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MVSKOKE NEWS

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WILL THE REAL APALACHICOLA PLEASE STAND UP?

HERITAGE GROUPS, ACADEMICS, AND CULTURAL IDENTITY THEFT

by **TURNER W. HUNT**

TRIBAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER/ HISTORIC AND CULTURAL PRESERVATION DEPARTMENT

The Historic and Cultural Preservation Department (HCPD) works to preserve cultural properties in our ancestral homelands and on the reservation. We work within the regulatory framework of compliance with federal historic preservation laws. We have positions explicitly devoted to tasks such as Tribal Historic Preservation Officer and Tribal Archaeologist. Each job position has the same support staff specializing in GIS, compliance review, archives, and oral histories. The work we do, primarily, should be understood as a way to protect our national cultural sites, the repatriation of ancestors held in institutions, and the prevention of impacts on ancestral Muscogee burials.

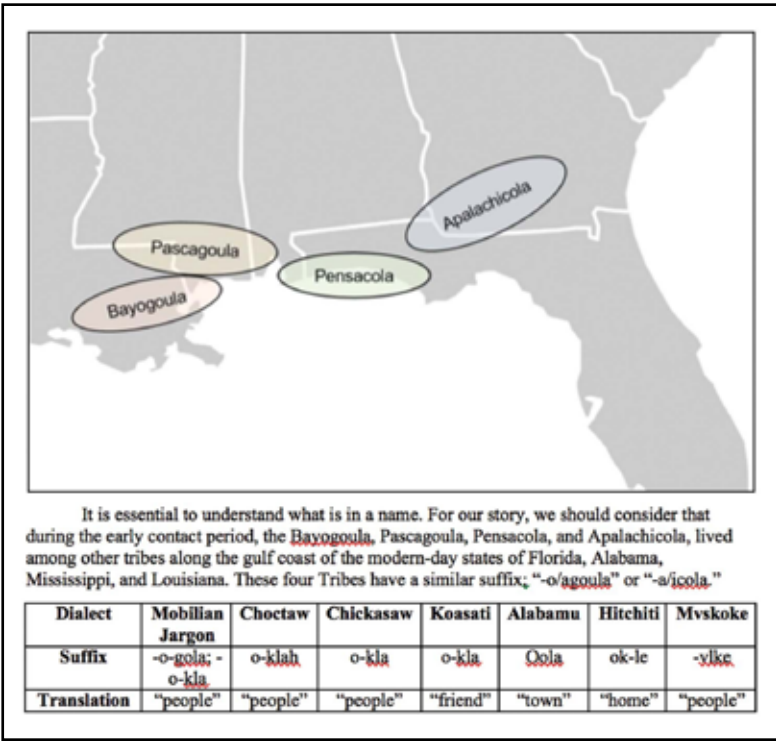
HCPD is often presented with new and exciting opportunities to consult and collaborate with willing partners in the Southeast. However, sometimes we are contacted regarding matters that renew historical trauma for those of us in this line of work. One such event is the subject of this article.

A professor contacted HCPD, who wished to publish her dissertation as a book. She requested that our office provide a statement from the Muscogee (Creek) Nation as to our feelings about her research on a group that claims to be Muscogee or Creek heritage in Florida. It is essential to acknowledge that publishing a manuscript is akin to the proverbial opening of Pandora's Box; once opened – it can never be shut. Once this manuscript is printed, generations from now, someone may read this book with no understanding and may mistake who the Muscogee people are. Our office has had to field ques-

tions from other academics generated by this professor's work. Articles that have been published have undermined our work and promoted our continued cultural erasure from our ancestral lands.

While the request is necessary, the burden inevitably falls on our department to examine this group's claim of Muskogean ancestry. The legwork on our end would not be equal to how it would be applied for the publication and only amount to an introductory statement that readers may simply bypass. However, we have chosen to provide a history of the Apalachicola from the Muscogee (Creek) Nations' perspective and let you, the reader, determine who the real Apalachicola are.

Mobilian Jargon is a popular lingua franca, or trade language, of the Southeast. While concentrated along the Gulf Coast and Mississippi River Valley, Mobilian was understood from the Georgia Atlantic coast to the west beyond the Mississippi River. Some of the early trade deals between the Muscogee people and the English at Charles Town (Charleston, SC) were conducted with Mobilian Jargon. The trade language borrowed heavily from Choctaw and Chickasaw, but



(Submission)

Koasati, Alabamu, and Hitchiti are closely related dialects that also contributed to the trade language. The table above provides different Muskogean dialects – similarities are not hard to find as, again, these are closely related dialects.

Pascagoula is a known Choctaw-affiliated Tribe whose name can be broken down in Choctaw

to Pvska-Okla or “Bread People.” The Choctaw and Mobilian word for boat, skiff, or canoe is pini/peni. While it is open to interpretation, folks living on the Gulf Coast would have used all sorts of boats, ergo Pens-o-goula, or “boat people.” However, as one looks farther east, Apalachicola appears – a Tribe linked to the Muscogee

SUBMISSION - 3

MNYS EMPLOYEE RECEIVES DREAM STARTER GRANT

RUNNING STRONG HAS PROVIDED TEN \$10,000 GRANTS YEARLY TO A YOUNG DREAMSTARTER AND THEIR ORGANIZATION

by **MORGAN TAYLOR**

MULTIMEDIA PRODUCER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma – Running Strong for American Indian Youth Dreamstarter grant chose Mvskoke Nation Youth Council Advisor Jasmyne Jack as one of the ten recipients for this year's theme of Social Action.

Olympic gold medalist and Oglala Lakota citizen Billy Mills co-founded the Running Strong for American Indian Youth. The Dreamstarter grant was developed as a part of the foundation to help American Indian youth in their dream for their community.

Each selected “Dreamstarter” receives a grant of \$10,000 to help fund their project, which is chosen based on the year's theme of the grant.

Jack's Street Outreach Program provides hygiene kits and period packs to homeless and struggling Native American youth ages 12-24 that got the foundation's attention.

According to Jack, she had come up with the idea for period packs to implement the MNYS “Snag Bags” program. The snag bags provide sexual health resources that can be picked up anonymously.

“People can't control that they have periods,” Jack said. “I just told Nancy I would really like it if we could offer this.”

After pitching the idea to her manager Nancy Mason, the two worked together on budgeting to make it happen before the grant.

Shortly after the period packs were available, the youth services started noticing a need for general hygiene products on the Reserva-



Jasmyne Jack started the Street Outreach program that provides hygiene kits and period packs. (Morgan Taylor/Multimedia Producer)

tion, patricianly in the Okmulgee area.

Jack claims since the program is new, the response hasn't been too heavy yet, but the grant will help fund outreach.

She said she knows firsthand how it is to live in poverty as a young girl with limited access to these products, not to mention the access to money to afford them.

It hit her when Jack got a call from her nieces needing period products because their mom could not afford them then.

“It just kind of brought me back to my own experiences growing up in poverty,” Jack said. “I couldn't always afford it, so I did have to miss school sometimes.”

Jack said her niece had to miss a

DREAM STARTER - 2

MUSCOGEE MODELS MAKE FASHION HISTORY IN NYC

DEERINWATER TWINS APPEARED IN TIMES SQUARE BILLBOARD

by **BRADEN HARPER**

REPORTER

NEW YORK CITY, New York – Times Square is one of New York City's most popular destinations for tourists to visit from around the globe. Also known as “The Crossroads of the World,” it stands as one of the most significant commercial intersections in the country. It's known for its fine dining, world-class theater, and array of large digital billboards. On July 18, the Deerinwater Sisters were featured in an advertisement campaign that debuted on a billboard in that world-famous junction.

“It just means more to both of us that we're able to actually be a part of this and represent Native Americans, and our tribe,” Autumn Deerinwater said. “To have both of us inspire other people



The Festival Stompdance is a social demonstration of the traditional and sacred ceremony. (Morgan Taylor/Multimedia Producer)

that they can do this”

Originally from Sapulpa, the twin sisters are models with a passion for fashion. “It's really emotional. I saw myself doing big

things growing up. This is something that is really huge,” Autumn Deerinwater said.

NYC - 2

SCHOOL CLOTHING PROGRAM ON CAMPHOUSE PORTAL

THE APPLICATION FOR THE SCHOOL CLOTHING PROGRAM IS ACCESSIBLE ON THE CAMPHOUSE PORTAL

by **MORGAN TAYLOR**

MULTIMEDIA PRODUCER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma – The Muscogee (Creek) Nation School Clothing Program application is now available on the Camphouse Portal that was created during the distribution of the ARPA funds. The School Clothing Program is an annual \$200 for any enrolled Muscogee citizen attending school from Pre-k to 12th grade. Only one application per household is permitted.

The program application is open from Jan. to Dec. and can be submitted anytime after a year has passed between the last approved application. Receipts must be submitted within 90 days of the fund's issue to be eligible for the following

year. Citizens should be aware that the program does not reimburse for past purchases.

The program will be digitized, including uploading receipts back to the portal, which can be done immediately after purchase by snapping a picture by phone. This also reduces the possible loss of receipts.

All guidelines remain the same for the program for those who applied in previous years. The list of approved items can be viewed at <https://www.muscogeenation.com/services/school-clothing/>.

Citizens that received funding from ARPA through Direct Assistance should have already created a login and profile on the Camphouse



Citizens can create a profile on the camphouse portal and store information. (MM File)

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DREAM STARTER

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whole week of school due to the lack of access to affordable products.

“It kind of was the ongoing thing with a bunch of other young people having to miss work or school because of that,” Jack said.

Depending on store location, a box of 18 tampons (Tampax Pearl) at the local Walmart and Walgreens is anywhere from five to ten dollars.

With 18 single tampons, being advised to change every four to six hours could mean using four to six tampons in just 24 hours. That would consume one-third of your product purchase in just one day.

The period packs include an estimated week’s worth of tampons, pads, liners, cleansing wipes, menstrual education on products, hemoglobin (blood) education, Toxic Shock Syndrome, and when to seek medical attention.

The hygiene packs include three to four weeks’ worth of toiletries like travel shampoo, wash, toothbrush, toothpaste, brush, and other small items.

According to Jack, the period packs and hygiene packs are anonymous mail or pick up and can be applied online at <https://www.mvskokeyouth.com/>.

For more information about the Mvskoke Nation Youth Services or guidance on services available, call 918-549-2557.

PROGRAM

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Portal. Once documents are uploaded to the portal, they are stored for later use for any application that is or will be on the Camphouse. Eventually, the Camphouse Portal will be the centralized location to apply for most services the Nation offers.

Jacob Stepp, the Salesforce Administrator, said the goal is one place for citizens to apply for services.

“We are creating a platform that allows all our citizens to have a one-stop shop to come in and get everything that they need from social services, everything that they can get from the Nation, everything that we provide for them,” Stepp said.

The choice to launch the school

clothing program was made by the Cabinet members based on the use, need, and simplicity of the application, according to Stepp.

Stepp claims the only person-to-person contact applicants may have is getting the signature of a school official on required documents. This document can then be uploaded on the portal as well.

There are multiple benefits to digitizing programs, including reducing the workload and complexity for employees and speeding up the process for citizens resulting in a quicker turnaround.

“Your application can go in, and you might have the money much faster than normal,” Stepp said.

Stepp and the IT Department are working with the Cabinet and other departments within the Na-

tion to prioritize outward-facing programs to implement on the Camphouse Portal.

The portal contains a full-blown knowledge base of written help articles where citizens can ask questions, read about programs, and get step-by-step guidance on navigating the portal that Stepp and his team write each time a new program launches.

“We already have more applications in the pipeline as well,” Stepp said. “We will keep improving and making this as easy and streamlined as possible.”

The School Clothing Program employees will still be in the office for those who may run into problems or need further assistance, they can be reached at 918-549-2880.

NYC

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The original designs modeled in the billboard campaign were designed by Sheila Tucker (Anishinaabe Ojibwe) from the YellowQuill First Nation Reservation in Saskatchewan, Canada. Tucker launched her original fashion brand in 2019.

Known for her beadwork and garments, Tucker’s work is inspired by traditional Ojibwe

Floral Designs.

The Deerinwater Sisters connected to Tucker through their father, a collector of her work. Autumn began modeling for Tucker in October 2021.

When Autumn Deerinwater heard Tucker’s work would be featured on a Times Square Billboard, she did not think much of it. That is until she learned Tucker wanted her to be featured on it.

“I was like, absolutely 110 percent yes, we have to do this,” Au-

tumn Deerinwater said. “And then I was just sitting there thinking, ‘it would be kind of cool having my sister there with me.’”

The photo shoot for the campaign took place in the Salt River, located in Phoenix, Arizona.

“It was a lot of fun, it was so beautiful, the location was everything, it couldn’t have been more perfect,” Autumn Deerinwater said.

In the shoot, the sisters are seen standing in the river, modeling bright orange dresses with earrings.

They can also be seen wearing Tucker’s signature beaded fedora hats.

The rest is history. The sisters had the opportunity to travel to New York City the week the billboard campaign debuted in Times Square. The junction’s foot traffic can see as many as 360,000 pedestrians on average during a typical business day.

The Deerinwater Sisters understand the magnitude of being Native American Models featured on a commercial platform of this scale.

This campaign has only motivated them further to pursue modeling.

“I want to do more, and put Native Americans out in the media even more,” Autumn Deerinwater said.

Thanks to trailblazers like Autumn and Raini, the future of Indigenous modeling is bright as they help usher Indigenous culture into mainstream society.

To learn more about Sheila Tucker’s work, visit: Native American Designer | Sheila Tucker.



The Tulledega Hills Gospel Music Theatre is located at 3000 W Main St Henryetta, OK. (Morgan Taylor/Multimedia Producer)

OLD CHURCH BECOMES GOSPEL THEATRE

REPRESENTATIVE NELSON HARJO SR. IS THE DRUMMER FOR MENDED BY GRACE

by MORGAN TAYLOR
MULTIMEDIA PRODUCER

HENRYETTA, Oklahoma – On the west side of Henryetta and one block up from the Interstate 40 exit lies a small brick building on the corner where a Y starts forming in the road.

This little building with doors facing the north is called the Tulledega Hills Gospel Music Theatre, formerly known as the Tulledega Hills Baptist Church, which has since changed locations.

Muscogee citizen and Indie Gospel artist Winnie Cooper owns the theatre gifted to her by her parents, Teresa and David Cooper.

Cooper leads the music ministry and is also the lead singer of the main performing band, Mended by Grace. Other notable band members are MCN Council Representative Nelson Harjo Sr., the drummer. Each band member is of Native American descent, a source of pride for the band.

Currently, the band is looking for

a talented instrumentalist, specifically a committed bass guitar player.

Cooper claims she would like to add other instruments to the band and is open to all calls and tryouts.

Every Saturday night, the Theatre hosts concerts at 7 pm for free for community members and guests. Shows include gospel praise music for the most part. You may occasionally catch Cooper singing an original written piece of hers that may be just outside of the gospel realm.

Other bands come to play. While it is free to attend, the performers do accept love offerings.

Local groups like the All Native southern gospel quartet ReDefined, Garland Blocker and Blue Tradition, Higher Ground, Amundson Family Music, Wesley Vanmeter, Mark Huitt, Leon Purley, and several more have performed.

In addition to the ministry, the Theatre is also developing a food ministry program. They obtained a truck with fundraising and donations to haul cold food items like meat and produce. Vittle’s Food Pro-

gram will be an emergency food service for those in need.

There is music and food, and the Theatre hosts AA/NA meetings called Rez Recovery led by Muscogee citizen Casey Thomas each Saturday from 4:30-5:30 (subject to change).

The last Saturday of each month is dedicated to the youth. Winnie and her husband, Tyler Hampton, help lead the evening by hosting a special guest speaker to share stories with the youth audience.

The first Youth Night featured Ava Rose, an Osage and Cherokee citizen. She is a freshman from Eu- faula, OK. Her song “There’s a Boy” has climbed to number two on the Indigenous Music Countdown charts on Sirius XM. Rose has been nominated for three Native American Music Awards, including Best Female Vocalist, Best Country Recording and Best Pop Video.

Although the Theatre was once a church, it does not host church services. Winnie defines the gathering place as a place for praise and fellowship where anyone is welcome.

Conventional but not traditional, the Coopers may have found a modernized form of doing God’s work, but they say it was a calling.

The Cooper family was facing foreclosure on their home in the small community of Wilson before they sold it and bought the old church building on the other side of the edge of town.

“We were going to move by the lake,” Teresa said, giving her daughter a wink.

Parents said they are “grooming” the young married couple (Winnie and Tyler) to take over the ministry of the Theatre and let God work through them when ready to do so.

For more information, visit the website <https://www.tulledegahills-musictheater.com>.

Tulledega Hills Gospel Theater is a 509 (a)(2) non-profit. You could use that donation for a tax deduction if you would like to donate.



Joe Hopkins and Muscogee Community Members pose with their completed collage project. (Submission)

MUSCOGEE ARTIST LEADS COMMUNITY ART PROJECT

EVENT HOSTED BY MCN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

by BRADEN HARPER
REPORTER

TVLSE, Oklahoma – The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Youth Wellness Program partnered with the Cultural Center & Archives to host a Community Art Project event at the Tulsa Creek Community Center July 16. The event featured Muscogee Artist Joe Hopkins and allowed MCN Community Members of all ages to paint a collage.

According to MCN Youth Wellness Program Project Coordinator Tricia Fields, community engagements are one of the most important aspects of promoting mental health for her department. “Our number one goal is to provide counseling services to people of all ages,” Fields said.

The event gave out door prizes and served Indian tacos for lunch. It also featured informational booths on various behavioral health programs such as White Bison. “It’s like A.A. (Alcoholics Anonymous) with Native teachings,” Fields said. “People can meet people who look just like them

that are young like them too.”

The event saw a crowd of at least 70 people. Some people came as far as Oklahoma City. While the event was open to all ages, it focused on providing family-oriented activities for children. “My part with behavioral health is to provide wellness to children,” Fields said.

Fields’ heart is easily found in her work, such as the community art project. “I hope that I get to work in behavioral health the rest of my life because it’s really changed me, and it’s helped my children as well,” Fields said.

Hopkins was a natural choice to be featured at the event. He’s known for his colorful contemporary pop art and has appeared at the Muscogee Art Market and Festival.

Hopkins led the collage project where everyone was assigned a tile to paint with instructions. It revealed a picture depicting the main cast of “Reservation Dogs” upon completion. Fields said they plan to exhibit the collage at Reservation Dogs Season Two Premiere at RiverSpirit Casino.

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SUBMISSION

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(Creek) Nation long before contact and throughout the colonial period, removal, and reservation era. Known as Palachucola in the Kvsehtv migration story, they were Hitchiti-speaking people who were living along the Chattahoochee River. From their perspective, they are responsible for changing Kvsehtv into a White Town by sharing their medicine and making peace.

In the Hitchiti dialect, Palachucola would be a contracted form of apalui- chuku –okola. Apalui translates to “on the other side,” chuku is similar to Mvskoke, meaning a dwelling or house, and –okola or “people.” It quite literally means, “people who dwell on the other side [of the river].” While this applies to Kvsehtv’s migration story to the Chattahoochee, it also applies to their location situated on the Choctawhatchee River, the quasi-border between Pensacola, Chatot, and Palachucola prior to the establishment of the Spanish mission system in the 17th and 18th centuries.

To add historical context, Palachucola are specifically mentioned in the 1733 Treaty of Savannah, signatories of the 1739 Treaty of Coweta, the 1785 land grant to Panton, Leslie & Company, and the 1814 Treaty of Fort Jackson. Now, Palachucola is the Hitchiti version, but they are also known by the Mvskoke name, Tulwa Rakko, or “Big Town.”

After the consequences of the 1814 Treaty of Fort Jackson were realized, the Tribal Town essentially split; Tulwa Rakko remained with the Creek Nation while the smaller band left for Florida. The Apalachicola Band of Indians was formally created as a political unit in the 1823 Treaty of Camp Moultrie. The Apalachicola Band subsequently signed treaties with the United States in 1832 and 1833 – in both cases; the U.S. urged those to join their fellow citizens in the Creek Nation west of the Mississippi River.

In his book The Five Civilized Tribes, Grant Foreman noted that in 1840, Tokepahce Speaker Opothle Yahola sent a letter requesting assistance due to a Band of Apalachicola arriving in Creek Nation in the West.

So badly had the wholesale emigration of the Creeks and Seminoles been managed that a band of Apalachicola Indians were brought west and located upon the Creek domain. The Creek Chiefs reported their presence on their land and begged the government to furnish them with food, as they were, “In a deplorable situation; a good many of them are naked and have no means by which they can obtain subsistence” (Foreman 1934:175-176)

The letter would indicate that Mvskoke leaders recognized a separate political body known as a Band of Apalachicola Indians was sent to Creek Nation. While offering assistance, clothing, and food – Creek Nation delegates requested aid from the federal government.

Two decades later, the Band of Apalachicola Indians signed the 1861 Treaty with the Confederate States of America. To be clear, they are not listed as signatories on the Creek Treaty, but additional articles were added to the treaty that clearly separated them from the Creek Nation on 10 July 1861,

ARTICLE. The survivors now residing in the Creek Nation, of the Apalachicola Band of Indians, have earnestly represented to the commissioner of the Confederate States the facts following, that is to say:

That the Apalachicola Band of Indians, being by origin a part of the Creek Nation, long resided on the Apalachicola river, in what is now the State of Florida, and were parties to the treaty concluded at camp Moultrie with the Florida tribes of Indians, on the eighteenth day of September, A. D.,

one thousand eight hundred and twenty three.

The 1861 Confederate Treaty does two things pertinent to our story. First, it establishes that the political body known as the Band of Apalachicola Indians acknowledges its shared history and origin of the Creek Nation. Secondly, it is a document that shows the Band of Apalachicola Indians in Indian Territory in 1861 were the same political unit as the band that signed the 1823, 1832, and 1833 treaties. Essentially, by the time of the American Civil War, there was no longer a political body known as the Band of Apalachicola in the state of Florida. Of course, the treaty with the Confederate States of America voided any obligations by the U.S. to honor any treaties with the Band of Apalachicola Indians made prior to 1861.

In 1866, when Creek Nation signed the reconstruction Treaty, there was no distinct political distinction between Creek Nation and the Band of Apalachicola Indians. The group was absorbed, politically, into the Creek Nation as they once had been. The 1867 Creek Nation Constitution called for a government with representatives to both the House of Kings and House of Warriors based on their Tribal Towns. Those in the Band of Apalachicola Indians, no longer having representation on their own, returned to their mother town and original Tribal Town, Tvlwv Rakko.

The Creek Census of 1895 includes Tvlwv Rakko, with a total population of 164 members. After the Curtis Act allowed the U.S. government to allot Muscogee lands held in common, Tvlwv Rakko members were allotted lands the same as other Tribal Towns. Their past and had always maintained a shared history with Muscogee (Creek) Nation – their future is still explicable tied to the Muscogee (Creek) Nation here on the reservation in the modern-state of Oklahoma.

Heritage Groups

In the absence of Tribal Nations from their ancestral homelands across the United States due to the government’s removal policies, a unique situation arises. In an unexplainable turn of events, there are groups who believe, with absolutely no verification, that they, too, are Native Americans. When Indian Gaming came around in the early 80s, there was a strong push for these people to form “tribes” and seek federal recognition.

Petitions and decided cases for federal recognition are publically available on the Bureau of Indian Affairs website. One group that sought federal recognition was the Creeks East of the Mississippi, Florida – which through the course of their petition process became known as the Lower Muskogee Creek Tribe – East of the Mississippi, Inc (LMC). In the final determination letter from the BIA, they determined, correctly, that this group does not exist as an Indian tribe pursuant to 25 CFR 54.

LMC could not establish any historical proof that the group that could be identified as “Indian” or “Aboriginal” has existed from historical time to the present. There were issues with 76% of their membership – with 56% unable to prove any Native American ancestry whatsoever. The BIA even comments on the instability of their membership, “The submission of a list of members who were omitted which is 2-1/2 times larger than the membership roll submitted with the petition, only serves to further emphasize the instability of the group.” The letter concludes with attempting to provide alternatives for LMC to receive services, but:

No viable alternatives could be found due to the group’s uncertain Indian ancestry, the geographical dispersion of its membership, and the group’s lack of inherent social and political cohesion and continuity. This conclusion is based on indepen-

dent research conducted by the Acknowledgment staff and on the factual arguments and evidence presented in the LMC petition and in the two rebuttals which challenged proposed findings.

Meaning, that the BIA found no reason to recommend any further applications for services because they had determined the group has no claim to be a Native American Tribe.

Another group admits in their ongoing petition that after seeing the recognition of the Poarch Band in 1984, they wanted to pursue federal recognition as well. They were initially known as the Florida Tribe of Eastern Creek Indians before changing their name to the Muscogee Nation of Florida in 2001. In response, the Muscogee (Creek) Nation passed TR 16-019, “BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Muscogee (Creek) Nation objects to the federal recognition of the Indian heritage group known as the Muscogee Nation of Florida and urges the Bureau of Indian Affairs Branch of Acknowledgement and Research to reject the Muscogee Nation of Florida’s request for acknowledgment.”

As this group is not only seeking recognition as a Native American Tribe, but is seeking recognition as the Muscogee Nation of Florida – trying to appropriate our history, our name, and our culture.

There is no doubt that other groups who honestly believe their great grandmothers were “Full-blooded Indians” will continue to seek recognition because they see the economic gains that tribal gaming provides. One such method is seeking state recognition through their state legislature to substantiate their claims for federal recognition.

If there is any doubt, there is no right for any state to recognize any tribe. The method that these groups use is political and not based on any historic or cultural evidence. There are cases in the past of groups that have, since denial of federal recognition, turned to their states to seek recognition of future reconsideration by the BIA. In response, the Muscogee (Creek) Nation signed Intertribal Resolution, FY09-07, “NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes objects to the recognition of Indian heritage groups and cultural clubs by states as “state recognized tribes.”

It is not up for debate how important it is for Tribal Nations to defend their history, names, and culture from appropriation. The groups that have petitioned the federal government under the identity of Muscogee or Creek people are literally trying to steal Muscogee (Creek) Nation’s identity.

Academics

The most devious and the entire justification for this article is when these heritage groups attempt to appropriate Muscogee culture. Cultural appropriation is a severe offense to other ethnic groups yet, when folks claim and appropriate Muscogee culture – they are often celebrated as a sacred holdout of ancient traditions.

Academics must understand the history of their involvement. In the early 1900’s, the U.S. Bureau of Ethnology commissioned a series of ethnographies on Native American Tribes. One such ethnologist was John Swanton, who wrote a series of papers with names like Early History of the Creek Indians and Their Neighbors, Social Organization and Social Usages of the Indians of the Creek Confederacy, and Modern Square Grounds of Creek Indians. By our standards, a lot of what was written is entirely too invasive and shared too much information with the outside. By their standards, they believed our culture was dying, and it was their duty to record as much as they could. And they did.

These ethnographies are

the go-to source for historians, archaeologists, and anthropologists who do not have access to the living Muscogee culture. If they can find it recorded in a st-heke’s book; they see no need to reach out to the living culture. In academia, it is one of the foundational sources – which is why sometimes even we use it to point out academic discrepancies. However, these ethnographies also fell into the hands of folks who wanted state and federal recognition.

In 2016, Archaeology Magazine published People of the White Earth, In Florida’s Panhandle, tribal leaders and archaeologists reach into the past to help preserve a native community’s identity by Mike Toner. There was no contact by the author at the time to the HCPD or MCN. However, Dr. Kent Reilly, an invitee to the 2013 and 2014 Muskogean Symposiums had this to say, “Everything—from the layout of the square ground, to the order of the dances, to the plants they use to make their medicine, to the contents of the sacred bundle they unwrap at every ceremony—was straight out of Swanton.” Now, Dr. Reilly is coined as a “specialist in the prehistoric art and iconography of the Mississippian Chiefdoms” in the article. It is intriguing that Dr. Reilly’s publically available biography for Texas State University states, “In 2011 Dr. Reilly was chosen as the Field Anthropologists Consultant for the Muscogee Nation of Florida. The Tribe hopes Dr. Reilly will be able to offer fresh insight, research material and advice as they seek federal recognition.”

There are obvious concerns about a conflict of interest in this situation and the most dangerous part is that Dr. Reilly invites his students to “observe and participate in the Muscogee busks” and provide “a rare glimpse of a culture.” The idea that someone in academia works with a group like this is not unheard of, but encouraging students to look to these heritage groups instead of the actual cultural bearers is a perilous and unethical path.

The same year as the Archaeology Magazine article came out, UCLA granted a Ph.D., based on a dissertation titles, Dancing Breath: Ceremonial Performance Practice, Environment, and Personhood in a Muskogee Creek Community. The dissertation is publically available and provides photos and names that identifies the group that goes by Pvlvcekolv. It still shocks me that UCLA would grant a doctorate about a “Muscogee Creek Community” with the individual having never talked to a Muscogee (Creek) Community, HCPD, or MCN.

In 2018, members of our department were made aware of an upcoming dissertation defense where the ethnographic information was gathered from a group known as Pvlvcekolv. The research had already been approved through the University of Virginia’s IRB and the manuscript written. At no point throughout the research process was MCN ever contacted and when pressed, only requested the name be changed to remove the reference to Muscogee – as this group in Florida cannot be representative of Muskogean culture. The dissertation, Sweet-gum’s Amber: Animate Mound Landscapes and the Nonlinear Duree in the Native South, is now being modified to be published as a book.

What our department sees is a dangerous 100-year cycle where academics record information as ethnographies and publish their research for the public. The groups who claim to be Creek then appropriate the information and attempt to perform just as the ethnographer recorded. Then, academics are amazed at how similar these “ancient” customs are to what was recorded in the book instead of erring on the side of caution and applying any critical lens. These academics invite students out to participate in these performances. Then

we have an increase in Ph.D.’s and journal articles that attempt to substantiate these groups as legitimate Muscogee cultural practitioners.

It is disturbing that two universities would not critically evaluate the subjects of these research projects. It is entirely unethical to use an unverified group of people claiming to be Native American, as an ethnographic source for Muscogee culture when the Muscogee (Creek) Nation with active ceremonial grounds is still in existence. I have struggled to think of another analogy. It may be similar to an investigative journalist wanting to learn more about the Greenwood Community in Tulsa but only talking to a group in Alabama that claimed to be associated with Greenwood. It does not make sense. The academic incompetence borders on misconduct as the researcher clearly misrepresented the finding as Indigenous and Muskogean when there is nothing whatsoever to verify that they are even ancestrally Native American.

The fact that the dissertation is going to publication and distributed for another generation of academics only provides an additional reason for the researcher to avoid discussing their research with the HCPD or MCN. The harm that this book can cause is cultural and historical erasure. In the academic record, non-Muscogee people are replacing actual Muscogee voices and I cannot stress how unethical this is. Our office will continue to press that academia must do better.

Conclusion

The Apalachicola people are, by origin, part of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. Tvlwv Rakko and the band in Florida were victims of the United States removal policies and have been with the rest of Creeks since arrival in Indian Territory. The ethnic cleansing campaign conducted by the U.S. was very effective and removed the Muscogee culture from the Southeast. With no more Tribal Towns, there was no one left to train new mekkvke, heles-hayv, or tvstvnkvklke. Our ancestors brought Muscogee culture with us to this new land and each generation was the culture bearer for the next.

Heritage groups are a threat to sovereignty when they claim to be Muscogee and seek state and federal recognition. State-recognized groups have siphoned millions of dollars in government contracts meant for federally recognized tribes based on GAO report GOA-12-348. They are constantly working to substantiate themselves by political initiatives, securing contracts, and working with academics – all in hopes that the United States will recognize them as Muscogee people.

Academic institutions must vet research proposals on Indigenous communities through consultation with federally recognized tribes. There is no excuse for an institution of higher learning to grant degrees with this level of unethical research that misrepresents the Muscogee people, Mvskoke culture, and our values. Institutions that instruct historians, archaeologists, or anthropologists, should include a course on Federal Indian Law, as it is evident their background is devoid of a firm understanding of the recognition process, Indian removal, or contemporary issues surrounding Tribal sovereignty.

The question phrased at the beginning of the article is focused on who is the real Apalachicola. The entire point of this paper is to demonstrate that the Muscogee (Creek) Nation is the closest descendant community. Apalachicola Tribal Town, clans, and ceremonial grounds were removed to Indian Territory. After the Civil War, Apalachicola’s fate became intertwined with that of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, which continues to this day.



OVER 12 MILLION FOR HOUSING FOR COVID RESPONSE

ROADS MAINTENANCE BY TRIBAL TRANSPORTATION ACROSS THE RESERVATION

by **MORGAN TAYLOR**
MULTIMEDIA PRODUCER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma - A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Land, Natural Resources and Cultural Preservation Committee meeting was held July 12 at the Mound Building.

All passed legislation is subject to full council approval during the regular session.

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

TR 22-106

Authorizing the Principal Chief to execute an Access Agreement between the City of Oxford and the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Choccolocco Park. Representative Nelson Harjo Sr. sponsors the resolution, which passed, 4-0.

The agreement provides the Nation access to certain areas of Choccolocco Park in Oxford, AL, for the MCN to exercise its rights under the MOA.

TR 22-107

Authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a Memorandum of Agreement with the Etowah Museum, Inc. for the creation of a museum and ancestral cultural center. Rep. Harjo sponsored the resolution, which passed, 4-0.

The museum is culturally affiliated with MCN as descendants of the former inhabitants of the



Committee supports homelands in several ways. (MM File)

Etowah site in Barlow Co, GA. The museum wants to partner with the MCN for the new addition to its facilities.

TR 22-108

Authorizing the Principal Chief to execute an Archaeology Collections Care and Trust Agreement with the Mississippi Department of Archives & History. Rep. Harjo sponsored the resolution, which passed, 4-0.

Mississippi Department of Archives and History possesses a specific Ceramic Vessel from St Catherine’s Creek in Natchez, a part of the Historic Creek Confederacy. The Dept. is willing to transfer the object to the MCN.

TR 22-109

Authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a Memorandum of Agreement among the

Federal Emergency Management Agency, Mississippi Department of Archives and History – Museum division, Mississippi State Historic Preservation Officer, Mississippi Emergency Management Agency, the Chickasaw nation, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, the Mississippi band of Choctaw Indians and the Muscogee (Creek) Nation regarding the repair of Winterville Mound Complex – Mound a (site 22ws500), Washington county Mississippi. Rep. Harjo sponsored the resolution, which passed, 4-0.

FEMA proposes to assist in response to damages caused by severe storms and flooding sustained in March 2016 to repair slide and destabilization of the Winterville Mound Complex (A).

TR 22-114

Authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a Memorandum of Agreement with Okmulgee county, Oklahoma for improvements to a county road. Rep. Harjo sponsored the resolution, which passed, 4-0.

Old Morris Highway Box Culvert Project includes replacing a flood-damaged box culvert. The estimated project total is \$550,000 from Tribal Transportation Program Federal Funding.

TR 22-115

Authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a Memorandum of Agreement with Okfuskee County, Oklahoma for improvements to a county road. Rep. Harjo sponsored the resolution, which passed, 4-0.

Greenleaf Church Road Bridge Project includes replacing a flood-damaged box culvert. The estimated project total is \$500,000 from Tribal Transportation Program Federal Funding.

TR 22-116

Authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a Memorandum of Agreement with Okfuskee County for the Tallahassee Road Box Culvert Project. Rep. Harjo sponsored the resolution, which passed, 4-0.

Tallahassee Road Box Culvert Project shall conduct preconstruction and award contract for \$600,000 from Tribal Transportation Program Federal Funding.

TR 22-117

Authorizing the construction of a new bus barn for the Tulsa

Head Start Center. Rep. Harjo sponsored the resolution, which passed, 4-0.

The proposed building will be approximately 2130 square feet with room for three buses, a storage area, and a work area consistent with the schematic design and budget of \$372,580.

TR 22-118

Authorizing the Asphalt Maintenance Overlay Project for the Elders’ Road and the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Housing Building parking lot. Rep. Charles McHenry sponsored the resolution, which passed, 4-0.

The project is estimated at \$623,000 for Asphalt Maintenance Overlay Project.

NCA 22-082

Appropriation for the construction of a bus barn for the Tulsa Head Start Center. Rep. McHenry sponsored the resolution, which passed and forwarded to the BFJ committee, 4-0.

Total costs associated with the bill are \$372,580.

NCA 22-083

Authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the U.S. Department of the Treasury for the benefit of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Department of Housing. Rep. Joseph Hicks sponsors the resolution, which passed, 4-0.

MCN Housing was awarded Homeowner Assistance Fund Plan Grant for \$12,346,147 to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To view the meeting, visit www.mcnn.com.

MCN INVESTS \$300K FOR HICKORY GROUND PROTECTION

\$5K DONATED TO ROCK THE NATIVE VOTE



A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Emergency Session was held July 18 at the Mound Building in Okmulgee. (MM File)

by **BRADEN HARPER**
REPORTER

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

TR 22-127

Authorizing the extension of the Secretary of the Nation and Commerce to continue operations of the Onefire Holding Company, LLC. The bill was sponsored by Representative Patrick Freeman Jr. and co-sponsored by Speaker William Lowe, which passed unanimously, 14-0.

The extension of operations of the Onefire Holding Company LLC will last 90 days.

TR 22-128

Amending TR 19-076 (A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation to suspend all special appropriations and donations) as amended by TR 20-150 and TR 21-080. The bill was sponsored by Representative Mark Randolph and co-sponsored by Representative Galen Cloud, which passed 11-2. Representative Sandra Golden and Rep. Freeman Jr. were the lone dissenters.

The bill would amend TR 19-076 to allow for a donation to Rock the Native Vote, special appropriations for Hickory Ground Ceremonial Ground, and Duck Creek Indian Community. It cites the recent temporary closure of the River Spirit Casino and Resort as the reason for

suspending all special appropriations and donations.

NCA 22-085

A Law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing a donation to Rock the Native Vote. The bill was sponsored by Rep. Randolph and co-sponsored by Galen Cloud, which passed 11-2. Rep. Golden and Rep. Freeman Jr. were the lone dissenters.

The amount of \$5,000 will be donated to Rock the Native Vote. The organization helps register Native Americans to vote in elections. The donation will help pay for workers, mileage, and promotional items.

NCA 22-086

A Law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing a special appropriation for the cost of necessary measures related to the protection of the Muscogee sacred site of Hickory Ground near Wetumpka, Alabama. The bill was sponsored by Representative Darrell Proctor, which passed unanimously 13-0.

The MCN National Council voted unanimously to hold an executive session before a vote on the bill proceeded.

The appropriations would be used toward the legal defense and public relations services to protect Hickory Ground (Ocevpofv). The sacred ground has been a frequent topic due to the Poarch Band Creek Indians excavating the site and developing a casino gaming facility.

The meeting, agenda, and full legislation can be viewed at www.mcnn.com.



Almost 3 million in budget modifications for health. (MM File)

ELECTION BOARD NOMINATION PASSED

PRINCIPAL CHIEF HAS NOMINATED SARA BARNETT-NASAKASHALO TO SERVE ON BOARD

by **MORGAN TAYLOR**
MULTIMEDIA PRODUCER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma - A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Health, Education and Welfare Committee meeting was held on July 13 at the Mound Building.

All passed legislation is subject to full council approval during the regular session.

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

TR 22-110

Authorizing the Election Board to execute an Attorney Contract between the MCN Election Board and Seacat Law firm. Sponsored by Representative Anna Marshall. A motion was made to postpone for 30 days, which was passed 4-0.

The Election Board is seeking to enter into an Attorney Contract and must obtain the approval of the Council.

TR 22-111

Confirming the nomination of Sara Barnett-Nsakashalo

to serve on the MCN Election Board. Sponsored by Rep. Robert Hufft, which was passed 4-0.

Principal Chief David Hill nominated Barnett-Nasakashalo, a Muscogee citizen, to serve. She will go before the National Council during the Regular Session.

TR 22-113

Authorizing the Department of Community and Human Services to participate in a nationwide elder needs assessment to apply for a Title VI Grant to fund the Nation’s Elderly Nutrition Program. Sponsored by Rep. Hufft, which was passed 4-0.

The grant application requires the Nation to submit a Tribal Resolution authorizing the Department of Community and Human Services to participate in a nationwide elder needs assessment called “Identifying Our Needs: A survey of Elders.”

NCA 22-081

Authorizing a budget modification to transfer funds from the Skilled Nursing Facility and the Long Term Acute Care Hospital to the MCN Medical Center FY 2022 budget on behalf of the MCN Department of Health. Sponsored by Rep. Marshall, which passed 4-0.

The modification of \$2,901,962.18 was to assist with continued operations for the Fiscal Year.

To view the meeting, visit <http://www.mcnn.com/2022-committee-meetings/>.

MCN AUTHORIZES CONTRACT FOR RIVERSPIRIT ROOF REPAIRS

FIRST AMERICAN MUSEUM DONATION POSTPONED INDEFINITELY

by **BRADEN HARPER**
REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma – A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Emergency Session meeting was held in person and via teleconference on July 14 at the Mound Building.

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

TR 22-119

Authorizing Muscogee Nation Gaming Enterprises, LLC (MNGE) to execute an agreement with Coryell Roofing and Construction, Inc. Representative Randall Hicks sponsored the bill, which passed unanimously 15-0.

The bill will allot \$2,692,216.15 to be used for roof replacement services.

NCA 22-084

A law of the Muscogee

(Creek) Nation appropriating funds to First Americans Museum for the sponsorship of the Family Discovery Center. The bill was sponsored by Representative Patrick Freeman Jr and was postponed indefinitely 15-0.

If eventually passed, \$1,000,000 in appropriations would be appropriated to sponsor the Family Discovery Center. It would provide the Nation with the opportunity to reach its urban population. It would also introduce international, regional, and local visitors to Muscogee Cultural Lifeways and provide free museum access to all MCN Citizens one year from the first payment date.

The meeting, agenda, and full legislation can be viewed at www.mcnn.com.



Children paint medallions at Family Fun Day in Okmulgee. (Braden Harper/Reporter)

MCN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH LAUNCHES FAMILY FUN DAY EVENT SERIES

CITIZENS OF ALL AGES WELCOME

by **BRADEN HARPER**
REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma – The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Department of Behavioral Health hosted its first Family Fun Day (Enahvm-kvlke nettv) at the Claude Cox Omniplex July 15. It was the first of five scheduled community events this summer.

The event allows the community to come out and participate in arts and crafts and games, including medallion painting, rock painting, God’s eye making (Ojos de Dios), corn husk doll making, cornhole, kickball, three-legged race, and an egg toss.

MCN Behavioral Health Project Director Tyler Stone said the event is a great way to serve the community through fellowship.

“We just kind of wanted to get some people out here, bring the family out,” Stone said. “We just kind of wanted to do something fun over the summer.”

Although the event saw brutal temperatures in the 90s, most activities were held in the Omniplex Pavilion. Stone’s favorite game hosted was kickball.

“I get a little competitive,” Stone said. “It brings me back to my youth.”

The event series features a turtle

(locv) theme. Organizers donned event shirts with turtles. “We thought it would be cool to represent the turtle clan as well,” Stone said.

Community members of all ages are invited to Family Fun Day. The event was popular with elders and parents with young children. Sapulpa Creek Indian Community Chair Joseph Rogers said the event is a great way to get connected with

“We try to interact with every activity we can get in with our tribe,” Rogers said. “They love to interact here with the rest of the people here.”

Rogers’ was accompanied by Billy Joe Harjo (Seminole Nation). The two agreed their favorite activity was corn husk doll making. “It’s about learning. It’s about fellowshiping,” Rogers said. “To know that we’re Muscogee People and that we need to go back to that way of life of watching out for each other”

The other scheduled MCN Family Fun Days will be held July 22nd at the Koweta Community Center, July 29th at the Okemah Muscogee Nation Housing, August 5th at the Dewar High School Baseball Field, and August 12th at the Eufaula Dorm Gym.

For questions, call 918-758-1930 or email Tyler Stone at tyler.stone@creekhealth.org.



MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION ELECTION OFFICE

NEED TO REGISTER or HAVE QUESTIONS?

Call Our Office at 918.732.7631

Or Email Us at
Election@mcn-election.com

For all other information please see our website
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The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Honor Guard prepares to lead the Festival Parade down Sixth Street. (Braden Harper/Reporter)

MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION FESTIVAL PARADE RETURNS WITH HOORAH

CITIZENS EAGER TO COME BACK AFTER TWO-YEAR HIATUS

by **BRADEN HARPER**
REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma - Sixth Street in Downtown Okmulgee was buzzing with spectators excited to see the annual Muscogee (Creek) Nation Festival Parade on June 25. This year’s parade was particularly special because event planners had not been able to host it in over two years due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The parade began at Okmulgee street and followed Sixth Street east to Muskogee street.

MCN leaders and tribal employees representing various departments were featured in

the parade driving cars, trucks, motorcycles, and floats. Principal Chief David Hill and Second Chief Del Beaver were seen toward the front, tossing out candy.

Parade entries included the MCN Honor Guard, the Living Legends Class of 2022, the Pride of Sequoyah Marching Band, and the Muscogee Honor Riders.

MCN Departments that participated included the Executive Branch, National Council, College of the Muscogee Nation, Environmental Services, Veteran Affairs, Mvskoke Media, EMS, and Lighthorse Police.

Muscogee Royalty Tema Yargee and Chanoa Barnett were seen riding a horse-drawn car-

riage. Previous Muscogee Royalty were also featured. Royalty from the Seminole and Haskell Indian Nations made an appearance as well.

Other major appearances included musicians Lil Mike, Funny Bone, and Sten Joddi from the Hulu Television Series “Reservation Dogs.”

Although temperatures reached the upper 90s on Saturday morning, that did not stop the Nation from celebrating, according to MCN GIS Cultural Specialist Gano Perez.

“We have our people that are active, getting together, and we’re still doing things,” Perez said. “It’s hot weather, but it just shows all the dedication of the people who come out and put their time in.”

Spectators of all ages, including MCN citizens and the Okmulgee community, lined up along Sixth Street to watch the

colorful parade vehicles pass by. The street was littered with candy, t-shirts, wristbands and other freebies tossed out at the parade.

Members from other tribes were also in attendance, including the Cherokee and Seminole Nations.

Elizabeth Deere was one of the spectators in attendance. She said she enjoys the arts and crafts and the friendly people the parade attracts. “You see your friends, your old friends, your new friends, and it is really, really awesome, and I look forward to it and hope they keep having it,” Deere said.

MCN Citizens like Speedy Harley were grateful to attend the parade after missing it for so long. “It’s like everybody’s been cooped up in a house the last year and a half or two,” Harley said. “Then we finally met here today at the parade, and we saw kinfolk and friends we’ve been

reacquainted with.”

MCN Citizens and event organizers agreed one of the key highlights of the parade is fellowship.

“Us as a people, it’s always good to see each other,” Perez said. “The sense of community, everybody coming together, meeting up, seeing old friends, it’s always good to visit and be amongst our own people.”

When spectators were asked what their favorite parade entries were, answers ranged from the Diabetes Program, the MCN Honor Guard, and the Lighthorse Police Vehicles.

The Festival continued with events Saturday, including the fun fair and the Living Legends Softball Reunion.

To see Mvskoke Media’s coverage of the 2022 Muscogee (Creek) Nation Festival, visit: <https://www.mvskokemedia.com/?s=Festival>



Actor and comedian Tatanka Means had the Muscogee People laughing at the MCN Festival. (Morgan Taylor/Multimedia Producer)

NATIVE STAND-UP COMEDIAN OVERCOMES STEREOTYPES

TATANKA MEANS TALKS ABOUT HIS JOURNEY FROM HIS RESERVATION TO PERFORMING ACROSS THE COUNTRY AND FILMING

by **MORGAN TAYLOR**
MULTIMEDIA PRODUCER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma – The Saturday night of the Festival, Este Cate Night, featured the Navajo, Omaha and Oglala Lakota comedian Tatanka Means for his first time performing for the MCN.

This year has been busy for Means, with most of the filming roles being done in OK, so naturally, when he was invited to the MCN Festival, he was beyond excited to come back to the state and perform for the Muscogee People.

Means claimed all he could see were big laughs when he looked out in the crowd.

“Everybody was ready to laugh,” Means said. “It just made it that much better to perform. It’s a great feeling when people are having a good time, and the reception is good.”

In his role as a comedian, he claims that many jokes about aunties, frybread, and reserva-

tion life translate universally across all tribal nations.

“I try to make it for everybody so that I can go everywhere,” he said. “Native humor is universal.”

According to Means, he will be featured in Reservation Dogs, the FX tv series co-written and directed by Muscogee Citizen Sterlin Harjo that was filmed on the Muscogee reservation.

The next project that Means worked on in Oklahoma was filming Killer of the Flowers Moon, where he plays John Wren. The film is set to release this fall.

His first appearance as Crazy Horse on a mini television called Into the West was in 2005 when he was around 20. Since then, Means has played minor roles in various films, tv series, and documentaries, along with his stand-up comedy.

Many natives can relate to Means because he was a young Native American boy growing up on a reservation in South Dakota. One thing that set him apart from his peers was his love for

entertaining, which helped guide his passions and lead him to where he is now.

Using his fingers and then his toes to count the years, Tatanka Means adds up 13 years total that he has been in the stand-up comedy portion of the entertainment industry. He mentions that the 13 years in this industry are equal to his years in recovery and sobriety from drugs and alcohol.

He takes pride in being an alcohol-free and drug-free performer.

“Just being here and being coherent,” Means said. “It’s an important part to being yourself.”

Though he is naturally funny, Means claims that it is not a talent he has always nurtured when asked about his humor.

“My family probably thought I was funny,” he said. “I was one of those that would think of a joke or comeback way after the fact.”

This left him laughing at his jokes most of the time during his pre-comedy career years but also allowed him to learn to write his scripts for a comedy performance.

Being a generational curse breaker is something he hopes to inspire the Native American youth to strive to be and chase their dreams.

For more information about the actor/comedian, visit www.tatankameans.com.



Starting in the fall 2022 semester CMN will offer a new certificate in tribal leadership. (MM File)

CMN ANNOUNCES NEW CERTIFICATE IN TRIBAL LEADERSHIP

CLASSES BEGIN FALL 2022

by **BRADEN HARPER**
REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma – The College of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation announced a new Certificate in Tribal Leadership program. The program will begin offering classes in the fall 2022 semester.

The new curriculum will combine Native American cultural values with leadership skills tailored for modern tribal communities. CMN Tribal Services Director Matthew Yates says the program is not only an investment in students, it’s an investment in the future.

“It takes the best aspects of administration and focuses more on developing leaders for the future,” Yates said. “Proper leadership can completely change the way an organization functions. We are treating it separate from just the business functionality, to learn how to excel in a leadership role”

The program will use leadership theories as well as real world examples to instruct students.

“We want to expose students to a wide range of leadership theories, including traditional concepts in real-world situations” Yates said. “We will look at how our leaders handle situations, considering the history and trauma that is still playing out. Connecting these concepts in this specialization will be advantageous for our Mvskoke students when they become leaders”

The program will give students the opportunities to gain experience in working with tribal communities in the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. That includes a required community development capstone project.

“Our capstone in this new leadership program is a community development project where students will get hands-on to produce something that benefits the community,” Yates said. “I think sometimes we need a reminder to stay grounded. Remember who we’re working for and that good leaders cannot succeed alone.”

CMN President Dr. Monte Randall believes teaching a modern leadership curriculum is important for the future of the tribe. Effective leadership is crucial for a healthy community.

“While we have many great Native American leaders today, leadership development was one of the most overlooked aspects of identity stolen from our people during the numerous policies and assimilation attempts,” Dr. Randall said. “We still have many traditional and ceremonial ways to develop leaders; however many of our Tribal governments and programs require an understanding of cultural values in leadership.”

The new program will teach invaluable leadership principles through the lens of tribal culture.

“The main tenets of character, values, community and excellence exist between mainstream and Native American Leadership, but the differences are purpose and culture,” Dr. Randall said. “The character and values of a person are the most important and should be rooted in Native American culture. Leaders can then positively and more effectively impact the culture of the tribal organizations.”

For information on CMN degree program offerings, visit: <https://cmn.edu/degrees/>.

MCN AG YOUTH HOSTS SECOND ANNUAL 4-H ARCHERY CAMP

ACTIVITIES INCLUDED ARCHERY, FISHING, AND A FLINT NAPPING DEMONSTRATION

by **BRADEN HARPER**
REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma – The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Agricultural Youth Program hosted its second annual 4-H Archery Camp July 12 at Looped Square Ranch. It featured many cultural activities for youth, including archery, fishing, and a flint napping demonstration. The camp was hosted at a new location to accommodate more activities.

Event organizers could not have asked for better weather in Oklahoma this time of the year. The morning saw an overcast sky with a reasonably consistent breeze that kept campers cool during outside activities.

MCN Agricultural Youth Program Director Billy Haltom was pleased with the turnout and the weather conditions. “The good Lord has blessed us beyond belief,” Haltom said.

For some, like MCN Wildlife Technician Brooklyn Bartling, it was their first time hosting an archery camp.

“It’s been quite an adventure, but it’s been fun, and it’s been going smoothly,” Bartling said.

Bartling has been shooting bow and arrows since she was nine years old. Bow hunting is one of her favorite sports.

“I would much rather archery hunt than do anything else,” Bartling said. “It’s quieter, more intimate of a hunt, and you respect



Camp participants pull back their strings to take a shot at the archery range. (Braden Harper/Reporter)

the animal a little bit more because you’re closer to them.”

The camp offered traditional archery targets and 3D targets for participants to shoot. The 3D targets resembled various animals like deer, bears, and hogs. Many camp participants cited the 3D archery targets as their favorite camp activity.

The skill levels of camp participants ranged from novice to advanced. For some, it was their first time picking up a bow.

Haltom recognized the camp’s success was partly due to the parents that participated. “I’m just so excited about all our kids. We’ve got a great turnout, wonderful parents here with their kids helping. It makes such a difference when we get that much involvement, especially from the parents.”

Mandy Guillen was one of the

parents involved with her kids at the camp. She loved the outdoor activities the camp had to offer.

“I think it’s a great opportunity for the kids to do something hands-on outside of the home, not on videogames, and just to get with one another and learn the art of archery,” Guillen said.

Haltom and his team host the camp because they believe it is important to keep cultural traditions alive. “We’re getting them when they’re young. We’re getting them excited about archery,” Haltom said.

“It’s really fun to get them interested in it,” Bartling said. “I would like to keep the younger kids into the sport.”

To view prior coverage of this story, visit: <https://www.mvskokemedia.com/mcn-agricultural-youth-archery-camp-returns/>.



Lighthorse Police Officers work with emergency responders outside the Commerce Building. (Submission)

POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS MATERIAL FOUND IN MCN COMMERCE BUILDING MAIL ROOM

MCN TRIBAL COMPLEX CLOSED EARLY AS A PRECAUTION

by **BRADEN HARPER**
REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma - The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Tribal Complex Offices closed early on July 18 due to a potentially hazardous material discovered by an employee in the commerce building mail room. The material was later found to be non-hazardous after further investigation. Lighthorse Police were immediately notified and arrived on the scene. They notified other first responder agencies to assist in the investigation. Tribal employees were advised to stay away from the commerce building and stay in place before being given the all-clear by Lighthorse Police.

The Nation released a statement on its Facebook page regarding the situation.

“The Muscogee Nation is proud

of the swift response of its first responders, Lighthorse and Emergency Management, in addressing this matter. This Nation is further pleased with the wonderful collaborative efforts with fellow agencies, including Okmulgee Fire and Rescue, Okmulgee County EMS, Okmulgee County Emergency Management, Muskogee Fire, and Hazmat Team, and the U.S Postal Inspection Service. Even though the substance was non-hazardous, this incident demonstrated a seamless response to public safety from all agencies involved.”

Once the material was discovered to be non-hazardous, the area was declared secure. The investigation is currently ongoing.


For tribal employees that find suspicious mail items are advised to call the main Lighthorse Police phone line at (918) 732-7800.




MVSKOKERADIO

WEDNESDAYS @ 10AM CST

FM 106.3 // AM 1240 // 1240THEBREW.COM




CRISIS TEXT LINE |



MUSCOGEE NATION
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
ESTABLISHED 1970

Text CREEK to 741-741

A free, 24/7 text line for people in crisis.



LEGALS

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

IN THE MATTER OF: JUL 18 A 9 57 Case No. JV-2021-19
L.M.; DOB: 11/04/2020
Alleged Deprived Child.

NOTICE OF HEARING TO:
UNKNOWN FATHER, Natural Father to T.B.

YOU ARE HEREBY GIVEN NOTICE that a Petition to Terminate Parental Rights has been filed against you in the above-styled and numbered cause and will be heard in the District Courtroom of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, Tribal Complex in Okmulgee, Oklahoma on the 13th day of October, 2022, at 9:00 A.M.

YOU ARE HEREBY INFORMED that it is sought by the Muscogee (Creek) Nation that the child remain a ward of the Court and custody be continued in the Children and Family Services Administration for continued foster placement of possible pre-adoptive placement. YOU ARE FURTHER INFORMED that you have the right to be represented by legal counsel at this hearing.

FURTHERMORE, failure to appear at the hearing shall constitute a denial of interest in the child, which denial may result, without further notice of this proceeding or any subsequent proceeding, in the termination of your parental rights.

Sharon Harjo
JUDGE OF THE DISTRICT COURT

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

IN THE MATTER OF THE GUARDIANSHIP OF: A.S., DOB: 1/26/05, K.S., DOB: 9/25/07, and C.S., DOB: 9/10/09, minor children) CASE NO: GD-2022-26

NOTICE OF GUARDIANSHIP

TO: Lori April Lombard

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on July 12, 2022, the District Court of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, Okmulgee District, appointed Sharon Harjo as Guardian of the person and estate of the following minor children that you are the mother of: A.S., DOB: 1/26/05; K.S., DOB: 9/25/07; and C.S., DOB: 9/10/09. If you object to the appointment of this Guardian for your children, you must contact Michael Parks, P.O. Box 3220, McAlester, Oklahoma 74052, (918) 426-1818, before August 31, 2022. If you contact Mr. Parks before that date, he will file a Motion to Schedule a Review Hearing in the District Court of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, Okmulgee District. If you do not file an objection by that date, then the guardianship will proceed until it is terminated. You should govern yourself accordingly.

DATED this 13th day of July, 2022.

Respectfully Submitted,

By: *Michael D. Parks*
Michael D. Parks, OBA #6904
10 E. Washington, Suite 102
P.O. Box 3220
McAlester, OK 74502
(918) 426-1818, (918) 426-1836 FAX
mike@mikoparkslaw.com
ATTORNEY FOR GUARDIAN,
SHARON HARJO

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

IN THE MATTER OF: JUL 18 A 9 57 Case No.: JV-2022-04
L.M.; DOB: 10/27/2019
Alleged Deprived Child.

JUVENILE SUMMONS

THE MUSCOGEE NATION to: Unknown Father

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that a Petition has been filed in the Court of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation alleging that the above-named child(ren) is a deprived child and that, as the parent of said child, L.M., you have been named as the Respondent, all as more fully set out in the Petition.

YOU ARE THEREFORE ORDERED TO APPEAR at the Courtroom of the District Court of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, Okmulgee, Oklahoma, on the 21st day of September, 2022 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 18th day of July, 2022.

Sharon Harjo
Deputy Court Clerk
Muscogee (Creek) Nation District Court

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

IN THE MATTER OF: JUL 18 A 9 58 Case No.: JV-2022-04
L.M.; DOB: 10/27/2019
Alleged Deprived Child.

JUVENILE SUMMONS

THE MUSCOGEE NATION to: Ross David Harjo

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Sharon Harjo
Deputy Court Clerk
Muscogee (Creek) Nation District Court

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

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Alleged Deprived Child.

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Issued this 18th day of July, 2022.

Sharon Harjo
Deputy Court Clerk
Muscogee (Creek) Nation District Court

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

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THE MUSCOGEE NATION to: Ross David Harjo

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Issued this 18th day of July, 2022.

Sharon Harjo
Deputy Court Clerk
Muscogee (Creek) Nation District Court

OBITUARY



Tony Isaacs
Tony Isaacs was born on December 20, 1936, the son of David and Diane Isaacs of Los Angeles, CA. The

remarkable life of Tony Isaacs ended suddenly on the afternoon of June 21. He is preceded in death by his loving wife, Ida Lujan Isaacs. He leaves behind his two sons, Gregory David Isaacs and Brian Santiago Isaacs, his brother, Jeffery Isaacs of La Jolla, CA, his sisters Judy and Janice Lujan, Martha Oestreich, Dorothy De Laune and Leona “Pinky” Johnson , nephews Ira, Erik and Gabriel Lujan, Jackson Isaacs, niece Meleana Leaverton, along with numerous family members and friends. His Love of traditional American indian music started when he was in a Boy Scout troop in California and was asked to learn and perform an Indian Song. Captivated by this type of music he later moved to Anadarko, OK, to further his self guided education of American Indian music. He went to various universities to further his aca-

demnic career. He eventually settled in Taos, NM, Tony Isaacs and his wife Ida in 1966, founded Indian House Records, which earned a reputation as a label committed to respectful, selective, high-quality recordings of traditional American Indian music. In 1954, Tony made his first field recording of Oglala Lakota singers at the Flagstaff Powwow in Arizona. The Society for American Music selected Tony in 2009 as Honorary Member of the Year. Members include composer and musician John Cage, Country singer Loretta Lynn, Bluegrass musician Bill Monroe and many others. He was a selfless, loving father, a man that always supported everyone he knew, was always a beacon of kindness and never had harsh about anyone. He was buried beside his loving wife Ida Lujan Isaacs at Ohkay Owingeh (San Juan Pueblo) NM, on June 27, 2022.



Elaine Marie Byrd
Elaine Marie Byrd, 52, a resident of Henryetta, Oklahoma, passed away July 13, in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Elaine was born April 29, 1970 in Tahlequah, Oklahoma to Amelia Gambler. Elaine is preceded in death by her maternal grandfather Wallace Gambler and maternal grandmother, Stella (Bruner) Gambler, aunts, Lavina Nye, Elizabeth Murphy, Doris Ramirez, Carmelita Gambler, great-aunt Lucille Tiger and Mariah Randall Jacobs. Before she left she made many friends. She gave many hugs and made many smiles. She was full of energy and brought a bright light wherever she went. Elaine had a deep love for cats, playing bingo, and painting nails. She enjoyed walks, riding bikes, and fishing. She loved being around family and friends and she never met a stranger. Elaine was much loved and will be greatly missed. Those left to cherish Elaine’s

memory are her husband Charles Byrd, of the home, sons, Cody Longan of Dewar, Devin Longan of Tiger Mountain, granddaughters, Journiee Longan and Piper Longan of Dewar, mother Amelia Gambler of Okmulgee, sister, Roxanne McCullah and husband David of Okmulgee, nieces, Raelynne Green, Terri McCullah and nephews, Justin Lillard and Timothy McCullah Officiating: Rev. Wallace Gambler and Rev. Mitchell Taylor Pallbearers: Cody Longan, Devin Longan, Raelynne Green, Terri McCullah, Justin Lillard and Timothy McCullah Funeral Services were held July 20, 2022 at Hickory Ground I Indian Baptist Church, Henryetta, Oklahoma. Arrangements and Services under the direction of Integrity Funeral Service.



Nix Storm
Nix Storm, 79, of Checotah, passed away on June 24, in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Nix was born on July

1, 1942 at his home in Carr Creek Checotah, Oklahoma to Foy Houston and Sara Ann (Leader) Storm. He attended Carr Creek Schools and graduated from Checotah High School in 1960. Nix received his Associate’s Degree from Connor’s State College. Nix drove a dump truck for a few years and helped build the roads to the Eufaula Dam. On December 9, 1963, he married Lou Ann Winkle. They were happily married for fifty years and raised three children together, before she preceded him in death in 2013. Nix worked as the McIntosh County Extension Agent for several years. He was a farmer and rancher for most of his life. Nix enjoyed welding, carpentry, and tending to his cattle. He also transported his homegrown produce to numerous states to sale. Nix was a member of the Checo-

tah First Baptist Church. He was most known for selling his delicious watermelons from his truck during the hot summers. Survivors include: his children: Hoy Nix Storm and wife, Mary; Lisa Annette Robison and husband, Larry; and Joe Heath Storm, all of Checotah; one brother, Malcolm Storm, of Eufaula; one sister, Norma Mann and husband, Fred, of Checotah; grandchildren: Justin and Christin Storm, Dustin and Meagan Storm, Austin and Brianna Storm, Westin and Megan Storm, Stormi and Jake Hollingshed, Allissa and TJ Berryhill, Bryon and Heather Smith, Amanda Crawford, and Blake Keeter; and a host of great and great great grandchildren. He is preceded in death by his parents, Foy and Sara Storm and his wife, Lou Ann Storm.



Barbara Joyce Ryal
Barbara Joyce Ryal, a resident of Henryetta passed away July 12, in Henryetta at the age of 80. She

was born July 24, 1941 in Dewar to William “Bill” Goodman and Grace (Stapp) Goodman. She married Wiley Ryal August 31, 1959 in Dewar and were married 60 years at the time of his death. She was a member of Dewar Baptist Church. Barbara was a retired teacher having taught and coached basketball in Wynnewood for 1 year. Thereafter she taught at Dewar Public Schools where she coached basketball, track and softball. Barbara and Wiley’s contribution of selflessness to the Dewar community and Dewar Schools will not be soon forgotten. She is preceded in death by her parents, Bill and Grace Goodman, her husband, Wiley Ryal, two brothers, Johnny Goodman and Bill Goodman, a sister, Doris Lawson, a great

grandson, Tripp Whitlow. She is survived by a son, Mark Ryal and wife, Renea of Dewar; A daughter, Karen Milam and husband, Scott of Dewar; Five grandchildren, Rusty Ryal and wife Erica, Kacie Ryal and fiancé Nick Whitlow, Karlie Ryal, Ryan Milam and wife Tanya, Alicia Williams and husband Jared; Seven great grandchildren, Asher, Bowen, Rocco, Silas, Hudson, Boston and Maverick; A sister, Mary Adams of Kansas; Two brothers-in-law, Woxie Ryal and wife Janice of Oklahoma City; Doug Ryal of Skiatook; Also by a host of friends and other relatives; Funeral services were held July 18, 2022 at Dewar First Baptist Church with Rev. Ryan wells officiating. Interment followed in Westlawn Cemetery under direction of Integrity Funeral Service.

SUBMISSIONS

Thlopthlocco (Creek) Tribal Town General Elections Scheduled Saturday, January 28th 2023 Time and Location: To Be Determined After 17 years of internal litigation within the MCN District and Supreme Court and 15 years since the last election, this litigation has been settled and the Thlopthlocco Citizens will once again exercise their

constitutional right to cast their votes to determine who the governing body shall be. The Thlopthlocco General Elections include the following 5 elected positions: 1. Tribal Town King 2. Tribal Town Warrior 1 3. Tribal Town Warrior 2 4. Tribal Town Treasurer 5. Tribal Town Secretary The Thlopthlocco Tribal

Town Constitution outlines the election is to be determined by enrolled Thlopthlocco Citizens, by standing vote and voters must be 21 and over. Thlopthlocco is currently assembling an Election Committee that will officiate the upcoming election. There has not been a determination of location or time however, the election is dated for Saturday, January 28th 2023.