans, per capita.”

The announcement was made at the First Americans Museum in Oklahoma City. Not to be picky, but, why not here at the Tribe itself?

Want to be an extra in a movie? A movie about a dark chapter of Oklahoma’s past. A movie that would present an accurate story about Indians? A movie by Sterling Harjo? KOTV News reports, there is now a virtual casting call for the film, “Killers of the Flower Moon.” It’s about the Osages murdered at the oil boom of the 1920’s. The Cov9d-19 virus had delayed the work but now, they’re getting back on track.

The Killers of the Flower Moon website is providing information about the opportunity.

They are stressing: “Natural looks only please. No fake eyelashes or heavy make-up, although foundation is okay.” O.K., guys, get furry. Filming next spring in the Tulsa, Bartlesville and Osage County area.

Alright, have a good 2021. Hvtvm Cerecares!

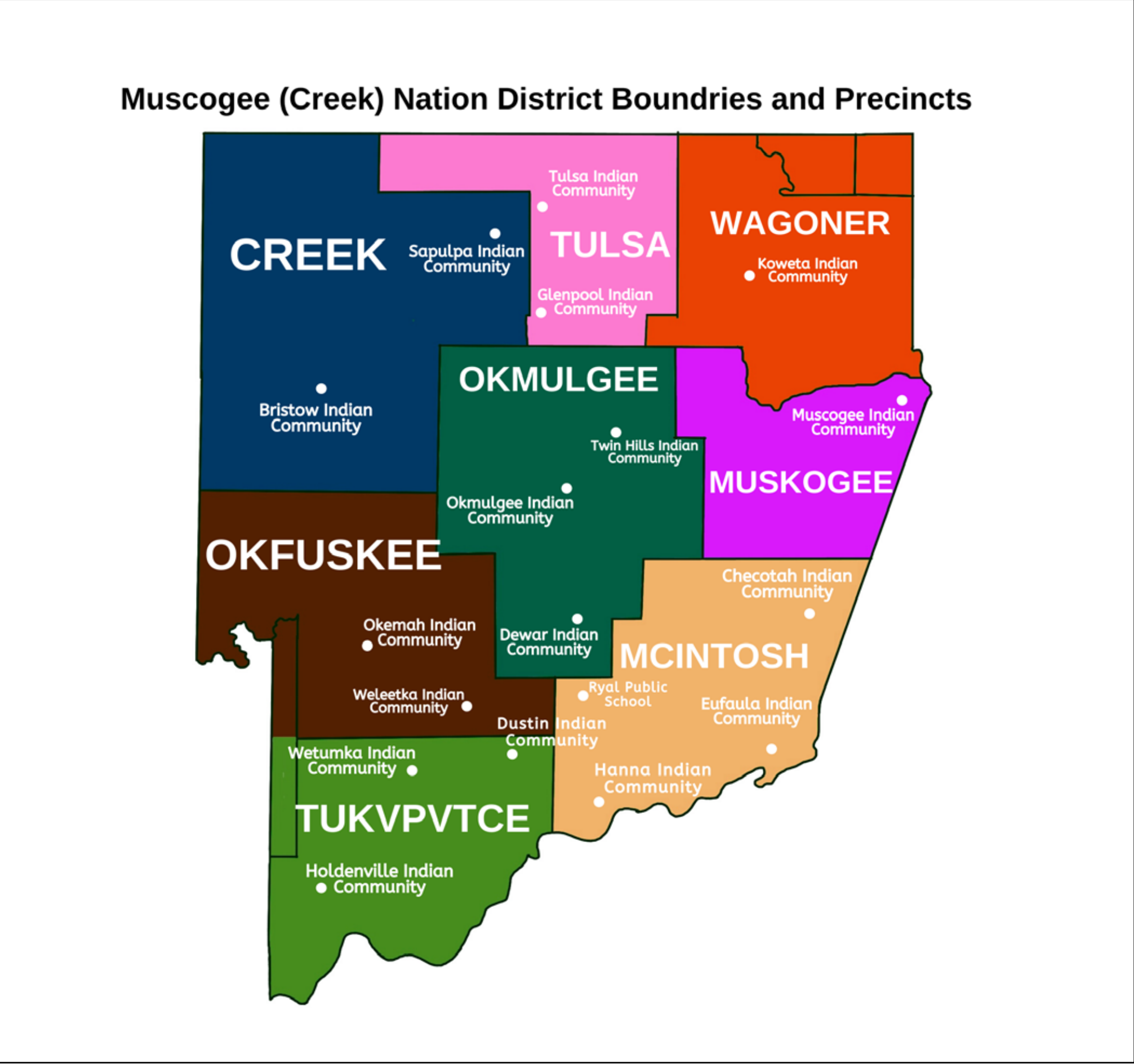
Disclaimer: The views expressed are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation.



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# MCN DISTRICT JUDGE JOINS ASU LAW

## STACY LEEDS JOINS ASU AS FOUNDATION PROFESSOR OF LAW AND LEADERSHIP

Lani Hansen  
SENIOR REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Okla-homa– Arizona State University-Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law has appointed the first Native American female dean and a prominent Indian law trail-blazer.

Stacy Leeds, is a citizen of the Cherokee Nation and is currently serving as one of Muscogee (Creek) Nation's District Court judges. Leeds was selected to serve as the Foundation Professor of Law and Leadership for ASU Law.

According to an ASU press release, ASU Law Indian Legal Program was established in 1988 and through its connections to each of Arizona's federally recognized 22 tribes, is home to one of the highest concentrations of Native American students and Indian law students in the nation.



Stacy Leeds continues to serve as District Judge while teaching at ASU Law. (Submission)

A citizen from Muskogee, OK Leeds studied at Washington University in St. Louis, MO for her undergrad. She played on their basketball and tennis teams. Leeds received her bachelors degree in history. After graduating with her undergrad, Leeds moved back and went to Law School at the University of Tulsa.

"While I was at TU, during my second and third year I worked for Judge Patrick Moore for Creek Nation," Leeds said.

Leeds has focused on law since her undergrad years. She knew she wanted to study Indian Law after graduating. Leeds has practiced, taught and served as a judge in Indian Law since she finished college.

Leeds also was named the dean of the University of Arkansas School of Law in 2011, becoming the first Native American woman to be appointed to such a position.

Recently she was the vice chancellor for economic development, dean emeritus and a professor at U of A.

Upon her appointment Leeds, has known about ASU Law program and knows many of the professors who teach in the program.

"No surprises in what I was getting into, I knew it was a really great team of Indian Law experts and for me that's a big attraction," Leeds said.

One of her main goals for the program is to increase number of students who come through. Leeds said as many Native American lawyers there are now, there is still more needed. She believes lawyers tend to be leaders or help with leadership in tribes.

Leeds is excited for this opportunity and the flexibility that it affords, so she can continue on with her work with Muscogee (Creek) Nation.

# PRESLEY SIBLINGS DOMINATE SPORTS

## MVSKOKE STUDENTS MAKE NAMES FOR THEMSELVES AND THE PRESLEY FAMILY

Morgan Taylor  
REPORTER

BIXBY, Oklahoma – Three siblings of Bixby, OK are setting records and reaching for the stars.

Sister of the trio, Brandee is currently in her third year of college at Ole Miss and participates in track and field. Throughout her running career she has broken many records.

In High School Brandee lettered all four years in track, set the OK state record in the 100-meter dash at 11.44 seconds, was awarded girls track and field athlete of the year twice, and broke 12 seconds in the 100-meter dash each year.

In 2019 she started her freshman track career at Ole Miss continuing to set personal records and climbing the ladder of Ole Miss records reaching a second all time high for the 200-meter dash while her 100-meter time ranked sixth for the indoor meets.

As the 2019 outdoor season rolled around, Brandee was shining winning gold, silver and bronze medals throughout her events and continuing to break records.

At the Pan Am U20 Championships, Brandee and the 4x100 relay team won gold and she continued to medal bronze in her 100-meter dash. She took home the gold in the 100-meter at the USATF U20 Championship with a personal best of 11.19, which broke the school record. The victory set her on course to compete in the 2020

In 2020 she broke yet another school record in the indoor 60-meter dash with a time of 7.18 seconds along with many other accomplishments.

Her accomplishments set



Presley siblings Brandee, Brennan and Braylin are each making big moves in their athletic careers. (Submission)

her on course to be an Olympic competitor but Brandee's season for 2020 was cut short due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Last meet I ran was in February," Brandee said. "It's been almost a whole year."

On Saturday Jan. 16, Brandee will run her first meet of the 2021 season where she will be running the 60-meter dash (PR 7.18 seconds). "I am working towards trying to break my record, the world record, but I am just going to take it meet by meet."

Although meets were cancelled for the year of 2020, Brandee used her time to recuperate from existing injuries and continued training.

"I am feeling really good that I have had extra time to recover from previous injuries," Brandee said. "I am trying to remain as strong and positive as possible going into the season."

All that Brandee has accomplished has led her to be a prospect for the future Olympics. Being just tenths of a second away from the qualifying time, Brandee knows her goal is in reach.

"I know I have to remain positive no matter the outcome of my meets," Brandee

said. "These things take time and they take progress. I have to trust the process and trust my coaches, trust my training and go out there and be the best that I can. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity for someone like me, coming from Oklahoma."

Brandee's younger brothers Brennan and Braylin Presley have received recognition for their skills on the football field.

Brennan may be recognized as freshman wide receiver number 80 on the OK State Cowboys football team.

Before starting his senior year of high school Brennan had already received offers from five different schools before committing to OSU in July 2019.

During his high school career as a Bixby Spartan, he led his team to three 6A state championships. He was named the 2019 Oklahoma Gatorade Player of the Year and the Oklahoma MaxPreps Male Athlete of the Year. He was also tabbed a True Freshman Preseason All-American by 24/7 Sports.

Brennan was well known for playing both sides of the ball and made headway offensively and defensively.

In the 44 games that was his high school career Brennan had 3,448 receiving yards on 232 catches with 40 receiving touchdowns with an average of 79 receiving yards per game. He had a record of 52 touchdowns that put up 312 total points.

In 2020 when he started his freshman year on the Cowboys team he had immediately made an impression on head coach Mike Gundy according to a Sports Illustrated press release on Sept. 1. On Dec. 29, Brennan displayed his talents at the Cheez-It Bowl where he scored three touchdowns for the Cowboys. In the first quarter, he caught two touchdown passes being the first receiving touchdowns of his college career.

According to father Arthur Presley, Brennan broke an OSU record for having the most receiving yards (118 yards) and touchdowns by a freshman during a bowl game. Cowboys went on to win the bowl game against the Miami Hurricanes 37-34.

Still just in his junior year at Bixby, youngest brother Braylin has already received a few offers and recognition from colleges all over Nation though he will not graduate until 2022.

Currently in the midst of his

high school career of 34 games, Braylin has 3,258 rushing yards with 48 touchdowns and 876 receiving yards with 14 touchdowns. Just in three seasons, he is nearing 5,000 total yards for his career thus far.

In the eight games played in 2020, Braylin recorded 1,129 yards and 18 touchdowns along with 584 yards and eight touchdowns receiving.

The highlight of Braylin's 2020 season was the game against Booker T. Washington that was broadcast on ESPN. At the end of the game Braylin finished with 419 total yards and five touchdowns.

According to rivals.com, a recruiting website, Braylin has 12 total offers that stand and it is highly suspected that he will gain more offers as he continues to play the 2021 football season. Braylin has stats that secede well over the average player.

Braylin Presley can be identified as number one for the Bixby Spartans and though his primary position is running back, he is considered an all purpose player due to his versatility on the football field.

He has been named the MaxPreps All-American in the junior class and is suspected to earn the title back as he approaches his senior and follow in his brother footsteps to earn Gatorade Oklahoma Player of the Year.

In a press release in Nov., Braylin told Sports Illustrated he wanted to go through the recruitment process before making a commitment to a single school.

Mvskoke Media will be following the Presley siblings as they continue their successes in sports.

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# NAVY NAMES FUTURE VESSEL TO HONOR MUSCOGEE CREEK NATION

## NAVAJO-CLASS TOWING SHIP TO CARRY THE LEGACY OF THE MUSCOGEE PEOPLE



An image showing the T-ATS 10, now formerly names the USNS Muscogee Creek Nation stands for onlookers to view during the recent press conference. (Submission)

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WASHINGTON – The US Navy announced Jan. 15 that a future Navajo-class towing, salvage, and rescue ship will be named USNS Muscogee Creek Nation (T-ATS 10) to honor the self-governed Native American tribe.

The Honorable Gregory J. Slavonic, Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary of the Navy and Oklahoma native, announced the name selection during a ceremony at the First Americans Museum in Oklahoma City.

“I am sincerely honored, on behalf of the Secretary of the Navy, to announce that this future naval vessel will carry the proud legacy of the people

of the Muscogee Creek Nation, and be cemented as part of Navy and Marine Corps history,” said Slavonic. “The future towing, salvage, and rescue ship honors the culturally distinct people of the state of Oklahoma, and will join the fleet as a symbol of appreciation for the contributions of American Indians and the Muscogee Creek citizens to the defense of our nation.”

This will be the first Navy vessel to carry the name Muscogee Creek Nation.

“Despite a complex and sometimes challenging history with the U.S., no race has answered the call of duty and served more than Native Americans, per capita,” said Principal Chief David Hill. “We are joined together to once again strengthen our ties

and recognize those efforts with this wonderful gesture by the Navy to respect that commitment.

In early 2019, the Navy announced that T-ATS ships would be known as the Navajo-class of ships to honor the contributions of the Navajo people to the armed forces. Vessels in this class are named for prominent Native Americans or Native American tribes.

The Navajo-class T-ATS ships are designed to combine and replace the current capabilities of the Powhatan-class ocean tugs and Safeguard-class rescue and salvage ships in service with the Military Sealift Command. They will be capable of towing U.S. Navy ships and have 6,000 square feet of deck space for embarked systems. The platform will be 263 feet long, have a beam of 59 feet, and carry a load of nearly 2,000 tons.

“Myself, along with our tribal leadership, employees and citizens are so thrilled that for the first time, a United States Navy Ship will be named after the Muscogee Creek Nation,” said Principal Chief Hill.

The future USNS Muscogee Creek Nation will join USNS Navajo (T-ATS 6), USNS Cherokee Nation (T-ATS 7), and USNS Saginaw Ojibwe Anishinabek (T-ATS 8) providing a wide range of missions including open ocean towing, oil spill response, humanitarian assistance and wide area search and surveillance.

# JENKS SENIOR SIGNS WITH FT. SCOTT

## CITIZEN EMMA LANG COMMITTED TO CONTINUE HER SOFTBALL CAREER



Emma Lang has signed with Ft. Scott to continue her softball career. (Submission)

### Lani Hansen SENIOR REPORTER

JENKS, Oklahoma– Jenks High School senior and Muscogee (Creek) citizen Emma Lang has signed with Fort Scott Community College in Kansas to continue her softball career.

Lang is the daughter of Shawn Lang and Susan Froman. She played on the softball team all four years of high school as the pitcher. Lang has been playing the game since her fourth grade year.

Academically, Lang made the Principal’s Honor Roll her sophomore and junior year. Since the school is not over yet, she hopes to make the honor roll again. As an athlete, she made all-district pitcher at the end of the 2020 season and first all-state alternate for class 6A.

As a senior, Lang has committed to play softball for the Lady Greyhound softball team

out of Fort Scott Community College. She signed with them on January 20, 2021 and will begin in the fall of 2021.

“I did not have any other offers, I was talking to other college coaches but I just really liked Fort Scott,” Lang said.

Lang and her family were able to set up a campus tour, and she fell in love with it. She plans on studying special education when she gets started with school.

After graduation, Lang plans on playing summer ball. She stated, “Summer ball is my favorite time. That’s pretty much what I do during summertime because there is nothing else to do.”

She is looking forward to meeting new teammates, Lang said she already knew some of the team members. She is excited about playing with the Lady Greyhound team.

The Jenks athletics program, family and friends of Lang are proud and excited for her commitment to Fort Scott.

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A CHURCH PLANTED BY TWO SISTERS

FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH GROWS FROM WHEN IT WAS FIRST ESTABLISHED

Lani Hansen

SENIOR REPORTER

DUSTIN, Oklahoma—Mvskoke Media continues the series of Muskogee-Seminole-Wichita Association churches, with series four featuring Faith Baptist Church.

According to Deacon Philip Harjo, there was two sisters by the name of Christine Wolf and Sue Davis from an Indian fellowship church out of Holdenville,

Ok. These sisters wanted to build a church in Dustin for Creeks or anyone who wanted to join back in 1985. Faith Baptist Church is a sister church from Many Springs Baptist Church.

“This started in an old home on the church grounds for about 12 years,” Harjo said.

After 12 years of congregating in an old run-down home, they built a church building with fellowship hall and a place to worship. Harjo has attended Faith Baptist Church since 2002, he

said they have about 40 members now.

The first pastor of the church was Richmond Carr, then throughout the years there was a number of pastors coming and going. The current acting pastor for the church is Benny Harjo.

Before the pandemic, the church would help conduct baptisms and funeral services when needed. Harjo said they are doing online services, but hope to start back up in-person soon.

“We were able to host our

Christmas dinner at the church back in December,” Harjo said. “We had about 50 people come to eat or carry food out.”

Harjo said the church would support the annual Annie Armstrong Christmas offering as one of their outreach ministries. Also, before the pandemic they were having vacation bible school, discipleship training and preaching.

“We would have bible study at 9:45, then preaching would follow at 11 a.m.,” Harjo said. “Discipleship training would start at 1:30

p.m. and on Wednesday nights we would have prayer service.”

Since Faith Baptist Church is predominately Creek, you can hear the language being spoken or sung amongst the members.

When their acting pastor is not there to bring the word, Harjo steps in and preaches. As Deacon of the church it is his role if there is not a supplied pastor. Harjo was ordained in 2004, so he has been serving for almost 17 years.

Faith Baptist Church is located in Dustin, Ok. on 36 S. Seamon.

OBITUARIES



Warren Wesley “Wes” Yazzie  
September 24, 1975 - January 21, 2021

Funeral services for Warren Wesley “Wes” Yazzie, age 45, of Bixby, Oklahoma, was held Jan. 27, at Clearview Baptist Church in Broken Arrow, Ok, officiated by Gary Hawkins and laid to rest at Vernon Cemetery in Coweta, Ok.

Wes was born Sept. 24, 1975, in Lawton, Ok, into the Gonal Clan born from the Wind Clan of the Muskogee Creek Nation and into the Tó’adeedlínii (Water Flows Together Clan). Wes went to be with his Lord and Savior on Jan. 21 in Bixby, Ok. Wes is the son of Das and Margie (Coon) Yazzie, the grandson of Mary (Berryhill) and Arthur Coon Sr.

of Sasakwa, Ok, and Bessie (Burbank) and Frank Yazzie of Fishpoint, AZ.

Wes graduated from Putnam City North High School, Oklahoma City, Ok, and he received his certificate in Small Engine Repair from a career vocational school. Wes’s passion for volleyball was born when he was sixteen-years old playing in the United States Volleyball Association (USVA) with his Dad as his teammate for over twenty years. Wes continued his love for the sport and became an avid player, and he was considered a well-respected teammate and referee. Wes relocated to Tulsa, Ok, and he worked

with his Dad at Diversa Graphic as a paper-cutter, die-cutter, and fork-lift operator for five years before committing to be a full-time dad to his children. At the time of death, he was employed by Paragon Technologies, Sapulpa, Ok.

Wes’s spiritual life began at five years old when he accepted Jesus as his Savior, and he was baptized by the late Johnny Buckner at El Reno Indian Baptist Church, El Reno, Ok.

Wes had a magnetic personality as people were drawn to him through his genuine heart and good-natured character. His hobbies included spending time with his children, fishing, volleyball, camping, fixing cars, hunting, boxing, construction, weaponry, spending time with his brother and

loved ones, and challenging his parents in dominoes. Wes would go out of his way to help others, and he would give anything he had to help them, and he once said to his Mom that he always put other people’s needs before himself. Wes never left without bestowing a kiss on his loved ones.

Wes is survived by his three children, Isaac, Nevada and Lilee Yazzie of Bixby, Ok; his parents, Das and Margie Yazzie of Coweta, Ok; his fiancé, Jessica Armstrong and baby on the way; his sister, Zena (Yazzie) Stafford of Sallisaw, Ok; his brother, Jerome Yazzie of Broken Arrow, Ok; six nieces, eight nephews, two great-nieces, seven great-nephews, and numerous other relatives and friends to mourn his passing.



Robert Lee Yargee  
November 19, 1954 - January 14, 2021

Robert Lee Yargee passed away from this life on Jan. 14 at the age of 66. Robert was born in Yeager, Oklahoma on Nov. 19, 1954 to Phillip and Winey (Scott) Yargee.

Robert was born into his purpose as Mekko of Alabama Quassarte Cuko Rakko, and at a very young age he stepped into his job. He often spoke about the elders who raised him and taught him what he needed to know. He enjoyed being outside, fishing, taking drives, going stomp dancing, visiting Mvskoke Churches, working in the yard, and “cleaning” his shed.

He loved his grandchildren and thought the world of

everything they did. He loved being with family and friends and drinking coffee while visiting. He was a member of Ryal Community Baptist Church, where he loved singing and listening to Mvskoke hymns. He was elected second chief of Alabama Quassarte Tribal Town and loved helping his people any way he could.

Robert had so much love for his ground and members. He explained his love for his people as this: A mother loves her child, sees her child as perfect and could do no wrong. No matter what anyone says or thinks, that child is the most beautiful thing in her

eyes. My members and people I am responsible for our my children. They are not perfect but nothing they do could make me love them any less.

Robert is survived by his wife Lesah Deere-Yargee of the home, five sons, Robert “Buddy” Yargee Jr. of Gore, Ok., Jason Yargee of Gore, Ok., Curtis Yargee of Gore, Ok., Kenneth “Tohvtke” Yargee of Muskogee, Ok., and Devery Deere of Tulsa, Ok., two daughters, Lesha “Baby Doll” Deere of Okemah, Ok., and Nancy “Nungee” Deere-Turney of Okmulgee, Ok. Four siblings, Jack Yargee, Evelyn McLemore, Tarpie Yargee, and Josie

Yargee. Eleven grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Serving as active Pallbearers were Alabama Quassarte Etlwlv vn Tvsykiyv.

Honorary Pallbearers were Bonnie Deere, Roger Butler, Buster “Bunko” Bear, Galen “Dute” Cloud, Sam Osborne, and Paskova Deere.

Services were officiated by Barton Looney, Head Deacon from Thewarle Indian Baptist Church.

Funeral Services for Mekko Robert “Bobby” Lee Yargee were held Jan. 18 at the Phillip Deere Roundhouse in Okemah, Ok. Interment followed at the Deere Family Cemetery in Okemah, Ok.



R. Michael Copeland  
December 30, 1950 - September 8, 2020

R. Michael Copeland was born on December 30, 1950 in Kansas City, Kansas. He was the youngest of six children born to the late Robert Lee Copeland and Anna Mae Copeland. R. Michael Copeland was preceded in death by his parents, and his older sister Loretta Matthews. R. Michael Copeland was educated in the Kansas City, Kansas Public School System. In 1969, he graduated from Washington High School. R. Michael received a basketball scholarship from Park University, Kansas City, MO. During this free time, he enjoyed and shared his love for “the game.” As a result of his commitment and skill,

he received an invitation to play in the World University Games in Lake Placid, New York. In 1972 Michael culminated and graduated with his Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Park University. After college, he enlisted and served in the United States Air Force for four years from 1980-1984. In 1979 R. Michael Copeland accepted Christ in the kitchen of the Copeland family home under the auspices of his older sister Shirley. As he continued to grow in the knowledge of his Savior R. Michael Copeland was appointed the Regional Director of the C.H. Mason Bible College for four years. It was during this time he met and married his “baby.” On July 18, 1981, he and the love of his life, Deborah Ann Portley professed their love before a crowd of witnesses. A love that radiated for thirty-nine years. To this union two beautiful children were born; Robert “Michael” Copeland Jr. and Rachelle Marquis’ Copeland. As a child R. Michael attended Havenside Church Of God In Christ (C.O.G.I.C.) under the leadership of the late Bishop J.O. Owens. In 1981 R. Michael Copeland and his wife joined Mt.Carmel C.O.G.I.C. under the leadership of the late Bishop Ervin Sims Jr. and Supervisor Mary K. Sims. It

was at this time he accepted the call to ministry and was licensed into the Gospel Ministry in 1982 at Mt. Carmel C.O.G.I.C. Shortly after R. Michael Copeland was ordained as an Elder in the Church of God In Christ under the late Bishop William H. McDonald. In 1995, Elder R. Michael Copeland was appointed and served as the pastor of Pentecostal Powerhouse C.O.G.I.C. by the late Bishop William H. McDonald. Pastor Copeland adored and faithfully served his church. Being a man of great vision, he was lead of the Holy Spirit to build upon the foundation laid by his predecessor changing the name to New Harvest C.O.G.I.C. in 2002. As New Harvest developed many were saved and returned to Christ. As the church continued to grow, the parishioners witnessed miraculous healings, ministry development, leadership and the presence of the Lord. After R. Michael Copeland’s work concluded at New Harvest in 2006 he and his family joined Boone Tabernacle C.O.G.I.C. under Bishop L.F. Thuston. During that time, he served as the Evangelism President, New Members Class Teacher as well as the Coordinator for the Minister’s Fellowship. As his time concluded at Boone Tabernacle Pastor Copeland and his wife

were led back home to Mt. Carmel C.O.G.I.C. where he served as an Associate Pastor, the Director of Special Ministries and the Vice-President of the Minister’s Alliance. As Pastor Copeland faithfully dedicated his life to ministry he served as the Secretary for the Kansas East Jurisdiction Ordination Board for fifteen years. From 2004- 2009 he diligently held the office as the Jurisdictional AIM (Auxiliaries In Ministry) Chairman. Shortly after his jurisdictional AIM appointment he was appointed as the Mid-Central Regional AIM Director from 2005 - 2009. It was during this time he co-hosted the National AIM convention, hosted in 2005 in Kansas City. R. Michael Copeland worked and retired from the Sprint Corporation for fourteen years where he worked as a Sales Supervisor and Project Manager.

After retirement, he worked as a night auditor at Holiday Inn Express. Pastor Copeland was a visionary. His impact on the next generation was immeasurable. He impacted men, young people and the family. He took time to share his knowledge and wisdom with all he encountered. Elder R. Copeland was a prolific teacher and historian. He was afforded many opportunities to travel across the world. He was faithful

and traveled to the Church of God In Christ Auxiliaries in Ministry (AIM) Convention and the National Convention. Elder Copeland visited West Africa multiple times.

He also valued his travel to Israel. It was during his second visit where he and Dr. George Westlake Jr. baptized each other in the Jordan River. Pastor R. Michael quietly transitioned from labor to reward on Tuesday, September 8, 2020. He leaves a legacy of faith and love to the love of his life, Missionary Deborah Ann Copeland, his son, Robert Michael Copeland Jr., his daughter, Rachelle Marquis Copeland, his sisters Gloria Hobson (Albert), Shirley Matthews (Donald), Julie Turner (Hylton) and his brother Ronald Copeland (Deborah) two godsons, Joshua Sims, and Nolan Jamal Jones Jr., A host of nieces, nephews, great nieces, great nephews and cousins. Special thanks to Providence Medical Center Staff. Thank you for your labor of love. Funeral Services will be held at 11:00 A.M. on Saturday, September 19th at Mount Carmel COGIC 2025 North 12th Street KCK 66104. Visitation 9:00 A.M. Interment Chapel Hill Cemetery KCK.

Funeral Services were held September 19th at Mount Carmel COGIC 2025 North 12th Street KCK 66104.



Submissions

Thank You

The family of Mekko Robert “Bobby” Yargee acknowledges with grateful appreciation your kind expression of sympathy.

First and foremost, the Alabama-Quassarte people for taking care and laying their Mekko to rest as they were taught. The preparation of food and details by the Alabama-Quassarte people as they went about and also grieved.

The many comforting words, memories, gifts, food and donations from Nuyaka Ceremonial Ground, Peach Ceremonial Ground, Ryal Church, Thewarle Church, Barton Looney, Chief David Hill, Council Representative Travis Scott, Mark Randolph, Thomasine Yahola and former Council Representative Frank Coachman, Jon Chaudhuri, friends and family are overwhelmingly appreciated during this time of great loss.

It was a great tribute to a wonderful man. There are many more people Bobby touched and we do not mean to omit and sincerely apologize however, we are thankful and it will always be remembered.

Mvto Vcvkerricetcat.

Thank You MCN Elder Care

I want to thank you and your workers for sending me the Elder Care Covid-19 “Kit”. It was an unexpected surprise that is very welcomed.

As a Mvskoek Citizen, living in Texas, I was un-aware that you care so much for each of our citizens that you would send this to me. I will use it for its intended purpose and continue to protect myself from this deadly disease.

Letter to the Editor

Open Letter to the National Council and Mvskoek Media Editor

I am going to address a section of the 2020 NC Rules of Procedure which basically gags the legislative branch from communicating via social media with any MCN citizen in reference to proposed legislation or Nation business. the NC Rules of Procedure are in violation of the MCN Constitutional protections set forth in the Preamble of the Muscogee Constitution and the MCN Constitution as a whole. The Preamble states:

“Under the guidance of the Almighty God, our Creator, We the People of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, do promote Unity, to establish Justice, and secure to ourselves and our children the blessings of Freedom, to preserve our basic Rights and Heritage, to strengthen and preserve self and local Government, in continued relations with the United States of America, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation.”

The NC 2020 Rules of Procedure referring to legislation inhibits “Unity”. It curtails any input, plus or minus, by any MCN citizen via social media. This is inclusive of all proposed or actual legislation to be brought to the floor. To curtail any citizens input on any legislation shows that the MCN Legislative branch is nothing more than a dictatorship branch of government and the Rule is unconstitutional. The NC Representatives were elected by the voting citizens of the Muscogee Nation to represent the people openly and honestly with reference to any and/or all legislation. How is it that a citizen is to honestly believe that they are being heard, or adequately represented, with reference to any legislation if the citizen is unable to communicate via social media? I can understand if this so-called “gag” Rule only encompassed MCN’s National Security.

Computer Social media is a conduit for a MCN citizen to openly discuss proposed legislation with any or all NC Representative. The Pony Express no longer exists and snail mail is unnecessarily slow. By the time any mail goes by USPS it will have become moot as to any correspondence regarding any proposed legislation.

Where is the “Justice” when it comes to any legislation, proposed or passed, when a MCN citizen is unable to discuss any legislation prior to being submitted to a legislative vote? All NC Representatives were elected to serve by the citizens of the MCN. However, after such victory the NC, as a whole, now takes a dictatorship approach by turning a deaf ear and their backs on the MCN citizens as to proposed legislation. Why?

How are the MCN citizens to preserve to our children the freedoms, basic rights and to strengthen and preserve self and local government if the MCN citizens are prohibited from openly discussing proposed legislation or changes to any legislation via social media? The 2020 NC Rules of Procedure are, as written, unconstitutional in my opinion. I am not an attorney and this is my opinion only. However, this could become public.

MVTO!  
Rick Wilde  
Tulsa

Legals

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION  
OKMULGEE DISTRICT

IN THE MATTER OF: )  
N.D.; DOB: 12/24/2004 ) Case No. JV-2020-18  
Alleged Deprived Child. )

JUVENILE SUMMONS

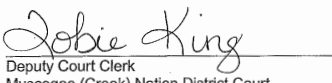
THE MUSCOGEE NATION to: Kimberly Ann Beal

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that an Amended Petition has been filed in the Court of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, Okmulgee, Oklahoma, on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2021 at the hour of 9:00 a.m. for an **Adjudication Hearing** and to there remain subject to the call of the Court until discharged so that you may be advised of the allegations and may answer that you admit or deny the allegations of the Deprived Petition.

You may seek the advice of any attorney on any matter relating to this action at your own expense. Or, if you are qualified as indigent, an attorney can be appointed for you.

IF YOU FAIL TO ATTEND THIS HEARING, YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS MAY BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED AND YOU MAY BE CITED FOR CONTEMPT OF COURT AND A BENCH WARRANT MAY BE ISSUED FOR YOUR ARREST.

Issued this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of January 2021.

[Seal]   
Deputy Court Clerk  
Muscogee (Creek) Nation District Court

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION  
OKMULGEE DISTRICT

IN THE MATTER OF: )  
N.D.; DOB: 12/24/2004 ) Case No. JV-2020-18  
Alleged Deprived Child. )

JUVENILE SUMMONS

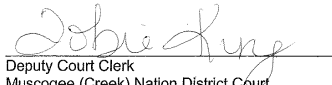
THE MUSCOGEE NATION to: Deante Carun Asberry, Jr.

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that a Second Amended Petition has been filed in the Court of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, Okmulgee, Oklahoma, on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2021 at the hour of 9:00 a.m. for an **Adjudication Hearing** and to there remain subject to the call of the Court until discharged so that you may be advised of the allegations and may answer that you admit or deny the allegations of the Deprived Petition.


You may seek the advice of any attorney on any matter relating to this action at your own expense. Or, if you are qualified as indigent, an attorney can be appointed for you.

IF YOU FAIL TO ATTEND THIS HEARING, YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS MAY BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED AND YOU MAY BE CITED FOR CONTEMPT OF COURT AND A BENCH WARRANT MAY BE ISSUED FOR YOUR ARREST.


Issued this 4<sup>th</sup> day of February 2021.

[Seal]   
Deputy Court Clerk  
Muscogee (Creek) Nation District Court

Again, thank you for caring for every citizen, especially us older ones who live out of state.  
Regards,  
David Shirley



Webinar Wednesday



Muscogee (Creek) Nation Behavioral Health Services is providing mental health trainings to community members and professionals. In May 2020, we had to adapt our conferences to an online platform. We started a weekly training series called Webinar Wednesday. The ease and convenience to attend this training series made it an instant success. Our desire is to build on this on this success and continue offering applicable virtual trainings throughout 2021.

Last year, our Webinar Wednesday sessions included speakers with national and international recognition, such as Kevin Hines, Dr. Kelly James, Elliot Connie, and Jermaine Galloway. The session topics included substance abuse, trauma, suicide prevention, behavioral health treatment, resiliency, historical trauma, and more. We hosted 25 trainings and over 2000 community members attended the virtual webinar series.

The speakers we have lined up for this year’s Webinar Wednesday series is Dr. Thomas Joiner, Dr. Cathy Pratt, Dr. Robert Cramer and more. The topics will include autism, intellectual disabilities, trauma, grief journey, stress management, substance abuse, self-care, suicide prevention and more. We will continue to add more speakers and topics throughout the year!

Webinar Wednesday Schedule and Topics:  
**February 24th** –Grief and Trauma  
**March 10th**- No Such Thing as a Bad Kid: Understanding and Responding to Kids with Behavioral Challenges Using a Positive, Strength-Based Approach  
**April 21st**- Autism: Characteristics and Strategies  
**May 5th**- Why People Die by Suicide

Each session will be from 12:00pm-1:30pm. To register, visit [bit.ly/mcnwebwed](https://bit.ly/mcnwebwed) and create an account. If you need further assistance, do not hesitate to contact us at [mcnbhsgrants@creekhealth.org](mailto:mcnbhsgrants@creekhealth.org) or 918.758.1930.

We hope to see you there!

If you or someone you know is struggling with anger, anxiety, worry, fear, stress or depression and need to talk to someone, please contact Muscogee (Creek) Nation Behavioral Health at 918-758-1910.

If you or someone you know is in crisis call the National Suicide Prevention Hotline Number at 1-800-273-8255 or Text “Creek” to 741-741.

MVTO



Fiscal Year 2021

In accordance with the following legislation:

**NCA 20-050** A law of the Muscogee Creek Nation amending **NCA 20-038** (A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the expenditures of **Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act** (“**CARES Act**”) funds received from the United States Department of the Treasury to establish the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Coronavirus Relief Fund Program.)

SECTION 7. REPORTING. A report shall be provided bi-weekly by the Office of the Principal Chief to the Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council and Mvskoke Media documenting all expenditures of the CARES Act funds.

Total received/earned \$312,616,371.42

Total expenditures and encumbrances for FY20 and FY21 as of this report date equals, \$281,369,023.

The following report has been submitted for the publication date of **Feb. 15th**.

ACCOUNT NUMBER	PROGRAM NAME/ ACCOUNT NAME	AMOUNT BUDGETED	EXPENDED	ENCUMBERED	CASH BALANCE
	<b>PRINCIPAL CHIEF</b>				
50000	Salary & Wages-FT	5,667.00	-	-	5,667.00
50020	Salary & Wages-O/T over 1.5	19,900.00	-	-	19,900.00
50100	Salary & Wages-PT/Other	37,500.00	51,500.00	-	-14,000.00
51000	Fringe-FT	25,488.00	-	-	25,488.00
51100	Fringe-PT/Other	4,556.75	4,969.72	-	-412.97
53000	Supplies	2,500.00	-	-	2,500.00
56010	Donations/Contributions	50,000.00	10,000.00	-	40,000.00
	<b>SECRETARY OF NATION</b>				
54000	Contractual	9,245,034.70	4,498,585.72	4,745,020.42	1,428.56
58010	Construction	1,400.00	1,400.00	-	-
59220	Grants	305,310.85	120,767.32	-	184,543.53
	<b>TOURISM &amp; RECREATION</b>				
53000	Supplies	1,537.38	1537.38	-	-
59050	Food Purchases	681,025.44	670,043.79	10,981.65	-
59440	Incidentals	4,048.79	4048.79	-	-
	<b>CONTRACTING EMPLOYMENT</b>				
53000	Supplies	1,700.00	1,355.00	-	345.00
55210	Communications - Other	3,000.00	80.40	-	2,919.60
59220	Grants	6,825,910.80	3,702,521.83	-	3,123,388.97
	<b>INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY</b>				
53000	Supplies	716,070.56	302,631.69	104,843.66	308,595.21
53010	Software/Licenses	1,047,630.11	726,536.90	218,026.74	103,066.47
54000	Contractual	463,594.25	39,723.75	38,172.50	385,698.00
55210	Communications- Other	42,033.74	17,334.36	-	24,699.38
55300	Bldg Maint/Repairs	99,818.95	26,238.82	29,216.86	44,363.27
85500	Equipment	3,660,033.48	1,407,285.28	1,966,882.31	285,865.89
	<b>FLEET MANAGEMENT</b>				
50000	Salary & Wages - FT	20,000.00	671.94	-	19,328.06
50010	Salary & Wages - Overtime	15,876.00	-	-	15,876.00
50100	Salary & Wages - PT/Other	-3,374.80	8,637.20	-	-12,012.00
21000	Fringe - FT	20,199.00	363.61	-	19,835.39
51100	Fringe - PT/Other	-394.66	977.66	-	-1,372.32
53000	Supplies	3,242,728.45	1,409,735.95	76,495.49	1,756,497.01
53290	Postage/Shipping	50,000.00	28,136.57	-	21,863.43
55300	Bldg Maint/Repairs	315.00	-	-	315.00
85400	Vehicles	151,476.00	146,021.00	-	5,455.00
85500	Equipment	78,000.00	77,716.00	-	284.00
	<b>SOCIAL SERVICES</b>				
50000	Salary & Wages - FT	48,519.09	58,232.84	-	-9,713.75
50020	Salary & Wages - O/T Over 1.5	0.67	7,909.54	-	-7,908.87
51000	Fringe - FT	38,960.72	34,149.97	-	4,810.75
53000	Supplies	5,522.08	5,430.79	36.00	55.29
53010	Contractual	420,955.91	205,451.99	10,970.89	204,533.03
54000	Indirect Costs	-	76.61	-	-76.61
57000	Direct Assist - Income Support	53,883,581.41	50,828,000.00	-	3,055,581.41
59071	Direct Assist - Hardship	34,432,825.50	32,200,900.00	-	2,231,925.50
	<b>SENIOR SERVICES</b>				
53000	Supplies	200,000.00	184,212.01	1,280.00	14,507.99
	<b>FOOD DISTRIBUTION</b>				
53000	Supplies	75,214.69	75,214.69	-	-
59050	Food Purchases	146,239.79	146,239.79	-	-
85050	Renovations	130,000.00	1,590.0000	124,212.80	4,197.20
85170	Construction	313,656.48	-	-	313,656.48
85400	Vehicles	63,417.60	-	63,417.60	0.00
85500	Equipment	525,000.00	262,500.00	262,500.00	0.00
	<b>COMMUNITY RESEARCH &amp; DEVELOPMENT</b>				
55210	Communications - Other	-	-	-	-
	<b>ELDERLY NUTRITION</b>				
85170	Construction	540,000.00	95,568.50	394,888.50	49,543.00
	<b>SECRETARY OF EDUCATION</b>				
50000	Salary& Wages- FT	2,980.44	2,309.46	-	670.98
50020	Salary& Wages - O/T over 1.5	37,688.31	37,688.31	-	0.00
51000	Fringe - FT	16,043.42	15,665.30	-	378.12
53000	Supplies	859,513.00	374,673.11	157,980.79	326,859.10
56030	Stipends/Honorariums	25,000.00	-	-	25,000.00
57000	Indirect Costs	-	245.91	-	-245.91
59073	Direct Assistance - Ed Support	2,189,243.29	2,189,243.29	-	0.00
59220	Grants	-	-	-	0.00
	<b>MCN MEAT PROCESSING PLANT</b>				
53000	Supplies	100,000.00	-	-	100,000.00
85010	Architect & Engineering	1,000,000.00	728,177.58	131,405.42	140,417.00
85170	Construction	14,800,000.00	1,576,137.91	9,942,515.09	3,281,347.00
85500	Equipment	1,400,000.00	1,070,272.18	118,919.13	210,808.69
	<b>REAL ESTATE SERVICES</b>				
54000	Contractual	9,628.00	7,064.12	3,689.88	-1,126.00
	<b>CULTURAL CENTER &amp; ARCHIVES</b>				
53000	Supplies	-	-	-	-
	<b>CULTURAL PRESERVATION</b>				
53000	Supplies	2,000.00	-	-	2,000.00
59220	Grants	2,725,000.00	2,139,998.95	-	585,001.05
	<b>TRIBAL CONSTRUCTION</b>				
50100	Salary & Wages - PT/Other	83,206.80	19,234.80	-	63,972.00
51100	Fringe - PT/Other	10,438.07	2,188.86	-	8,249.21
53000	Supplies	38,975.00	32,490.00	4,270.00	2,215.00
85010	Architect & Engineering	132,241.18	73,886.45	-13,003.70	71,358.43
85170	Construction	14,289,758.71	5,053,419.37	6,153,354.64	3,082,984.70
85500	Equipment	195,110.00	119,985.00	10,125.00	65,000.00
	<b>SECRETARY OF INTERIOR AFFAIRS</b>				
58010	Construction	313,297.00	297,631.64	3,460.36	12,205.00
	<b>OFFICE OF JUSTICE</b>				
53000	Supplies	26,800.00	26,799.29	-	0.71
54000	Contractual	26,738.00	24,738.00	-	2,000.00
	<b>OFFICE OF TAX COMMISSION</b>				
54000	Contractual	36,300.00	19,000.00	-	17,300.00
55300	Bldg Maint/Repairs	340.80	-	-	340.80
85500	Equipment	1.03	-	-	1.03
	<b>CITIZENSHIP BOARD</b>				
53000	Supplies	316,797.50	97,243.80	54,157.00	165,396.70
53010	Software/Licenses	5,649.00	-	-	5,649.00
54000	Contractual	50,500.00	10,000.00	-	40,500.00
85500	Equipment	36,258.00	-	-	36,258.00
	<b>LIGHTHORSE ADMINISTRATION</b>				
85500	Equipment	60,000.00	56,790.00	-	3,210.00
	<b>NATIONAL COUNCIL</b>				
53000	Supplies	625.00	623.34	-	1.66
	<b>DISTRICT COURT</b>				
53000	Supplies	918.23	-	-	918.23
53310	Equipment Maint/Repair	10,512.00	10,512.00	-	-
85500	Equipment	176,011.68	159,761.68	16,250.00	-
	<b>SUPREME COURT</b>				
50100	Salary & Wares - PT/Other	4,500.00	-	-	4,500.00
51100	Fringe - PT/Other	547.00	-	-	547.00
	<b>SECRETARY OF HEALTH</b>				
90110	Transfer Out	-	11,279,552.97	-	-11,279,552.97
	TOTAL	156,625,101.19	122,789,630.73	24,630,069.03	9,205,401.43