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Students and limited audience will gather in person to celebrate the graduation of the 2020 and 2021 CMN graduating glass.

CMN STUDENTS TO GRADUATE **IN-PERSON**

THE COMBINED COMMENCEMENT **CEREMONY WILL HAVE LIMITED** ATTENDANCE BUT WILL HONOR THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE 2020 AND 2021 GRADUATES

> For Immediate Release

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma-The College of the Muscogee Nation's 12th graduation will take place at the Mvskoke Dome on Friday, April 23, 2021. The graduation will recognize both the Class 2021 and Class of 2020, since graduation ceremonies were canceled last spring. The graduation speaker is Muscogee (Creek) Nation Principal Chief David Hill.

The College of the Muscogee Nation is pleased to host an in-person graduation to celebrate the accomplishments of the classes of 2020 and 2021. "While we are anxious to get back to our normal routines, we are continuing to take the necessary COVID safety precautions to host our combined 12th and 13th gradations," said Dr.

Monte Randall, CMN Presi-

"The decision to hold an in son graduation with limited guests came about by request of the 2021 graduates. The CMN graduation committee reviewed the graduate's request, the current situation of COVID cases, and the direction of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. With the support of Chief Hill and MCN Recreation Department we were able to make the necessary accommodations to celebrate the accomplishments of our graduates this year at the Dome."

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 protocols, the ceremony is closed to the public. Graduates are allowed a small number of guests, and each attendee must have a valid ticket. All attendees must wear masks, have temperature checked, and practice family social distancing.

MCN TO OBTAIN LEGAL **ADVICE ON TAX ISSUES**

TRIBE TO ALLOCATE MORE FUNDS TO HAVE A BROAD SPECTRUM OF LEGAL ADVICE FOLLOWING THE SCOTUS DECISION CONFIRMING TRIBAL JURISDICTION

> Angel Ellis **DIRECTOR**

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma-In an emergency session held March 23, the MCN National Council met to consider legislation that would allocate funding to the MCN Attorney General's office that would allow the tribe to hire Big Fire law and Policy Group, and contract services with Attorney Michael Parks.

Three pieces of legislation, TR 21-044, TR 21-045 and NCA 21-029, all focus on legal services.

Tribal Resolution 21-044, a resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, authorizes the Principal Chief to execute a legal service contract with attorney Michael Parks. Rep. William Lowe sponsored the resolution.

'The Muscogee (Creek) Nation by and through the Office of the Attorney General seeks to secure advice, consultation, and any necessary legal services relating to issues raised by the McGirt decision within the Muscogee (Creek) Nation,' the legislation said.

According to the resolution, 'There are income tax issues faced by Muscogee (Creek) citizens that may require legal assistance. '

The bill said Parks possesses significant litigation experience and has previously represented the Muscogee (Creek) citizens in other cases on behalf of the legal services program.

MCN Attorney General Roger Wiley said that these agreements will not result in legal representation but rather be used to produce resources to help citizens navigate channels inde-



MCN NC approves legislation funding attorneys and legal services with tax specialty. (Shutterstock)

pendently.

"We will be putting together a tax appeal document, it will include a legal brief and letter response," Wiley said. "I will distribute that to citizens who have income tax issues."

"Citizens dealing with an exemption denial can contact our office for those documents they need to file, it will also have a legal description and form letter."

Resolution 21-045 approved an engagement letter between the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and Big Fire Law and Policy Group, LLC for legal services on behalf of the Nation.

The legislation said a need for the firm's specific expertise exists, 'in regard to the McGirt decision and matters identified by the Muscogee Reservation Protection Commission.'

The Muscogee Reservation Protection Commission is an advisement committee formed after the USSC confirmed the tribe's reservation had never been dis-The MCN established. Principal Chief set it up to deliver advice and review laws for the tribe after Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt formed a completely nonindigenous commission.

The tribal tion states that the MCN National Council receive a monthly report from Big Fire Law concerning 'the McGirt Decision in regards to tribal government, corporate and business matters, taxation, regulation, jurisdictional matters, and advice on litigation matters.'

This report will be part of the monthly Business, Finance and Justice Meet-

The cost of this agreement between the tribe and Big Fire was approved through appropriation in NCA 21-029. The funding was set for \$200,000.

According Wiley, this contract will serve as policy advisement for the MCN National Council.

"At this time Big Fire Law and Policy Group are not representing in any litigation," Wiley said.

For more information, read the full legislation at www.mcnnc.com.

COUNCILMAN IMPLICATED IN HOUSING VIOLATION MCN'S REPAYMENT OF HOUSING FUNDS DUE TO VIOLATIONS IN PROGRAM REVEALS A NEED FOR MORE REVIEW OVERSIGHT

Angel Ellis DIRECTOR

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma-At an extraordinary session of the Muscogee (Creek) National Council on Feb. 5, 2021, NCA 21-010 was proposed and failed to pass. The legislation was considered on more than one occasion by Council but never garnered passing support from the Council.

According to the bill

sponsored by Rep. Thomasene Yahola Osborn, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (US HUD) determined program funds were required to be paid back to the federal program with tribal funds because of a violation of regulations.

The MCN Office of the Principal Chief outlined the process that made the executive branch aware of the vio-

"I received a concern cor-

respondence from a citizen with supporting documentation," Principal Chief David Hill said. "I immediately contacted the Attorney General's office, the Department of Housing and Lighthorse... The AG's Office determined that this allegation warranted investigation."

According to Hill, the matter was investigated by tribal law enforcement.

"At the conclusion of Lighthorse's

tion, they determined that the claim was credible and therefore it was up to HUD to investigate further."

Under the MCN Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), Mvskoke Media requested any documents related to this legislation with the MCN National Council, MCN Housing Department, the MCN Executive Branch, and US HUD.

US HUD public affairs confirmed the violation and submitted redacted documents to Mvskoke Media on Mar. 23, 2021. Myskoke Media received copies of MCN Housing application documents and a letter from the MCN Secretary of Housing to HUD detailing the tribe's findings.

According to the documents, the violation came through the tribe's Mortgage Assistance Program. Records from the tribal housing department dis-

HOUSING - 2

HOUSING

Continued from Page 1

closed to the federal HUD program, 'The buyer and the seller did not disclose their relationship during the application process.' Documents indicated that this incident took place in 2017.

Through public land records and cross-referencing redacted documents, Mvskoke Media was able to identify the participating program homebuyer as Elizabeth Coale and the seller as Lucian Tiger III, a current MCN National Council representative.

HUD Regional Public Affairs Officer Scott Hudman said the program could not verify the total qualifying household.

"Based on the information provided to our office, it was unclear if the application included one living in the house," Hudman said. "Because of this, total household income could not be determined."

'Because the Total Household Income was questionable, the family could not be found to be eligible for the program.'

HUD's SPONAP Office determined that these discrepancies in the application violated HUD regulations CFR SS 1000.104, which requires total household income disclosure.

Rep. Tiger refuted living at the residence in Jenks but did not deny selling the home to Coale on July 28, 2017.

"I was only a resident at the address in December of 2017," Tiger said.

However, voter registration with the State of Oklahoma and the tribe lists Tiger's residence at the Jenks home with the same address as Mortgage assistance applicant Coale.

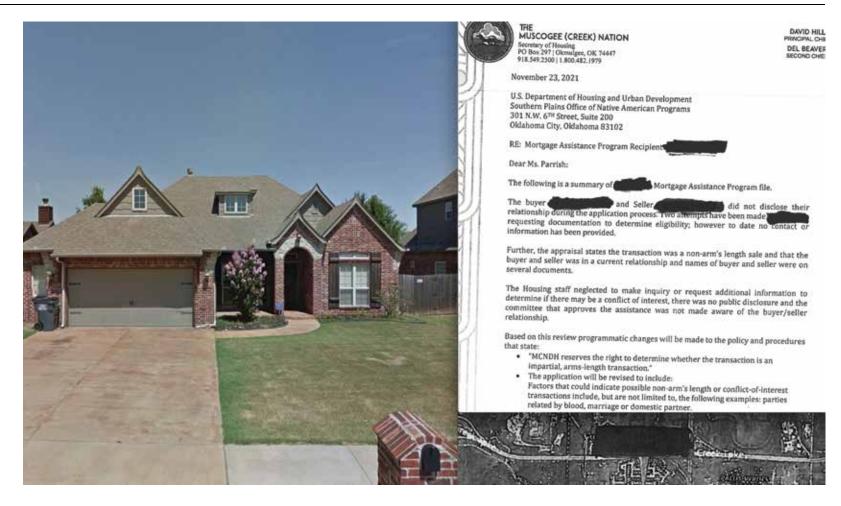
Tiger said he felt the administration could have avoided this infraction.

"..it is my opinion that the administration allowed the A.G.'s Office to dispute this finding, HUD would have reversed their decision," Tiger said. "I feel that this investigation was politically motivated because since the inception of the MAP, housing has only audited one file, Ms. Coale."

Mvskoke Media contacted all members of the National Council to determine what information was presented to them about the violation before they voted on NCA 21-010.

Several members who voted no on the legislation stated that the internal fact-finding committee found no wrongdoing, and based on the A.G. opinion, they did not support the legislation.

James Jennings said, "Council Fact-Finding Committee found no findings, and the A.G. offered



Pictured above is a home purchased with MCN mortgage assistance funds along with supporting documents that has become the focus of an investigation after a tribal citizen brought documents and allegations of possible violations. (MN File Photo)

an opinion to that effect."

Jennings was not the only representative not in favor of the legislation.

"I voted 'No,' due to the Fact-Finding Committee's investigation and report of no wrongdoing,' Rep. Anna Marshal said.

Rep. Joe Hicks, a member of the Fact-Finding Committee, said his vote was based on that committee's evidence.

'I was able to see all evidence in the investigation that was presented before us,' Hicks said. 'It was my conclusion and opinion that there was no wrongdoing by any persons or program involved in the investiga-

Hicks called the legislation unnecessary.

"It is my understanding that legislation was not needed, and the monies still got paid," Hicks said. "I feel this was all politically guided... That is why I voted no."

Rep. Darrell Proctor did

not support the legislation. "I voted against the legislation based on facts that were presented in the Fact-Finding Committee meeting," Proctor said.

Rep. Adam Jones did not support the legislation.

"I voted no," Jones said. "After the fact-finding investigation, there were no findings."

Rep. William Lowe also cited the attorney general.

"The confidential report from the Fact-Finding committee showed no findings," Lowe said. "We received an opinion from the A.G., that specified the same."

A statement from Rep. Charles McHenry explained his shift in opinion when the original bill was reconsidered as NCA 21-013 on Feb. 25, but failed again to garner support from Coun-

On Feb. 5, his voting

record showed he turned down the legislation but later voted in favor of passing legislation to pay the funds.

'I voted no with the information I had,' McHenry said. 'Later (I) voted yes due to the repercussions and circumstances that might take place if the money was not paid back.'

Representatives voted yes all did so based on HUD's letter and their desire not to jeopardize future HUD funding.

"I voted yes on NCA 21-010 because the Nation received a letter from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development requesting the Nation pay back \$25,000 and if it was not paid back, HUD could consider an enforcement action against the Nation," Rep. Robert Hufft said.

Osborn cited housing experience in her statement.

"I was the sponsor of NCA 21-010, which I supported with a yes vote," Osborn said. "Since I have 25 years of housing experience, I knew non-payment could possibly jeopardize future funding.'

She also explained the materials MCN NC used to consider their decisions.

"The National Council was provided a copy of a letter from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development," Osborn said. "It stated, 'Should the Council not approve the legislation to repay the funds from a non-Federal source, the SPONAP office would be required to the follow the regulations at 24 CFR 1000.532 to pursue this matter, which is considered an enforcement action against the Nation or refer the matter to the Office of Inspector General.' "

Rep. Travis Scott said supporting the legislation was a matter of transparency to the people.

"I supported to expend the funds for the legislation based on the documents provided to National Council; also Council has to approve all expenditures according to law unless deemed an emergency for the Controllers Act to expend funds," Scott said. "I am not part of the fact-finding committee, so I can't comment on the findings of the committee."

"Approval of this legislation would allow another citizen to benefit from the program, so I voted to expend the funds for the citizens' benefit."

Rep. Mark Randolph also expressed concern for protecting federal program funding.

"I voted in favor to pay the money in the amount of \$25,000," Randolph said. "My concern was putting the Nation's Housing funding in possible jeopardy after receiving a formal request from HUD... I do not feel the \$25,000 in question is worth the Nation losing possibly millions in future funding."

He received a copy of a letter requesting the funds be repaid before voting on the measure.

"The only formal documentation I saw before the vote was the letter from HUD official requesting the \$25,000 from Mortgage Assistance be paid back by the Nation."

Mvskoke Media contacted the MCN AG's office for an opinion on the matter.

"HUD determined that an infraction was committed by the MCN Housing Department, not the mortgage assistance recipient," MCN Attorney General Roger Wiley said. "No violations of Muscogee (Creek) Nation law have been identified, and I do not anticipate further legal action."

Mvskoke Media also con-

tacted the executive branch to find out what funds were used to pay the violation.

"Since the proposed bills NCA 21-010, NCA 21-013, and NCA 21-019 were not approved by the National Council, and due to a deadline in this matter, I felt that this rose to the level of emergency," Hill said.

According to Hill, a failure to comply with payment could jeopardize the program's federal funding.

"I approached the Attorney General's Office to determine whether this would qualify under the Controllers Act," Hill said. "Upon his recommendation, I authorized the Controller to repay the MCN IHBG LOCCS using tribal funds."

The MCN repaid funds utilized by Coale to purchase the home from Tiger to the MCN Mortgage lending assistance program on Mar. 16, 2021.

Hill said measures had been put in place to prevent violations such as this one in the future.

"For all of our programs, we hope that our policies and procedures are strong enough to catch and identify any irregular activity," Hill said. "Unfortunately, sometimes we make mistakes, and we miss something."

Because of the incident, tribal procedures have changed.

... there is now an independent review for the beginning and end of this application process," Hill said. "This secondary review will allow fresh eyes to look at every application."

"These types of steps should deter any bad actors from attempting to influence our outcomes."

The MCN repaid funds utilized by Coale to purchase the home from Tiger to the MCN Mortgage lending assistance program on Mar. 16, 2021.

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The Myskoke News is mailed from Stigler, Oklahoma to all enrolled Muscogee (Creek) citizens' households upon request. Inquiries should be directed to Mvskoke Media.

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

UPSWING IN MEMBERSHIP DURING PANDEMIC

OKMULGEE INDIAN COMMUNITY MEMBERSHIP RISES DESPITE BEING UNABLE TO GATHER IN PERSON

Morgan Taylor
REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma – All Indian Community Centers in the reservation have been under an executive order shut down since March 13, 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Under former Principal Chief James Floyd, the Okmulgee Indian Community Center had been placed on probation for reasons determining instability and inability to maintain the center.

Right before the executive ordered shut down the center, elections were held for the board. Virginia Thomas was elected chair of the board.

As a retired schoolteacher, Thomas ran for the chair of the board because she wanted to help.

"I'm in the retirement age, I don't need to do this. I wanted to do this," Thomas said.

Just days after the new board was put into place, Principal Chief Hill put the Nation under a state of emergency and shut down the centers

"We had one meeting the afternoon that we took office and that was it, the pandemic had hit," Thomas said. "Everything was in limbo and everyone was suffering."

"When the pandemic hit and we saw tribal members, especially community members in Okmulgee, suffering by not being able to get anything done, not knowing who turn too, we tried to step it



Okmulgee Community Center hoping to open up to public this year.

up."

The OIC Board members took steps of action by making new Facebook page that was more accessible to citizens and used Zoom for monthly meetings.

"I have to give the board credit. They are young, enthusiastic, and never mentioned once about getting paid," Thomas said. "They ran for their positions because they wanted a change in their communities.

"They all have special talents."

The OIC Board in collaboration with Cox, a grocery store located in Okmul-

gee, the OIC was able to serve families by giving grocery vouchers.

"This was our Treasurer Melissa Sanders idea," Thomas said. "We presented it to the community members and they approved so we all voted on it and decided we had the funds and we needed to do this for our community."

According the Thomas, this was when membership numbers started rising. The Board had taken it upon themselves to reach out to members on the membership list to update it and from there people were calling to join.

"After reviewing the membership list, we had planned on originally serving 150 households at one voucher of a hundred dollars," Thomas said. "We ended up serving 272 households and expending over \$28,000 on our community."

With no events taking place during the year, the Community Center had the funds to expend, which Thomas says is equal to what would have been spent on yearly activities.

"We always had a pretty full membership before I took office and we always had a lot of people at the center but they were always the same people," Thomas said. "Whenever we got new members they would come every once in a while but nothing long lasting."

(Submission)

Thomas hopes this upswing in membership encourages citizens to remain active or sign up with their own community centers.

Currently, the OIC is off probation and is hoping to open the doors to the public in the near future.

Monthly Zoom meetings are open to the public and can be accessed by following the Okmulgee Indian Community Center 2021 Facebook page.

THE COLLEGE OF THE MUSCOGEE NATION SELECTS 5TH PRESIDENT

DR. MONTE RANDALL NAMED PRESIDENT OF CMN AFTER HAVING YEARS OF GUIDANCE FROM PREDECESSOR



Dr. Monte Randall selected as the CMN'S Fifth President.

th President. (Submission)

Lani Hansen
SENIOR REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma-

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma— The College of the Muscogee Nation Board of Regents announced Dr. Monte Randall as the new President. He is the college's fifth President.

Dr. Randall is Muscogee (Creek) and resides in Glenpool, OK, with his wife Lauren and three children. He is from Oklahoma and a veteran of the United States Navy.

PRESIDENT - 4

NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

FOR PRECINCT WORKER POSITIONS FOR THE 2021 ELECTION

APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE ONLINE AT HTTPS://WWW.MCN-NSN.GOV/SERVICES/ELECTION-BOARD/

EARLY IN PERSON VOTING
SEPT 15 & 16, 7:00 AM - 7:00 PM
EACH DAY

2021 PRIMARY ELECTION SEPTEMBER 18, 7:00 AM - 7:00 PM

ABSENTEE BALLOT &
REGISTRATION
REQUESTING DEADLINE
AUGUST 25 @ 5:00 PM

MCN Election Office PO BOX 580 Okmulgee, ok 74447



T: 918-732-7631 election@mcn-election.com

CABINET POSITIONS REMAIN IN LIMBO

MCN CHILD CARE RECEIVES \$12M IN GRANT

Morgan Taylor
REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma— The Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council meeting was held March 27 via teleconference.

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

TR 21-035 Resolution of the MCN authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a certain agreement between the MCN Department of Heath and Data Innovation LLC on behalf of the MCN Department of Health. Sponsor: Representative Anna Marshall

The agreement will allow the MCNDH access to certain software as a service product for the implementation of the Epic Electronic Health Record System. Requires application of laws of the State of Vermont. Adopted. 15-0-0

TR 21-036 Resolution of the MCN authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a certain agreement between the MCN Department of Health and Apteryx, INC. on behalf of the MCN Department of Health. Sponsor: Representative Anna Marshall

The agreement will allow the MCNDH access to certain software as a service product for the implementation of the Epic Electronic Health Record System. Requires application of the laws of the State of Ohio. Adopted. 15-0-0

TR 21-037 Resolution of the MCN authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a certain agreement between the MCN Department of Health and Wolters Kluwer Health INC. on behalf of the MCN Department of Health. Sponsor: Representative Anna Marshall

The agreement will allow the MCNDH access to certain software as a service product for the implementation of the Epic Electronic Health Record System. Requires application of the laws of the State of Ohio. Adopted. 15-0-0

TR 21-038 Resolution

of the MCN confirming the nomination of Miranda Carman to serve as the Secretary of Community and Human Services of the MCN. Sponsor: Representative William Lowe

The Principal Chief has appointed Miranda Carman to serve as the Secretary of Community and Human Services with a term beginning upon confirmation from the National Council until the end of the term of the Principal Chief. Adopted. 10-5-0

TR 21-039 Resolution of the MCN confirming the nomination of Sarah Price to serve as the Secretary of Education, Employment, and Training of the MCN. Sponsor: Representative Anna Marshall

The Principal Chief has appointed Sarah Price to serve as the Secretary of Education, Employment, and Training with a term beginning upon confirmation from the National Council until the end of the term of the Principal Chief. Failed. 5-10-0

TR 21-042 Resolution of the MCN authorizing the Principal Chief to execute an amendment for participation in settlement/litigation involving opioid consultants. Sponsor: Representative Travis Scott

The Nation must amend its Opioid Litigation Contingent Fee Agreement to include settling/litigating claims against manufacturers, distributors, and pharmacy chain retailers of opioid drugs, and their consultants for damages caused to the Nation due to opioid drugs because a claim against consultants falls outside the scope of the original Opioid Litigation Contingent Fee Agreement. Adopted. 10-5-0

TR 21-046 Resolution of the MCN authorizing the Gaming Operations Authority Board ("GOAB") to execute the AIA document A101-2017 Standard Form of Agreement between owner and contractor with Thompson Construction, INC. Sponsor: Representative Patrick Freeman Jr.

Agreement for the MCN Okemah Casino exterior and interior renovation project; article 4 of the Agreement provides the Contract Sum in the amount of \$1,527,000.00. Postponed until March 31 Extraordinary Session.

NCA 21-014 Law of the MCN authorizing an appropriation for the MCN Community Research and Development Department to provide necessary maintenance and repairs to the Nation's chartered community buildings. Sponsor: Representative James Jennings (\$300,000.00)

Funding (\$300,000.00) is being requested by CR&D to provide "general maintenance and repairs" and "to ensure the structural integrity of the Community facility or is necessary for the safety of Community membership," including but not limited to: equipment maintenance and repair, replacement of equipment, and repair and replacement of items such as doors, locks, windows, flooring and lighting fixtures. Adopted.

NCA 21-015 Law of the MCN authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded by the United States Department of Health and Human Services to the MCN Elderly Nutrition Program. Sponsor: Representative James Jennings (\$40,800.00)

The grant funds (\$40,800.00) form the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services will be used for supplemental funding for the Elderly Nutrition Program to include supplies, food purchases, and direct assistance. Adopted. 15-0-0

NCA 21-016 Law of the MCN authorizing a supplemental appropriation to the Post-Graduate Education and Scholarship Revolving Fund. Sponsor: Representative James Jennings (\$113,000.00)

The Secretary of the Department of Education, Employment and Training is requesting a supplemental appropriation to replenish the Post-Graduate Education and Scholarship Revolving Fund. Adopted. 15-0-0

NCA 21-017 Law of the MCN authorizing an appropriation for the MCN Tribal Driveways Department for the Purchase of equipment.

Sponsor: Representative James Jennings (\$79,163.15)

The MCN Tribal Driveways Department provides assistance with burial services (grave excavation) for MCN citizens and needs to purchase new equipment to provide said services. Adopted. 15-0-0

NCA 21-018 Law of the MCN establishing the Recreation Revolving Fund for the expenditure of all departmental income. Sponsor: Representative Travis Scott

MCN Recreation Department earns revenue through rental of and hosting of events at the Omniplex annually. A revolving fund would allow the Department to reinvest earned revenue year over year for special projects, including equipment upgrades, facilities improvements, and other operational expenses. Adopted. 11-4-0

NCA 21-020 Law of the MCN amending MCNCA Title 14, entitled "Crimes and Punishments" regarding the Criminal Complaint and Arrest Warrant or Summons to Appear. Sponsor: Representative Adam Jones III

MCNCA Title 14 1-401 B: 2. "The name of the defendant; if known or some other name or alias if not known plus whatever description of the defendant is known..."

MCNCA Title 14 1-401 B: amended by removing 7. "Verification by a Lighthorse Officer."

MCNCA Title 14 1-402 A: "..., or a Lighthorse Officer of other authorized law enforcement officer as identified in 1-101(J) of this Title..."

MCNCA Title 14 1-402 A: "An exact copy or facsimile of the affidavit may be presented to the court in lieu of the original document so long as the prosecuting attorney is satisfied as to the sufficiency of the probable cause allegation contained in the copy of facsimile."

MCNCA Title 14 1-402 D: "... as identified in 1-101 of this Title,..."

MCNCA Title 14 1-402 D: Amended by removing term "Indian Country" through out. Adopted. 15-0-0

NCA 21-023 Law of the

MCN authorizing the expenditure of the Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), 2020 Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act (LEMHWA) Program Grant for the benefit of the Lighthorse Police Department. Sponsor: Representative Travis Scott (\$125,000.00)

The grant is awarded to develop nationally recognized peer-led mental health and wellness program to serve its law enforcement officers. Adopted. 15-0-0

NCA 21-024 Law of the MCN amending MCNCA Title 48, Chapter 2, 2-102 Entitled "Tribal Workers' Benefit Advisory Council Membership" Sponsor: Representative Travis Scott

MCNCA Title 48, Chapter 2, 2-102 TWBAC Membership that comprises of five positions amends A-G that states those particular positions. Adopted. 15-0-0

NCA 21-025 Law of the MCN authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the Internal Revenue Service for the benefit of the office of the Secretary of the Nation and Commerce. Sponsor: Representative Anna Marshall (\$2,300.00)

The funds will be used for the Secretary of the Nation and Commerce to provide assistance in preparing income tax returns for individuals who are age 60 or older. Adopted. 15-0-0

NCA 21-026 Law of the MCN authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for the benefit of the MCN Office of Child Care. Sponsor: Representative Anna Marshall (\$12,501,189.00)

MCN Office of Child Care was awarded U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Child Care and Development Block Grant Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Funds to prevent the spread of infection and prepare and respond to the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Adopted. 15-0-0

Full agendas and meetings can be viewed at www. mcnnc.com.

PRESIDENT

Continued from Page 3

He is a graduate of Haskell Indian Nations University with a bachelor's degree in Business Administration. Then he went to the University of Oklahoma receiving his master's degree in Native American Studies. Dr. Randall then went to Oral Roberts University receiving his doctorate in educational leadership.

Dr. Randall was selected to serve as the President of CMN after the passing of Dr. Robert Bible. He started in office on March 8, 2021.

"It was a tough situation to come in after the loss of President Bible," Dr. Randall said. "He was a great leader and a mentor to me, a friend. For me, this was a calling to apply and after I was selected it was emotional. I knew I had to come in and take over in a tough situation."

Knowing Dr. Bible for ten years, Dr. Randall had felt prepared for this new role as President. He felt like he knew Dr. Bible's guidance and vision was for the college. Dr. Randall has his own vision too for the college as he prepared for the next step.

As the newly selected college President, Dr. Randall focuses on building up the college. Some of his goals that are currently happening on campus are a new Natural Resources building which is under construction and a distant-learning Myskoke language certificate program.

"Those are some of our major projects right now, and my goal is to continue to carry those out," Dr. Randall said. "We should be in our Natural Resources building in the next month, and our distant-learning Mvskoke language program

by the fall at least but that is up to the higher-learning

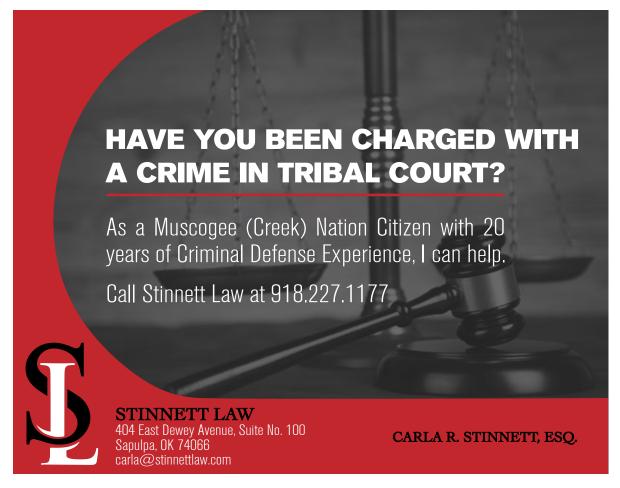
commission."

Other goals he has for the college is to increase student enrollment, increase classes and expanding the bachelor degree programs. Dr. Randall said the expansion of the bachelor degree programs was a goal of the late President Dr. Bible, and he plans to continue to work towards that goal.

Dr. Randall said Dr. Bible's influences are still seen at the college, and that is reassuring to him. As far as Dr. Bible, Dr. Randall feels like he doesn't have to keep that alive knowing the legacy of the late Dr. Bible is still present.

Dr. Randall wanted to thank the Board of Regents and selection committee for offering him this opportunity.

"I want to thank everyone for their support, Chief Hill and National Council for all of their support for the college," Dr. Randall added. "I also wanted to send out my heart felt condolescences to the Bible family, to let them know President Bible will not be forgotten here."







MUSCOGEE

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MCN HIRES TAX ATTORNEY THROUGH AG OFFICE

BIG FIRE LAW FIRM RETAINED BY MCN TO CONSULT ON TRIBAL JURISDICTIONAL MATTERS AFTER SCOTUS RULING

Morgan Taylor
REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma—A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Emergency Session was held March 23 by teleconference.

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

TR 21-044 Resolution of the MCN authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a legal services contract with Attorney Michael Parks on behalf of the MCN. Sponsor: Representative William Lowe

The MCN is seeking to secure advice and consultation and legal services pertaining to the McGirt decision as there may be tax issues facing individual MCN citizens that may require legal assistance. Attorney Michael Parks possesses experience in litigation and with the MCN. Adopted. 15-0-0.

TR 21-045 Resolution of the MCN approving an engagement letter between the Nation and Big Fire Law and Policy Group, LLP for



Emergency session called to pass legislation to hire attorneys.

(MN File Photo)

legal services on behalf of the MCN. Sponsor: Representative Adam Jones III

The Nation desires to hire Big Fire Law and Policy Group, LLP for legal services for the MCN, Muscogee Reservation Protection Commission and provide a monthly report to the National Council related to matter concerning the McGirt decision in regard to the tribal government, corporate and business matter, taxation, regulation, jurisdictional matter and advice on litigation matters.

Adopted. 15-0-0.

NCA 21-029 Law of the MCN appropriating funds (\$200,00.00) for attorney services for the MCN. Sponsor: Adam Jones III

Requested funds will be for the use of advice and legal counsel in regard to the McGirt decision and matters identified by the Muscogee Reservation Protection Commission. Adopted. 15-0-0.

Full legislation and agendas can viewed at http://www.mcnnc.com/images/pdf2021/bills/NCA21-029.pdf.

COUNCIL COVERAGE LNC LAND, NATURAL RESOURCES & CULTURAL PRESERVATION

A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Health, Education and Welfare Committee meeting was held March 23 at the Mound Building in Okmulgee, Oklahoma. (MNN File Photo)

HEW COMMITTEE APPROVES GRANT FUNDING

COVID-19 AND ASSISTANCE IN INCOME TAX RETURNS FUNDING BOTH APPROVED THROUGH COMMITTEE

Lani Hansen

SENIOR REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma — A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Health, Education and Welfare Committee meeting was held March 23.

All passed legislation will go before the full Council during the regular session March 27.

HEW addressed the following legislation, the interpretation of which is attributed to language in the bills:

NCA 21-025 Authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the Internal Revenue Service for the benefit of the Office of the Secretary of the Nation and Commerce. Sponsored by Rep. Anna Marshall.

The Tax Counseling for the Elderly Grant will be used for

the Office of the Secretary of the Nation and Commerce to provide assistance in preparing income tax returns for individuals who are age 60 or older. Passed 4-0.

NCA 21-026 Authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for the benefit of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Office of Child Care. Sponsored by Rep. Anna Marshall.

The Coronavirus Repsonse and Relief Supplemental Funds for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Office of Child Care will be used to help prevent the spread of the infection and prepare and respond to the ongoing effects caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Passed

For audio of committee meetings visit: www.mcnnc. com

MVSKOKE CITIZEN TURNS 100 FAMILY MATRIARCH BECOMES CENTENARIAN

Angel EllisDIRECTOR

CALIFORNIA— Like others in her family Ruth Presley Keys is enjoying her longevity and heritage. She turned 100 years young, and is not the first centenarian in the family. She is the last of seven siblings, two of which lived to be 99 and 100 years old.

She along with family and friends celebrated her birthday and centenarian status on April 1. April fools jokes aside, Keys who was born in Oktaha, Oklahoma in 1921 is happy and grateful to have lived this long according to her daughter J. Keys.

Keys grew up in Tulsa, Oklahoma then moved to California in her 20's where she is currently living.

Initially, she worked as a welder on a naval ship, along-side her sister. Later on, she worked at USC Medical Center in Los Angeles until retirement in 1986.

Her daughter said, "In those days, she left home for work in the dark early mornings and was a diligent employee."

She was talented in crafts and sewing. In her retirement years, she continued making amazing meals for family and friends, who often encouraged her to open a restaurant, but she preferred cooking for the joy of it. "Fan" favorites include her gumbo, apple pies and chocolate cakes.

Keys has four children, seven grandchildren, a host of great grandchildren and great-great grandchildren to whom she enjoys passing on her wisdom, humor and advice.



Emergency session called to pass legislation to hire attorneys.
(MN

(MN File Photo)

Keys enjoys talking on the phone, having family visits, coloring, and watching television, especially Westerns.

Her daughter said, "She doesn't mind when you ask if she was around when we had the horse and buggy."

She is also proud of her roots as a Muscogee (Creek) citizen and often talks about how she misses Oklahoma.

To celebrate her birthday, she will be showered with as much love as can be mustered from a distance.

'There were blown masked kisses waving signs about

how wonderful she is and her favorite foods on the table,' her daughter said. 'Anything she wanted the sky's the limit.'

Ruth is still in her own home in the company of her family who enjoy her conversation, and she is still the boss of everyone.

Her family wishes her a "Happy 100th and many more."

Keys is also the very proud great-aunt of the Presley children, Brandee, Brennan, and Braylin featured recently in the Myskoke News for their achievements in sports.



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OBITUARIES





Lucas Wayne Columbus March 15, 2021

Lucas Wayne Columbus, 44, of Kiefer, Oklahoma went to be with the Lord on March 15, 2021. He is preceded in death by his parents Mike and Luanna Columbus of Kiefer, Oklahoma, grandparents Herbert and Martha Fox of Sapulpa, Oklahoma. He is survived by brothers Michael Columbus of Albuquerque, New Mexico, and Aaron Columbus of Kiefer Oklahoma; niece Sheriah Fox of Sapulpa, Oklahoma; nephew Josiah Columbus of Albuquerque, New Mexico, and numerous aunts and uncles and his

dog Hershey. Luke lived in Kiefer most of his life where he attended high school and graduated. He was an outstanding athlete for Kiefer High earning honors in baseball and football. He was the starting quarterback and pitcher where he made first team honors in each sport. Luke then went to play baseball for Carl Albert Junior College where he was also a

starting pitcher. After his college days ended, he started to play softball, where he also excelled! He loved to play in tournaments every weekend whether it be slow or fast pitch

In his younger days he was something special as he excelled in baseball usually playing in higher age groups. He played in the Dizzy Dean World Series when he was young as he had a blazing fastball as a pitcher and was outstanding at shortstop. Luke was a competitor as he would love to play the best as he was the best too. Luke loved playing ball with his brothers, uncles, cousins, and friends as he enjoyed that time of his life! Luke was an avid Sooner and Yankee's fan he liked to watch Sooner games every weekend with family and friends. He let it be known that the Yankees were always the best team. Luke lived his life to the fullest, always made people laugh whether you understood him or not. Thank you for giving us 44 years of a joyous life with many great memories. Godspeed Lucas Wayne.

There will be a visitation from 6:00pm-8:00pm, Friday, March 19, 2021 at Traditions Funeral Chapel in Kellyville. Services will be noon, Saturday, March 20, 2021 also at Traditions Funeral Chapel. Bearers will be Chris and Robbie Leaf, Brent Johnson, Phillip Stanford, Mike Chisholm, Shawn Harvey, Jason Soweka and Micah Fox Jr. Honorary bearers will be Eric Williamson and Dylan Fox. Arrangements are under the direction of Traditions Funeral and Cremation Services, 35 S. Main, Kellyville, Oklahoma, 918-247-7373.



Profiles will be edited for Associated Press style, structure, grammar, spelling, length and punctuation.

2021 Graduate Profile Form

High Resolution Digital Image

Name

High School/College/Technical Institute/Military Program BIO (150-word limit)

DEADLINE: MAY 14, 2021 AT 5PM LATE PROFILES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

E-mail all information to info@mvskokemedia.com

For more information please call 918-732-7720. An e-mail stating your submission has been received will be sent to you, however if you do not get a response, please call to verify that your information was received.



April Events and Trainings



April is Child Abuse Prevention Month, a time for communities to come together to build caring connections, supportive environments, and positive experiences for all children. We know child maltreatment is a preventable problem. All adults play a role in building the safe, stable, nurturing homes and environments needed for the healthy development of our future generation of parents, leaders, and community member.

> If you suspect child abuse contact the OKDHS Hotline number at 1-800-522-3511 and Indian Child Welfare at 918-732-7869 for Tribal members.

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month, an opportunity to raise community awareness about sexual violence and resources available to survivors. Sexual assault, at its core, is a devastating abuse of power. It is the responsibility of each of us to stand up and speak out against it. Together, we must work toward a society that upholds every person's right to live free from sexual violence — where our institutions and communities commit to preventing sexual assault and sexual harassment, supporting survivors, and holding offenders accountable.

> If you or someone you know needs assistance or supportive services due to sexual assault or domestic violence, Family Violence Prevention Program Advocates are here to help and are available 24/7. Call us any time at 918-732-7979.

The pandemic has exacerbated the already harrowing challenges facing children of abuse and sexual assault survivors by making it more difficult or risky for them to seek help. Victims and survivors are often isolated from loved ones, friends, teachers or co-workers who might be in the best position to provide support. It is the responsibility of each of us to learn to how to help, stand up, and speak out to make the change.

If you would like to learn more how you can help, please contact Family Violence and Prevention at 918-732-7979.

April's Education and Event Calendar

April 29th

Sexual Assault Awareness Parade at the Omni Plex 1:00 – 3:00

Learn how to raise awareness, provide support, increase community involvement, and help those in crisis.

April 7th

Webinar Wednesday (free Zoom training to all citizens, teachers, and professionals) "Impact of trauma on children with developmental and intellectual disabilities"

Time 12pm-1:30pm. To register, visit http://bit.ly/mcnwebwed.

April 21st

Webinar Wednesday (free Zoom training to all citizens, teachers, and professionals)

"Autism: Characteristics and Strategies" Time 12pm-1:30pm. To register, visit http://bit.ly/mcnwebwed.

April 30th

Suicide Prevention Training (free Zoom training to all citizens, teachers, and professionals) Time 12-1pm. To register, email Tyler Stone at tyler.stone@creekhealth.org

If you or someone you know is a victim of abuse or assault and is experiencing anxiety, worry, fear, stress or depression and need to talk to someone, please contact Muscogee (Creek) Nation Behavioral Health at 918-758-1910.

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

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 Myskoke Media documenting all expenditures of the CARES Act funds.

Total received/earned \$\$312,678,391.90

Total expenditures and encumbrances for FY20 and FY21 as of this report date equals, \$294,492,656.60

ACCOUNT NUMBER	PROGRAM NAME/ ACCOUNT NAME	AMOUNT BUDGETED	EXPENDED	ENCUMBERED	CASH BALANCE
50000 50020 50100 51000 51100 53000 56010	PRINCIPAL CHIEF Salary & Wages-FT Salary & Wages-O/T over 1.5 Salary & Wages-PT/Other Fringe-FT Fringe-PT/Other Supplies	5,667.00 19,900.00 37,500.00 25,488.00 4,556.75 2,500.00 50,000.00	86,000.00 10,449.00 10,000.00	-	5,667.00 19,900.00 -48,500.00 25,488.00 -5,892.25 2,500.00 40,000.00
54000 58010 59220	Donations/Contributions SECRETARY OF NATION Contractual Construction Grants	9,245,034.70 1,400.00 305,310.85	7,394,884.91 1,400.00 180,114.32	1,848,721.23	1,428.56 125,196.53
53000 59050 59440	TOURISM & RECREATION Supplies Food Purchases Incidentals	1,537.38 681,025.44 4,048.79	1,537.38 670,043.79 4048.79	10,981.65	- - -
53000 55210 59220	CONTRACTING EMPLOYMENT Supplies Communications - Other Grants	1,700.00 3,000.00 6,825,910.80	1,691.75 80.40 4,806,349.19	- - -	8.25 2,919.60 2,019,561.61
53000 53010 54000 55210 55300 85500	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY Supplies Software/Licenses Contractual Communications- Other Bldg Maint/Repairs Equipment	816,070.56 1,047,630.11 463,594.25 42,033.74 124,818.95 3,535,033.18	407,156.99 778,002.60 54,626.40 39,975.89 43,611.70 1,730,909.90	231,274.99 205,187.24 98,269.85 29,579.65 1,765,898.99	177,638.58 64,440.27 310,698.00 2,057.85 51,627.60 38,224.29
50000 50010 50100 21000 51100 53000 53290 55300 85400 85500	FLEET MANAGEMENT Salary & Wages - FT Salary & Wages - Overtime Salary & Wages - PT/Other Fringe - FT Fringe - PT/Other Supplies Postage/Shipping Bldg Maint/Repairs Vehicles Equipment SOCIAL SERVICES	20,000.00 15,876.00 -3,374.80 20,199.00 -394.66 3,212,728.45 50,000.00 315.00 151,476.00 108,000.00	980.89 11,744.20 552.24 1,426.92 1,450,837.74 31,621.52 146,021.00 85,016.00	28,853.70	19,019.11 15,876.00 -15,119.00 19,646.76 -1,821.58 1,733,037.01 18,378.48 315.00 5,455.00 22,984.00
50000 50020 51000 53000 53010 54000 57000 59071	Salary & Wages - FT Salary & Wages - O/T Over 1.5 Fringe - FT Supplies Contractual Indirect Costs Direct Assist - Income Support Direct Assist - Hardship SENIOR SERVICES	48,519.09 0.67 38,960.72 5,522.08 420,955.91 - 55,883,581.41 36,132,825.50	86,883.73 13,977.17 56,784.69 5,466.79 407,128.64 14,211.30 56,161,500.00 35,816,400.00	36.00 9,294.24	-38,364.64 -13,976.50 -17,823.97 19.29 4,533.03 -14,211.30 -277,918.59 316,425.50
53000	SUPPLIES Supplies FOOD DISTRIBUTION	200,000.00	185,364.01	0	14,635.99
53000 59050 85050 85170 85400 85500	Supplies Food Purchases Renovations Construction Vehicles Equipment	75,214.69 146,239.79 130,000.00 313,656.48 63,417.60 525,000.00	75,214.69 146,239.79 5,870.00 66,527.04 31,708.80 262,500.00	119,932.80 67,506.00 31,708.80 262,500.00	- 4,197.20 179,623.44 -
85170	ELDERLY NUTRITION Construction SECRETARY OF EDUCATION	540,000.00	95,568.50	394,888.50	49,543.00
50000 50020 51000 53000 56030 57000 59073	Salary& Wages- FT Salary& Wages - O/T over 1.5 Fringe - FT Supplies Stipends/Honorariums Indirect Costs Direct Assistance - Ed Support	2,980.44 37,688.31 16,043.42 859,513.00 25,000.00	2,906.39 71,715.24 42,011.98 539,918.88 8,000.00 10,514.19 2,180,488.27	2,157.84 - - -	74.05 -34,026.93 -25,968.56 317,436.28 17,000.00 -10,514.19 8,755.02
53000 85010 85170 85500	MCN MEAT PROCESSING PLANT Supplies Architect & Engineering Construction Equipment	100,000.00 1,165,012.00 14,800,000.00 1,234,988.00	748,454.08 1,576,137.91 1,070,272.18	111,128.92 9,942,515.09 118,919.13	100,000.00 305,429.00 3,281,347.00 45,796.69
54000	REAL ESTATE SERVICES Contractual CULTURAL PRESERVATION	9,808.00	9,519.94	2,854.06	-2,566.00
53000 59220	Supplies Grants TRIBAL CONSTRUCTION	2,000.00 2,725,000.00	2,189,998.95	-	2,000.00 535,001.05
50100 51100 53000 85010 85170 85500	Salary & Wages - PT/Other Fringe - PT/Other Supplies Architect & Engineering Construction Equipment	83,206.80 10,438.07 38,975.00 145,244.88 14,289,758.71 195,110.00	19,234.80 2,337.03 32,490.00 103,798.83 10,292,235.22 127,985.00	4,270.00 0.00 2,796,875.90 2,125.00	63,972.00 8,101.04 2,215.00 41,446.05 1,200,647.59 65,000.00
58010	SECRETARY OF INTERIOR AFFAIRS Construction	313,297.00	297,631.64	3,460.36	12,205.00
53000 54000	OFFICE OF JUSTICE Supplies Contractual	26,800.00 26,738.00	26,799.29 24,738.00	-	0.71 2,000.00
54000 55300 85500	OFFICE OF TAX COMMISSION Contractual Bldg Maint/Repairs Equipment	36,300.00 340.80 1.03	19,000.00 -1,159.20	1159.20	17,300.00 340.80 1.03
53000 54000	CITIZENSHIP BOARD Supplies Contractual LIGHTHORSE ADMINISTRATION	177,704.50 231,500.00	124,730.80 10,000.00	32,560.00	20,413.70 221,500.00
85500	Equipment NATIONAL COUNCIL	60,000.00	56,790.00	-	3,210.00
53000 53000 53310 85500	Supplies DISTRICT COURT Supplies Equipment Maint/Repair Equipment	625.00 918.23 10,512.00 176,011.68	10,512.00 159,761.68	- - 16,250.00	1.66 918.23 -
50100 51100	SUPREME COURT Salary & Wares - PT/Other Fringe - PT/Other	4,500.00 547.00	-		4,500.00 547.00
90110	SECRETARY OF HEALTH Transfer Out TOTAL	- 160,338,284.59	11,279,552.97 142,417,428.08	18,138,909.14	-11,279,552.97 -218,052.63