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MVSKOKE NEWS

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FEMA HELPS REBUILD INFRASTRUCTURE

MCN WILL LEAD THE FEMA PROGRAM ON DISASTER ASSISTANCE

by **MORGAN TAYLOR**
MULTIMEDIA PRODUCER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma – The Muscogee (Creek) Nation received a Presidential Disaster Declaration for public assistance through Federal Emergency Management Agency due to inclement weather during May 2-8.

According to MCN Emergency Management Supervisor Bobby Howard, public assistance does not include individual assistance of homes and property. The public aid includes buildings, bridges, roads, and infrastructure around the reservation used by both Muscogee citizens and other Oklahoma citizens.

Counties and municipalities around the reservation can apply for FEMA funds but will do so through the MCN. Once applied for, if granted, the funds will be delegated to the municipalities through the MCN as well. In other words, the MCN is playing the role that would be typically known as the role of the state government.

"This has never been done before," Howard said. "We are pioneering."

Howard said this relationship would serve as an example for future collaborations that tribes can follow and an example to learn.

"We will succeed," Howard said. "We will be efficient, effective,

and transparent throughout this process."

Howard mentions that it is a testament to the relationship between the federal government and the MCN.

"It's a partnership," Howard said. "We get to deal with FEMA as a Federal-to-Federal agency, unlike the state."

Not only is the working relationship above par, but the MCN has the country's number one tribal hazard mitigation plan.

A FEMA representative joined Howard to review the damages around the nation for a preliminary damage assessment that included \$3.5 million for road repairs alone.



MCN will delgate FEMA Funds to eligible applicants. (Shutterstock)

Howard says the preliminary assessment findings are the first step in the process. A meeting between officials of the MCN, FEMA, county commissioners, city managers, and entities will develop project worksheets on Oct. 17. Proj-

ect worksheets will then be turned in to Howard and forwarded to FEMA for funding. FEMA will then distribute funds to the MCN Finance Department to each county for repairs.

This is a developing story.



MCN Oral Historian Midge Dillenger sat down to discuss the Tribe's collaboration with University of Tulsa Professors, Archivists, and Students on spreading knowledge of the school's origins as a boarding school. Originally T.U. was called the Presbyterian School for Indian Girls and was located in Muskogee pre-statehood. It would change names to Henry Kendall College, then the University of Tulsa. (Braden Harper/Reporter)

UNIVERSITY OF TULSA LOOKS BACK AT THEIR MUSCOGEE BOARDING SCHOOL ROOTS

RESEARCH GROUP COLLABORATES WITH MCN TO SHARE THE COLLEGE'S ORIGINS

by **JERRAD MOORE**
ASSIGNMENT EDITOR

& by **BRADEN HARPER**
REPORTER

TVLSE, Oklahoma – Indian Boarding Schools have become a solemn topic of conversation within the past few years. A recent Federal Bureau of Indian Affairs report identified over 400 Indian Boarding Schools in operation between 1819 and 1969. One of those schools included the Presbyterian School for Indian Girls, established in 1882 in Indian Territory. Although the existence of the schools was well known, the extent of the abuse and trauma experienced by Indigenous Students at some of these schools was not.

According to Muscogee (Creek) Nation Oral Historian Midge Dillenger, the school was initially founded by members of the Presbyterian Church and enrolled young Muscogee Women until 1894.

"It is the precursory educational institution for the University of Tulsa," Dillenger said. "In my mind, this small, Indigenous Girls' Boarding School is at the core of Tulsa University's 128-year history and existence."

Over the course of the following century, the tiny school

changed. Originally it was located in what is now present-day Muskogee. It would later become a charter school, renamed Henry Kendall College. At the inception of statehood in 1907, Henry Kendall College packed its school bags and relocated north. It would undergo one last name change to reflect the city it now resides in: Tulsa.

"From an Indigenous perspective, this is a huge deal, and it's the truth," Dillenger said. "So many people don't know this history because it has not been given its proper place in the history of the University of Tulsa."

TURC and MCN collaboration

Dr. Laura Stephens, a faculty professor of English and creative writing at T.U, would revisit this footnote in history. Dr. Stephens assembled a team of faculty and students to study at the Presbyterian School for Indian Girls for the Tulsa Undergraduate Research Challenge (TURC) in 2021. Of which, primary sources were found in T.U.'s special collections archives.

"The project is to research, learn about and honor the young women and girls," Dr.

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MOTORCYCLE GROUP FUND CMN SCHOLARSHIP

MEMBERS OF THE TRAIL OF TEARS MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION FUND SCHOLARSHIP FOR CMN STUDENT

by **KAYLEA BERRY**
REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma- Over 50 Trail of Tears Memorial Association, Inc. motorcycle group members arrived at the College of Muscogee Nation on Sept. 19 to donate \$2,500 for student scholarships. The group started their ride on Sept. 17 in Chattanooga, Tennessee, riding along one of the Trail of Tears routes into Okmulgee.

According to their website, the Trail of Tears Remembrance Association, Inc. started in 1994 as the Trail of Tears Remembrance Association by Bill Cason. Since its inception, the association has helped recognize and mark Trail of Tears routes, educated people about the history, and donated funds for scholarships. Over the years, thousands of riders have participated in the ride from Tennessee to Oklahoma.

The name has since changed to Trail of Tears Memorial Association, Inc.



Members of the Trail of Tears motorcycle group and College of the Muscogee Nation staff pose for a group photo in Okmulgee, Okla., Sept. 19, 2022. (Mvskoke Media photo by Kaylea Berry/Reporter)

James Griffin, Trail of Tears Memorial Association Board Member, said that the number of riders decreased over the years but is now back on the rise.

The association donates money for scholarships to colleges on the Reservations in Oklahoma.

"The way we raise money is we sell t-shirts, and we have a raffle," said Griffin. "One of our members, a guy that rides with us, makes the arrowheads and things like that by hand."

The Trail of Tears (TOT) Me-

SCHOLARSHIP - 3

FIRST MUSCOGEE NATION ALL-INDIAN TRAP AND ARCHERY COMPETITION HELD SEPT. 27

MCN CITIZEN, TRENT SIMMONS, TAKES 1ST OVERALL AT THE MUSCOGEE NATION ALL-INDIAN TRAP AND ARCHERY COMPETITION

by **KAYLEA BERRY**
REPORTER

PORUM, Oklahoma - The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Agriculture Youth Program hosted the first All-Indian Trap and Archery Competition on Sept. 27 at the Connors State College Dr. Stuart Woods Shooting Sports Complex. Native American youth ages 14 to 18 from various tribes participated in trap shooting and archery competitions.

Sport shooting and archery have become more popular recently. The Olympics recognizes the two as official Olympics sports, and more colleges are offering scholarships for the sports. The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Division of Agriculture & Natural Resources has an archery program that helps support the kids with their projects and purchasing bows and arrows for students.

Muscogee (Creek) Nation Division of Agriculture & Natural



Overall winners Trent Simmons of Jenks first place, Sutton Grigsby of Jenks second place, and Easton Barclays of Winchester third place pose for a photo at the Muscogee Nation All-Indian Trap and Archery Competition Sept. 27 in Porum, Okla. (Mvskoke Media photo by Kaylea Berry/Reporter)

Resources Director Trenton Kisee said that the program came up with the idea for this event in 2019. However, because of COVID, they have not had a chance to do so until now.

"It's been a long time coming, but we're looking forward to doing this annual event," said Kisee. "It's the

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BOARDING SCHOOL

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Stephens said.

Dr. Stephens invited Dillenger to collaborate as a researcher and liaison to the MCN. When she was asked to collaborate on the project, Dillenger beamed at the opportunity to work with the research group.

“It is a fantastic opportunity to illuminate a significant yet diminished piece of Tulsa University History,” Dillenger said. “This project is meaningful because in this country we have a long-standing and very colonized white settler U.S. Historical Narrative, and seemingly pushed down into the dredges of this narrative are the silenced voices and histories of everyone else.”

Dillenger and Dr. Stephens would be joined by Dr. Stephens’ colleague, fellow English Professor Dr. Sarah Beam. Inviting an MCN historian into T.U.’s archives was a profoundly symbolic gesture.

“By having a conversation over these artifacts and opening up access to them is to build a relationship again or emphasis that we do and should have a relationship with Muscogee Nation,” Dr. Beam said. “It’s the prime setting for rich academic engagement, community conversation, and influence toward change.”

Artifacts and primary resources from the Presbyterian School for Indian Girls are found at T.U.’s McFarlin Library. It is characterized by a series of layered hallways and ornate study rooms—the T.U. Special Collections Archive Room sits in a temperature-controlled environment, its contents protected from the elements. The room is only accessible to department members and guests.

“When it comes to projects like this, Indigenous Peoples are not always allowed to be part of the research,” Dillenger said. “Over two years, we have had four to five graduate students volunteer their time.”

Two students included undergrad researchers Elizabeth Bailey (Cherokee & Choctaw Nations) and Alexandria Toyfoya (Cherokee Nation). Both hold the subject matter with the utmost respect and reverence because they have relatives that once attended residential schools.

“It very deeply and emotionally affected me,” Toyfoya said. “I want to provide comfort for families with family members who went to that school.”

Toyfoya and Bailey primarily worked in special collections. Their main task was iden-



Young Indigenous Women pose for a group photo at the Presbyterian School for Indian Girls. While little is known about the girls individually, assignment documents from T.U.’s archives exhibit what they learned in school. Evidence shows that the girls were taught subjects like English, grammar, and writing. (Jerrad Moore/Assignment Editor)

tifying students that attended the Presbyterian School for Indian Girls.

“It’s a rather emotional type of research, especially being Native and knowing I don’t speak Choctaw because my great-grandparents went to residential or boarding schools,” Bailey said.

Day-to-day operations

When discussing the details of boarding school operations, it is a topic that requires fragility. While some former boarding school students have reported positive accounts, others have reported abuse, violence, and forced cultural assimilation. Some former boarding schools have made headlines for mass graves discovered in their backyard. Dillenger says the operations at the Presbyterian School for Indian Girls were a genuine effort to educate.

“Nothing has come to the surface to indicate that the students at this school, the girls at this school, were mistreated or abused in any way,” Dillenger said.

When the research group initially dove into researching the boarding school, they were aware of the possibility that they might uncover horrors within its history.

“In full honesty, I had already mentally prepared myself for that right when I started because usually, many boarding schools at that time were just labeled as boarding schools but had ulterior motives,” Toyfoya said. “I knew full well that if I entered this project, I had to be prepared for the worst.”

According to the research group, an integral part of the school’s operations was a missionary teacher named Alice Robertson. Born in 1854 to non-Native settlers, Robertson’s contributions to Indigenous Education could be attributed to her upbringing within the Muscogee Reservation.

time periods,” Dr. Beam said.

Although the fact that T.U. originated as a boarding school may not be considered common knowledge, it is information that has been available to the public. An acknowledgment of the school’s origins can currently be found on the official university website.

Today, T.U. is well known for its prestigious law program and sits on the Muscogee (Creek) Reservation in midtown Tulsa. However, the school has seen controversy over its modern Indigenous Education Programs due to the decision to eliminate some Indigenous Graduate Degrees. Some progress has been made to amend it. Last month it was announced by T.U. President Brad Carson that a “Masters in Indian Law” degree would return.

Boarding School Research moving forward

Proper Indian Boarding School Research has also garnered national attention. Two bills in Congress have been introduced; U.S. Senate Bill S. 2907 and House Bill H.R 5444. Both would establish a Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies. The Biden Administration has stated it supports legislation on Indian Boarding School Research.

“It’s been ignored for way too long. It’s still being ignored. A lot of this stuff is difficult to discuss and talk about,” Toyfoya said. “It’s hard for the victims of the schools and their descendants. It’s hard for them to heal from that.”

In the meantime, local efforts to research boarding schools continue. According to Dillenger, the Presbyterian Boarding School for Indian Girls research project is still ongoing. The purpose of the project is to spread knowledge that was previously not well known.

“At the core of this project’s

mission is to identify the students by their names and tribal affiliation so that we can give these students the proper recognition and honor that they deserve,” Dillenger said. “This project is moving forward with the hope that we can make some connections between these students and their living descendants.”

The project is more than just an academic endeavor; it’s a quest to make genuine connections from the past to the present.

“As we learn more and as our project, we hope, grows, we can, on the one hand, give some information about ancestors to members of the Muscogee Creek Nation and probably members of other neighboring nations,” Dr. Stephens said.

At this stage in the research, Dr. Beam said they are ready to take oral accounts from those who may know more about the school.

“Some signals someone might look for might be that a relative attended a boarding school for girls in Muskogee between 1885-1895. They might have heard it referred to as the Presbyterian School or the Presbyterian School for Indian Girls. They might have also heard it referred to as the Minerva Home,” Dr. Beam said.

To pragmatically achieve their goal of making these connections, Dillenger said there are plans to develop a website to share findings and allow others to engage with the project.

“This story does deserve to be remembered and included in the narrative of Tulsa University, Muscogee Creek Nation History, and Indigenous Boarding School History,” Dillenger said.

If you have relatives that attended the Presbyterian School of Indian Girls in Muskogee and would like to share your accounts, contact Midge Dillenger at ddillenger@muscogeenation.com.



T.U.’s Special Collection archives contain photographs of the Presbyterian School for Indian Girls dating as far back as the 1880s. The photos are protected in the McFarlin Library’s secure, temperature-controlled room. The caption of this photo reads, “Presbyterian School, Muskogee, 1888”. (Jerrad Moore/Assignment Editor)



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SCHOLARSHIP

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morial Association is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The group raises funds through sponsorships, donations, souvenir sales, and the annual ride kickoff event. Shirts and souvenirs are available for purchase on their website.

According to Griffin, the Trail of Tears Memorial Association has it in its hearts to give back.

“The whole reason is because the Trail of Tears, as far as we’re concerned, was the worst thing that’s happened in the United States.”

Once the schools receive the monetary donations, they can distribute the money to students through their process.

“We generally go by student grade point average, and some-

times it’s just the need,” said Norma Marshall, College of Muscogee Nation Native American studies advisor and instructor. “The ones that are pursuing that [four-year degree] are generally the ones that we like to mentor and keep them on that road.”

Marshall also said that CMN is in the process of building the Native American Studies associate degree into a four-year bachelor’s degree. “Our ancestors came on that Trail of Tears to Indian Territory, and so we honor our ancestors by educating our young ones so they can assume the leadership roles for our people.”

All riders are welcome to participate in the annual Trail of Tears Remembrance Ride but ride at their own risk. For more information, visit their website or Facebook page: Trail of Tears Memorial Motorcycle Ride.

COMPETITION

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only one of its kind that we know of that combines shotgun sports with archery in the same contest.”

The participants had the option to compete in the trap shooting division, archery division, or both for the overall championship. There were 37 archers, 26 trap shooters, and 18 participated in both divisions. The participants supplied their own equipment for the competition, but ear and eye protection were available.

Trap shooting consists of an oscillating device called a “bunker” or “house,” dispersing clay targets that move away from the shooter at unknown angles. The archers shot at stationary (2D) targets in front of hay bales and then proceeded to 3D animal targets in the woods.

Muscogee (Creek) Nation Agri-

culture Youth Program Manager Billy Haltom said, “This is our first one and not something I’m really familiar with doing, so I was tickled to death that we had the support from Connors staff that we do to put this on.”

“This is our first one, and hopefully, it’s one of many,” said Haltom.

Shooting sports instructor Sierra Walker, Archery team coach Johnny King, and students from Connors assisted the MCN Ag Youth staff in the event. Off duty, Lighthouse officers volunteered their time to ensure gun safety.

There were first, second and third-place winners for the trap shooting, archery, and overall categories.

Overall, Trent Simmons of Jenks took first place, followed by Sutton Grigsby of Jenks and Easton Barclays of Winchester. Caden Shea of Sand Springs took first place in the division for trap shooting, followed

by Kalen Putman of Weleetka and Aiden Johnson of Candy in third. Sutton Grisby of Jenks won the archery competition, followed by Trent Simmons of Jenks for second place and Summer Barclays of Winchester for third.

The 1st place winners of each category received a Pendleton blanket signed by Chief David Hill, the trap shoot winners received shotgun cases, the archery winners received bow cases, and the overall winners received camouflage backpacks.

The Ag Youth Program’s 10th annual All-Indian Livestock Show is coming in January 2023. While pre-entry is not required, pre-entrants receive a free t-shirt. The program also has the MCN Ag Youth Facebook page. For more information on the MCN Ag Youth Program, contact Billy Haltom 918-843-0385 or Jacob Rippy 539-244-2220.



The mural is located at 116 E. Main St, Eufaula, OK. (Morgan Taylor/Multimedia Producer)

MVSKOKE ARTIST FEATURED IN EUFAULA ART PROJECT

THE MCN PARTNERED WITH VISION EUFAULA TO BRING MVKSOKE REPRESENTATION TO THE AREA

by MORGAN TAYLOR
MULTIMEDIA PRODUCER

EUFAULA, Oklahoma – An artist call from the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Tourism department led Joseph “Joe” Hopkins back to the Muscogee Nation reservation for a chance to display his artwork and participate in the Vision Eufaula Mural Festival and Art Walk. Of the seven-featured mural artist, Hopkins was the singular indigenous artist.

According to Vision Eufaula President Karen Weldon, the MCN sponsored Hopkins and his participation in the event. She said she applauds the MCN for being an excellent working part-

ner of the City of Eufaula.

“The Muscogee Nation is the main tribe here in the Eufaula area,” Weldon said. “In fact, (the Muscogee (Creek) Nation) was an inspiration for the 3D mural. We have always wanted the Creek Nation to partner with us.”

Hopkins traveled from his current home of Phoenix, AZ, to the Eufaula for a weeklong Mural Art Walk event to represent the nation and showcase his artwork on September 23-24. His design incorporated Mvskoke culture, Lake Eufaula, and the features of its historic downtown.

Using a southeastern Indian figure in a canoe on the mural was one way that Hopkins brought representation to the

Mvskoke (Creek) People. Implementing tribal design within the giant green letters spelling “Eufaula” also helped to bring representation to other tribes in the area.

Being raised by a non-native family after adoption in Carney, OK, Hopkins lost touch with his Mvskoke heritage until his adult years. Art was one way that he learned to cope and heal.

“It’s always good to be back here,” Hopkins said.

For the first time in his career, he used spray paint materials for this project.

“The Oklahoma wind made it challenging,” he said.

Ultimately, Hopkins enjoyed using the material for this partic-

ular project. As he reflects on the week’s unexpected challenges, he laughs and commends Shavon Agee for assistance getting materials to him.

Hopkins realized that the area was much different than he expected.

The original design he intended was 14 feet by 52 feet.

“When I got here, it was 73 feet by nine feet,” Hopkins said. “We didn’t have to change anything, but we had to scale up, so we didn’t have enough paint.”

Despite the difficulties, Hopkins could showcase his artwork on the reservation he once called home.

“I am very honored and excited,” Hopkins said.

The artists were expected to be

complete Friday afternoon as the mural art walk kicked off. Vendors started to fill the side streets with tents full of handmade products for purchase. Products ranged from handmade soaps, paintings, décor, jewelry, and unique pieces that one might not find in the local department store.

Murals were judged, but unfortunately, Hopkins did not place, although his mural will be a part of the downtown Eufaula scene.

He has participated in similar projects where he brings Native American culture to life through his paintings in California and Texas.

Hopkins can be found on Instagram, sockmonkey2011, where he sells canvas art, shirts, prints, and a “little bit of everything.”

MURROW INDIAN CHILDREN’S HOME SERVES AS A HAVEN FOR CHILDREN

MURROW PROVIDES SAFETY TO CHILDREN AND PREPARES THEM FOR ADULTHOOD

by KAYLEA BERRY
REPORTER

MUSKOGEE, Oklahoma - The Murrow Indian Children’s Home is a safe place. Indigenous children can go there under Tribal custody after being removed from their homes because of abuse or neglect. The home was founded in 1885 in Atoka, Okla., by a Baptist missionary, Rev. J.S. Murrow, and his wife. When Murrow could no longer fund the home, the American Baptist Home Mission Society took it over and moved it to the Bacone College campus in Muskogee, Okla. In the 1950s, cottages were built down the road from Bacone, where the home is today.

Their website states, “At the Murrow Indian Children’s Home, our mission is to provide a safe, nurturing environment, spiritual foundation, and cultural experience to Native American Children in crisis.”

Murrow typically houses children of school age, with the youngest being three years old. Each child is taught how to do their laundry and chores, such as setting the table and dishes and picking up after themselves. Once the children are placed into the home’s care, they are enrolled in public school, are current on medical requirements, and receive clean clothes.

The days consist of having breakfast, riding the bus to school, having an after-school snack, completing homework, attending tutoring if needed,

completing their chores, having dinner together, and then getting ready for bed.

Extracurricular activities are encouraged. Staff transport children to practice and events. When not at school or participating in extracurricular activities, the children can spend their free time playing outside, watching tv, or other preferred hobbies. The staff wants the children to have as typical a home as possible.

Children can stay until they graduate high school or turn 18, whichever occurs later. However, once they moved out, they ended up homeless, incarcerated, on the streets, and clueless about being an adult. Betty Martin, Murrow Indian Children’s Home Director, recognized an issue.

Martin said, “I went to the Board of Trustees, and I said, ‘You know, I think we need to develop a transition program because I don’t feel like we’re finishing our job.’”

A new transition program was implemented, allowing children to stay in one of the cottages until they were 21. To help young adults succeed, they are taught how to purchase a car, do banking, budget, and more traits needed to become self-sufficient and live independently by 18 years old.

“One thing about those children who live at home, if they go out and fall on their face, they can go back home,” said Martin. “Our children, if they go out and don’t make it, they just don’t

make it.”

When the children are 14 years old, the transition manager begins assisting in planning what they want to do and will put together a life plan for them. Their life plan typically changes by age 18, but the transition manager continues to work with them to help them accomplish their goals.

One of the current young adults living at Murrow is taking morning classes at Vo-Tech while also attending high school in the afternoon and working a part-time job. They were able to save up enough money to purchase a vehicle too.

According to Martin, the home struggles in three main areas: funding, staffing, and lawn maintenance.

Murrow Indian Children’s Home is a non-profit organization that receives funding through American Baptist Churches and individual donations, and the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and Cherokee Nation donate annually, along with other tribes donating sporadically.

While developing the transitioning program, the administration realized that more funding would be needed.

Martin said, “We realized our funding was coming for Murrow Indian Children’s Home for children under 18.”

The home started the Soaring Eagle gift shop on their grounds to help fund the transitioning program. The children make items to sell, and other



Murrow Indian Children’s Home, founded in 1885 in Atoka, Ok. by Rev. J.S. Murrow, now resides in Muskogee near the Bacone College campus.

vendors also have products to market. They are also looking for grants to provide funding.

Martin said that the Murrow home is currently a level B facility, like a foster home. Although, over the last few years, it has been rated a level C and even D facility because of the increase in the kids’ trauma and aggressive behaviors. Staffing is another issue because people are expected to work with happy and sweet children, not considering the abuse and neglect they dealt with.

Lastly, lawn maintenance is an issue that the home faces. A few times a year, one of the board members brings a group of workers to mow and weed-eat the property. There is no one employed as a maintenance worker.

“Everyone loves these children, they’re good kids, and these kids know that we love them,” said Martin. “I believe we are a good home, and we are a safe home.”

The gift shop will have its Christmas Open House from Nov. 10th -12th, with various products to purchase. There will be door prizes, refreshments, and gifts for the first five customers. Santa Claus will make an appearance on Saturday, and there will be live music.

Donations to the Murrow Indian Children Home can be brought to the home located at 2540 Murrow Circle, Muskogee, Okla., and or on their website. <https://murrowindianchildrenshome.org/>



The HEW and LNC Joint Committee meeting was held on Sept. 20. (MM File)

NC APPROPRIATED FUNDS FOR CHURCHES IN EMERGENCY SESSION

AMENDMENTS WERE MADE TO ADJUST THE DONATION AMOUNT THAT CHURCHES CAN BE GIVEN

by **MORGAN TAYLOR**
MULTIMEDIA PRODUCER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma – A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Emergency Session meeting was held on Sept. 28 at the Mound Building Auditorium.

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

TR 22-149

Authorizing the Principal Chief to submit a grant application to the Department of Housing and Urban Development 2022 Indian Community Development Block grant program for Indian tribes and Alaska Native Villages to construct a Public Facility Welcome Center and Creative Arts Center. Representative Joseph Hicks sponsored the resolution, which was adopted 14-0.

MCN has been informed of the availability of funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development for a Public Facility, Welcome Center, and Creative Arts Center.

NCA 22-111

Authorizing the transfer of all assets and liabilities of the Muscogee Nation Business Enterprise to Muscogee Nation Businesses, LLC and repealing MCNCA title 17, chapter 5, entitled “business enterprise.” Rep. Sandra Golden sponsored the Act, which was adopted 14-0.

The purpose of this Act is to authorize the transfer of all of the assets and liabilities of MNBE to MNB LLC and to repeal the MNBE Act.

NCA 22-112

Approving a Continuing Budget Ordinance and providing for appropriations and authorization for expenditures for FY 2023. Rep. Hicks sponsored the Act, which was adopted as amended 15-0.

A Continuing Budget Ordinance is needed to provide funding to all three branches of government until such time that the FY 2023 Comprehensive Annual Budget is approved by separate legislation.

NCA 22-113

Renacting the “Muscogee (Creek) Nation Victim Protection and Jurisdiction Expansion Act” to implement the Special Tribal Criminal Jurisdiction Provisions in the Violence

Against Women Act Reauthorization Act of 2022 and Amending MCNCA title 6 “Children and Family Relations,” MCNCA title 14 “Crimes and Punishment,” and MCNCA title 27 “Judicial Procedures.” Rep. Galen Cloud sponsored the Act, which was adopted 15-0.

Muscogee (Creek) Nation finds implementation of the Special Tribal Criminal Jurisdiction authority within the Muscogee (Creek) Reservation essential to the safety and protection of all individuals who live and work within the Reservation.

A second Emergency Session followed, addressing two additional pieces of legislation.

TR 22-150

Amending TR 19-076 (suspend all special appropriations and donations) as amended by TR 20-150, TR 21-080, TR 22-128, and TR 22-143. Rep. Hicks sponsored the resolution, which was adopted 14-0.

The legislation allows the Council to temporarily lift the suspension of special appropriations to fund selected donations.

NCA 22-114

Amending MCNCA title 5, § 2-115 entitled “funding” to allow donations to the Muscogee-Seminole-Wichita (MSW) Indian Baptist Association and the Oklahoma Indian Missionary conference. Rep. R. Hicks sponsored the resolution, which was adopted as amended 11-2-2. Rep. J. Hicks and Rep. Golden voted against the legislation, while Rep. Anna Marshall and Rep. Joyce Deere abstained.

The MSW Indian Baptist Association has requested financial assistance in the amount of \$182,940 for renovations and repairs for its Assembly Grounds in Henryetta, and the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference has requested financial aid in the amount of \$50,800 for repairs and electrical work at its Northeast Region Center in Preston, Oklahoma, and food for the 2023 OIMC Annual Conference Session.

View the meeting at www.mcnn.com.

COMMITTEES MOVE FORWARD WITH TIMBER LEASE

MCN TO PURCHASE REAL PROPERTY IN HUGHES CO.

by **MORGAN TAYLOR**
MULTIMEDIA PRODUCER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma - The Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Health, Education, and Welfare Committee and the Land, Natural Resources, and Cultural Preservation Committee held a joint session to discuss property purchases on Sept. 20 at the Mound.

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

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

TR 21-141

Amending TR 22-086 (authorizing the principal chief to execute a real estate contract to purchase property in Creek County, Oklahoma). Rep. Joseph Hicks sponsored the resolution, which passed 9-0.

TR 21-144

Authorizing the Principal Chief to purchase property in Hughes County, Oklahoma. Rep. Anna Marshall sponsored the resolution, which passed 9-0.

The MCNDH desires to purchase property using its Capital funds for the purchase price of \$425,000 plus closing costs.

NCA 22-105

Authorizing an appropriation to purchase timber from the Larnee Holahta Allotment Timber Trespass. Rep. Hicks sponsored the resolution, which passed 9-0.

The timber will benefit multiple MCN programs throughout the Nation, and the sum of \$24,000 will go to the heirs of Larnee Holahta Allotment in an IIM account.

Meetings can be viewed at www.mcnn.com.

MOTORCYCLE PURCHASE POSTPONED

LIGHTHORSE MOTORCYCLE MILITARY FUNERAL DETAIL UNIT POSTPONED IN A JOINT COMMITTEE

by **KAYLEA BERRY**
REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma – A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Business, Finance, and Justice/Health, Education and Welfare Joint Committee meeting was held on Sept. 20 at the Mound Building.

NCA 22-093

A Law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation appropriating funds for the MCN Lighthouse Department to purchase motor-

cycles for a military funeral and detail unit. Representative Thomasene Yahola Osborn sponsored the legislation, which was postponed indefinitely 8-0.

The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Lighthouse Department and the Veterans Affairs Office are requesting funds to purchase three Electra Glide police motorcycles for \$83,691.00 to provide for a military funeral and detail unit.

For video of committee meetings, visit www.mcnn.com.

LNC APPROVES EXPANSION OF THE OCMULGEE MOUNDS NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

COMMITTEE APPROVES MUSCOGEE LADY LEGENDS FUNDING FOR INDIGENOUS DAY OCT. 10

by **KAYLEA BERRY**
REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma – A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Land, Natural Resources & Culture Preservation Committee meeting was held on Sept. 20 at the Mound Building.

TR 22-148

A MCN Tribal resolution that supports the expansion of the Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park, forming a new National Park and Preserve. Representative Nelson Harjo Sr. sponsored the legislation, which passed 4-0.

This resolution supports the MCN creation of the Ocmulgee National Park and Preserve in Georgia to preserve 80,000 acres in conservation under National Park and Preservation status.

Tribal co-management and intergovernmental cooperation will increase public land management, enhance cultural and natural resource protection, expand educational outreach that includes tribal perspectives and ensure coordination for future land use planning, recreation, long-term resource management, and programmatic goals.

NCA 22-106

A MCN law Authorizing a \$2,000 donation to the MCN Lady Legends organization. Representative Sandra Golden sponsored, with Representative Joseph Hicks co-sponsoring. The legislation passed 4-0.

The requested funds are for meals and other essentials for the Indigenous Day event on Oct. 10.

For video of committee meetings, visit www.mcnn.com.

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A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Regular Session meeting was held at the Mound Building in Okmulgee on Sept. 24. (MM File)

MCN VETERANS AFFAIRS SERVICES OFFICE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE NATIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN VETERANS MEMORIAL DEDICATION CEREMONY IN WASHINGTON

A \$2,000 DONATION AUTHORIZED TO HELP THE MUSCOGEE (CREEK) LADY LEGENDS ORGANIZATION WITH THE UPCOMING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY EVENT

by KAYLEA BERRY REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma – A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Regular Session Council meeting was held at the Mound Building in Okmulgee on Sept. 24. The Council addressed the following legislation; the interpretation is based on the language in the bills:

TR 22-135

Authorizing the Principal Chief to execute an amended agreement with the Indian Health Service and supporting the assumption of remaining tribal shares from the Indian Health Services Wewoka Unit. Representative Leonard Gouge sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

MCNDH has determined the assumption that the remaining tribal shares from the Wewoka IHS facility will provide improved services to MCN citizens.

TR 22-136

Confirming the nomination of Bruce Douglas to serve on the College of the Muscogee Nation Board of Regents. Rep. Anna Marshall sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

The full council approved Douglas to serve on the CMN Board of Regents.

TR 22-137

Authorizing the Principal Chief to execute an agreement for gas installation by the Oklahoma Natural Gas Company for the Three Ponds Elderly Housing project. Rep. Galen Cloud sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

The construction of the Three Ponds Elderly Housing Project includes installing pipelines for natural gas utility services for residences. To do so, the Nation has to agree to gas installation by Oklahoma Natural Gas Company.

TR 22-138

Approving the construction contract for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Department of Housing. Rep. Cloud sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

MCN Housing requests approval for a construction contract with MacHill Tribal Construction, LLC, to build four homes (two in Henryetta and two in Wetumka). The total cost for constructing the four homes is \$1,010,618.

TR 22-139

Supporting the 574 Tribal Prayer – Gathering of the Sacred Nations. Rep. Mark Randolph sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

The legislation affirms that seeking the Creator’s intervention for our people and laws currently in the history, the MCN agrees that this land belongs to the Creator, and Creator has given the Indigenous Tribes spiritual authority to speak to it and address issues in this land.

TR 22-140

Authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a license and services agreement with Tyler Technologies for the MCN Lighthorse Police Department. Rep. Randolph sponsored the bill, which was adopted 15-0.

The license and services agreement will supply necessary computer software and hardware services for the MCN Lighthorse Police Department. The Nation will waive sovereign immunity for the Terms and Conditions with Tyler Technologies and Socrata Software and the adoption of the Third-Party End User License Agreement with Red Hat.

TR 21-141

Amending TR 22-086 (authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a Real Estate contract for the purchase of property in Creek County, Oklahoma). Rep. Joseph Hicks sponsored the resolution, which was adopted 15-0.

The amendment is necessary to include the property’s legal description.

TR 22-142

Authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a Memorandum of understanding with Sac and Fox Nation, Thlopthlocco Tribal Town, and the United States Department of the Interior on behalf of its environmental programs to create the Wilcox Oil Company Superfund Site Natural Re-

source Damage Assessment and Restoration Trustee Council. Rep. Hicks sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

The tribal entities seek to enter an MOU to recognize their shared interests and responsibilities for natural resources. Article VI, 7(b) of the MCN Constitution requires National Council Approval of any agreement with a federal, state, or local government entity.

TR 22-143

Amendment to TR 19-076 (Suspending all special appropriations and donations) as amended by TR 20-150, TR 21-080, and TR 22-128. Rep. Nelson Harjo Sr. sponsored the legislation, which was adopted substitute 15-0.

There was a need to amend TR 19-076 to allow donations to the MSW Indian Baptist Association, Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference, Muskogee Oklahoma Native American Association (MONAA), and the Muscogee (Creek) Lady Legends.

TR 22-144

Authorizing the Principal Chief to purchase property located in Hughes County, Okla. Rep. Marshall sponsored, and Rep. Thomasene Yahola Osborn co-sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

The Nation is interested in purchasing a property in Hughes County for use by the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Department of Health. The property’s purchase price is \$425,000 plus any closing costs associated with the purchase.

TR 22-147

Authorizing the Principal Chief, GOAB, and MNGE to enter into an amendment loan agreement with BOKE, NA dba Bank of Oklahoma, and the lender’s party thereto. Rep. R. Hicks sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

The loan was entered on Sept. 27, 2018, and requires an amendment to authorize other lenders, MGNE and GOAB.

TR 22-148

Supporting the expansion of the Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park to form a new National Park and Preserve. Rep. Harjo Sr. sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 14-1. (No Vote?) Rep. () voted against the resolution.

The support will help to preserve 80,000 acres in conservation under National Park and Preservation status.

Tribal co-management and intergovernmental cooperation will increase public land management, enhance cultural and natural resource protection, expand educational outreach that includes tribal perspectives and ensure coordination for future land use planning, recreation, long-term resource management, and programmatic goals.

NCA 22-095

Authorizing the expenditure of the US Department of the Interior Living Languages Grant Program Funds for the benefit of the Mvskoke Language Department. Rep. Gouge sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

Grant funds (\$69,789) will be used to expand access to the Mvskoke language by making resources avail-

able to every MCN citizen by creating a website, hiring a virtual language instructor, and archiving all language material.

NCA 22-096

Authorizing an appropriation to the MCN VASO to participate in the National Native American Veterans Memorial Dedication Ceremony in Washington, DC Rep. Gouge sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 14-1.

VASO is asking for \$35,568 and wishes to take ten veterans to the ceremony and participate in the Festivities.

NCA 22-097

Amending MCNCA Title 22, Chapter 9, entitled “Emergency Management Authority.” Rep. Marshall sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

Emergency Management manager Bobby Howard claimed that the amendment is needed to update for specific insurance purposes since the last update was in 2007.

NCA 22-098

Authorizing the expenditure of grant funds (\$20,442,854) awarded from the Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families American Rescue Plan Act Child Care Supplemental Discretionary Funds for the benefit of the MCN Office of Childcare. Rep. Gouge sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

The grant will be used to continue services that include day-to-day expenditures and direct assistance and will be applied to construction at the Okemah location.

NCA 22-099

Creating a new Chapter 12, entitled “Forestry Management and Fencing Act” in MCNCA Title 28 “Land and Minerals.” Rep. Cloud sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

The law will protect restricted and trust property by defining boundaries and raising the value of restricted and trust property serviced.

The program will be funded through the Comprehensive Annual Budget annually for the administration, professional staff, equipment, and operation; the Bureau of Indian Affairs will assist with up to \$50,000. The program operates under the management and direction of MCN Realty Trust Services.

NCA 22-100

Amending MCNCA Title 37 § 2-203 to alter the distribution of funds. Rep. Randolph sponsored the bill, which was adopted 14-1. (No vote?)

Funding distribution in the 2023 Fiscal Year will be deposited into the Gaming fund until the NC revisits the distribution percentages of Tribal Gaming Funds to determine the best and most effective distribution percentages for the future operation of the Nation.

NCA 22-101

Transferring remaining the Fiscal Year 2022 Funds from the Gaming Operations Authority Board (GOAB) to Muscogee Nation Business Holdings, LLC (MNBH). Rep. R. Hicks sponsored the bill, which was adopted 15-0.

The funds appropriated to the GOAB by NCA 21-66 were intended for gaming purposes. Since the repeal of GOAB and the formation of MNGE and MNBH, the remaining GOAB funds that have not been spent since March 2022 should be transferred to MNBH to carry out the Nation’s purpose of gaming and economic development.

NCA 22-102

Amending MCNCA Title 5, 2-115 entitled “Funding” to allow donations to the MSW Indian Baptist Association and the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference. Rep. Harjo Sr. sponsored the legislation, which failed 10-3-2.

The amendment grants the MSW Indian Baptist Association \$182,940 for various repairs and projects. Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference is requesting \$50,800 for food and supplies.

NCA 22-103

Authorizing a donation to Muscogee Oklahoma Native American Association (MONAA). Rep. Mary Crawford sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

The Act’s purpose is to authorize a donation to MONAA of \$2,000.00. MONAA Secretary Margaret Kelley is accountable for the funds allocated by submitting original receipts to the Office of Controller within thirty (30) days after the 2022 Indigenous Peoples Day Events have concluded.

NCA 22-104

Appropriating funds for the MCN VASO to purchase motorcycles for a military funeral and detail unit. Rep. Yahola Osborn sponsored the legislation, which was postponed to Oct. 29 Quarterly Session 15-0.

If approved, the law would provide for purchasing three police motorcycles, assisting VASO in properly escorting military funerals. The estimated total cost is \$83,691.

NCA 22-105

Appropriating funds to purchase timber from the Larnee Holahta allotment timber trespass. Representative Joseph Hicks sponsored the legislation, which was adopted on 14-0-1.

The Larnee Holahta 160-acre allotment was unlawfully entered and timber cut. MCN wants to purchase the timber from the heirs of the Larnee Holahta Allotment for \$24,000. The price for the unlawfully cut timber would be based on the estimated amount of “ricks of wood,” and the harvested timber will benefit MCN citizens in accordance with MCNCA Title 32. Procurement 3-102 and 3-103.

NCA 22-106

Authorizing a donation of \$2,000 to Muscogee (Creek) Lady Legends Organization. Rep. Sandra Golden sponsored, and Rep. J. Hicks co-sponsored the legislation, which was adopted substitute 15-0.

The Muscogee (Creek) Lady Legends Organization requested \$2,000 to help with food, drinks, paper products, utensils, gas, t-shirts, and possible purchase of tables and chairs for its Indigenous Peoples Day event.

Meetings can be watched at www.mcnnn.com.

COLLEGE STUDENTS RECEIVE FREE LIVING ESSENTIALS

DAY OF GIVING EVENT SHARES GENEROSITY

by BRADEN HARPER REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma – College can be a challenging time for first-time students trying to make ends meet. Often, young students are adjusting to living on their own for the first time. Independent living creates a list of essential needs. The College of the Muscogee Nation helped meet those needs by hosting the annual Day of Giving Event on Sept. 21.

CMN students and faculty organized the event. Students Aiyanna Tanyan (Seminole), Hunter Johnson (Muscogee), and Shaylyn Proctor (Muscogee) donated their time to serve their classmates.

Tanyan said she wanted to give back after personally experiencing the effects of the event’s generosity.

“A lot of people come together here for the students at the college,” Tanyan said. “They had the day of giving last year, which was big and helpful.”

The event provided donated items such as food, clothes, toiletries and school supplies. According to Tanyan, although these items may seem small, they go a long way in helping students.

“It just takes a lot off of you not having to go to the store and buy those things out of your pocket,” Tanyan said. “Us being a part of that and then helping today and giving

back to the incoming freshmen or transfer students that could use it too, I just wanted to be helpful.”

The event featured various Muscogee (Creek) Nation booths, including Behavioral Health, Mvskoke Youth Services and the College of the Muscogee Nation. Various religious organizations, including Somebody Cares and Save Our Streets Ministries, were present to provide a blessing for the community and present an interpretive dance. Some came as far as Texas and the East Coast.

Marlene Yeo is the director of Somebody Cares New England. Yeo, like many others, traveled hundreds of miles to volunteer their time and serve others.

“This is our fifth time out here to the Muscogee Creek Nation, and it is a joy to come and serve,” Marlene Yeo said.

According to Yeo, what brought her to serve the Muscogee (Creek) Nation was a spiritual call to action.



Students pick up school supplies at the Day of Giving event. (Braden Harper/Reporter)

“All of a sudden, in prayer, something happened to me. Something that has not happened before, which was a compelling love that I felt for the First Nations People,” Yeo said. “I heard God speak to me and say, ‘I have not forgotten My people,’ and from that moment, I knew there was something I needed to do.”

Although the supplies and essential living items were genuinely appreciated, what meant more to the students were the people that came together to serve the student body.

“Whether you’re a Creek Citizen or non-tribal, you’re here, and all these people are coming together to help you,” Tanyan said.

BOARDING SCHOOL SURVIVOR TELLS HIS STORY

J.C. KANARD ENTERED THE BOARDING SCHOOL SYSTEM AT FIVE YEARS OLD. HE WENT TO MULTIPLE BOARDING SCHOOLS AND PUBLIC SCHOOLS BEFORE GRADUATING AT 21

by **MORGAN TAYLOR**
MULTIMEDIA PRODUCER
& by **KAYLEA BERRY**
REPORTER

WEWOKA, Oklahoma – The story of J.C. Kanard started in the small rural community of Dustin, located in the southern region of the Mvskoke Reservation, on April 21, 1938. He was born to a full-blood Muscogee (Creek) woman, Rosanna Kanard, the daughter of Nellie Field and Josiah Kanard, who were both certified as full-blood Creeks by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Albert Rice, a non-native, is Kanard’s biological father. According to Kanard, his grandfather “ran Rice off” using a weapon, intimidation, and threats. Rice eventually settled on the West Coast in California. Kanard was well into his 50s before meeting Rice for the first time. Rice died just a few years after they first met.

Kanard’s original birth certificate read J.C. Rice as his legal name. However, in 1959 at 21, Kanard changed his last name to his mother’s maiden name Kanard. He has never known what J.C. stands for.

His mother was married to Mr. William Powell of Holdenville, a non-native who fathered Kanard’s three younger brothers, William Jr., Sandy, Jimmy, and younger sister Bonnie. Each was born between the years 1945-1953. Of his siblings, he is the last one living.

When Kanard was a young boy, he remembers his infant sister being taken from the home by an aunt, Sally Bunny, who ultimately adopted and raised the little girl. His sister, the child of Rosanna Kanard and Edward Scott, went by the name of Lorene Bunny. He did not see her again until they crossed paths at the same school later in life.

Kanard primarily lived with his grandparents in Dustin and occasionally stayed with his mother and stepfather. He would work with his grandparents in the fields.

“I picked cotton when I was three of four years old,” said Kanard. “I think my mother was there sometimes.”

Kanard has few childhood memories of his mother.

“I didn’t have that much of a connection with her,” Kanard said.

He recalls one time staying

with his mother and stepfather for a week.

“It was getting dark, and I said where do you want me to sleep,” he said. “She threw me a blanket and said, ‘you sleep under the bed.’”

He can remember being dropped off by his mother and her husband when he was five years old at the Euchee Mission Boarding School over an hour away in Sapulpa, Okla. Euchee was originally a co-educational facility under the direction of the Presbyterian Mission Board, authorized in 1891 and built in 1894.

The school opened in the fall of 1894 with about fifty students. At first, the school had only two dormitories and a three-room schoolhouse on 40 acres of tribal property. The Bureau of Indian Affairs took over operations in 1907.

It became a boy’s school in 1925, and 1929 initiated the integration of older students into the Sapulpa public school system. All remaining students were transferred to the Sapulpa public schools in 1947, when the school was abolished.

Kanard attended the school for first, second, and third grade between 1943 and 1946. When he first arrived, he only spoke the Mvskoke language and did not know English.

From what he can recall, most of what he learned at the school was how to read, write and speak English. During his time at the school, he participated in a Christmas performance and recited John 3:7 from the Bible. Nearly 80 years later and he still remembers it.

“It says, ‘Marvel not that I say unto you; you must be born again,’” Kanard said.

Christianity was not something new for Kanard. He attended Middle Creek #1 Baptist Church in Carson and occasionally Thlewarle Indian Baptist Church in Dustin with his grandparents. Kanard took heart to what John 3:7 says and gave his life to God on Easter Sunday a year later.

With his head down and eyes looking at the ground, he spoke of more memories at Euchee Mission Boarding School.

“Us boys, we’d be playing out on the playground, and you know how kids do; they get carried away,” Kanard said. “We’d get to talking in our native language.”

According to Kanard, the boys were punished for using their na-

tive language.

“They’d take us into the basement of the auditorium,” Kanard said. “Pull our britches off, we’d grab the other end of the table, lay across the table, and they’d spank us.”

Kanard said that after the punishment, the kids were told, “We don’t speak the native language around here; you have to speak English.”

Unfortunately, Kanard has no pictures of himself while attending Euchee. The school provided no photos or documents to the students or parents.

At the start of his fourth-grade year, Kanard transferred to Sequoyah Boarding School in Tahlequah. He also completed fifth and sixth grade there.

The only bad time he had at the school had him laughing while telling the story of when he and another boy were playing in poison oak and didn’t know it.

“It wasn’t too bad other than that week I spent at the hospital,” Kanard said. “I guess I was allergic.”

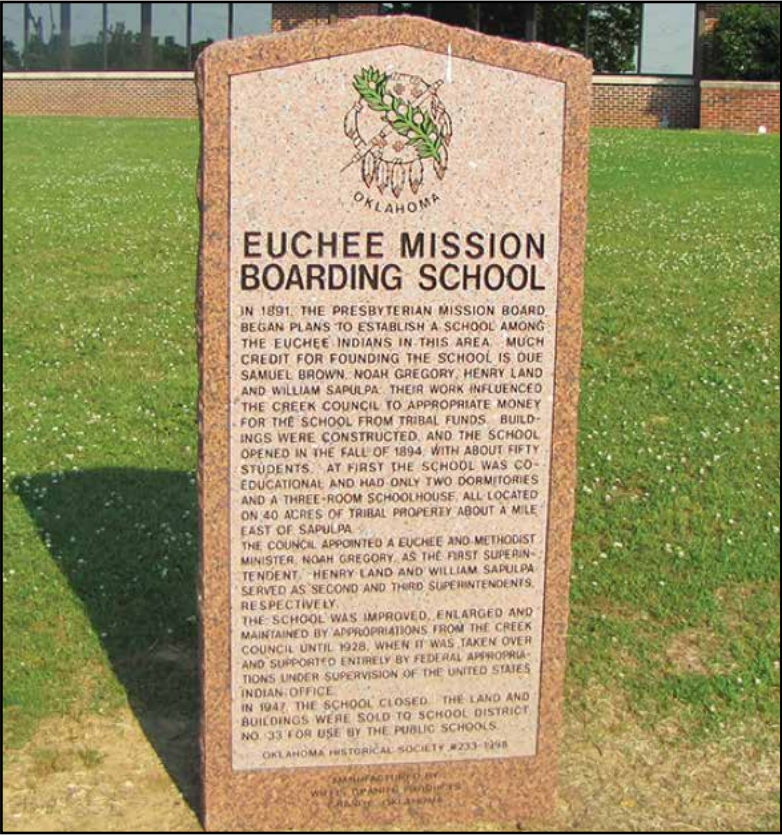
He remembers being bathed in tar each day for relief.

Sequoyah originated in 1871 due to the Cherokee National Council’s intent to house the orphans of the Civil War. The council authorized the Chief of the Cherokee Nation at the time to sell the Cherokee Orphan Training School, including 40 acres of land and all the buildings, to the U.S. Department of Interior for \$5,000 in 1914. The name was later changed to Sequoyah Orphan Training School.

It underwent a few name changes, added the seventh and eighth grades, and then became Sequoyah Schools in 2006. Today, Sequoyah Schools enrolls more than 300 students representing 42 tribes and 14 states. Students are eligible to attend if they are members of a federally recognized Indian tribe or one-fourth blood descendants of such members.

After three years at Sequoyah, Kanard’s grandparents decided to keep him home, and he attended Dustin Public Schools.

Due to the lack of documentation, one of his teachers brought him to the principal to determine what grade he should be placed into. He should have been starting seventh grade, but according to Kanard, the principal said to “put



Euchee Mission Boarding School marker stands on Sapulpa Jr. High School campus. The Sapulpa Public School campus is where the Euchee Mission Boarding School stood before 1947. (Web photo/K. Latham Flickr)

him back in third grade. Those Indian schools don’t know how to teach.”

Kanard said there were just as many Native students at the public schools as at the boarding schools. He did not have issues fitting in and was able to participate in extracurricular activities.

He remembers seeing his sister Lorene while he attended Dustin. “She was just starting school about first or second grade,” he said.

Even though she was just an infant the last time he saw her, he claims he remembered her face.

“I recognized her right off,” Kanard said. “I don’t know if the Lord was telling me who she was or what, but it worked out.”

From that point on, the two were able to stay in contact.

Kanard attended Fairview Public School for the seventh grade but eventually transferred to Chilocco Indian School. He learned carpentry skills while at school. According to Kanard, the students in the carpentry classes reroofed the multi-story dormitory building while attending the school. The siblings reunited again at Chilocco, where Kanard only attended for a year, but Lorene ended up graduating.

“Whatever tore up, we had to fix it,” he said.

He attempted to play football and baseball at Chilocco but did not get to play much.

Kanard finished his high school years at Holdenville Public School, graduating at 21. He enlisted in the military at 16 years old, paid \$20 monthly, and worked

at the local IGA grocery store, where he earned 50 cents an hour. He did this to provide for himself instead of playing sports, where he faced issues with nepotism.

“Coaches had their picks, and I didn’t get to play,” said Kanard.

He said the bankers, merchants, police, and lawyers’ kids would always get the most playing time even though he practiced as hard as they did.

After graduating high school, he met and married the love of his life, Frida, and they had three children together. She passed away in 2013.

At the age of 85, Kanard buried many memories he carried with him through his childhood. Although during those times, he never felt like he could talk about it, even with his grandparents.

“I didn’t tell them anything about boarding schools,” Kanard said. “They never did ask.”

Still, he holds no grudges over the era and “carries on.”

Kanard said, “I just put it in my mind that it just happened, and I don’t hold anyone responsible or anything like that.”

The stories of boarding school survivors are pertinent to the Native American people’s history. While Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland travels around the country collecting oral stories, Mvskoke Media is determined to gather those of the Mvskoke people specifically. Anyone interested in sharing the story of boarding school impacts is encouraged to contact Mvskoke Media at 918-732-7720.

FIRST MVSKOKE SPELLING BEE HELD AT THE WETUMKA INDIAN COMMUNITY CENTER

MVSKOKE SPELLING BEE TESTING CITIZENS’ LANGUAGE KNOWLEDGE

by **KAYLEA BERRY**
REPORTER

WETUMKA, Oklahoma -The Wetumka Indian Community Center held a Mvskoke Spelling Bee for the first time on Sept. 17. Wetumka Indian Community Center Assistant Secretary and Treasurer and Wetumka Sucker Day Committee member Timothy Yahola, who goes by his middle name Eric, invited the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Language Preservation and Revitalization Program to put on the Spelling Bee.

Yahola reached out to the Language Preservation and Revitalization Program because he wanted to include an event in the annual Sucker Day celebration involving Native American culture.

“Being a part of the Wetumka Indian Community, I wanted to get more Creek or Native American activities and the Indian community more involved in the celebration to create unity and have something for everyone,” Yahola said.

Wetumka Indian Community member Phyllis Noon participated in the first Mvskoke Spelling Bee at the Wetumka Indian Community Center.

“It’s new to me, and I think it’s going to be educational for those that want to learn our language,” said Noon. “I’m going to be studying on this [Mvskoke word list] because it’s good for the people; that way, they can pronounce the word right.”

“I like it, it’s my first time here, and I’ll be coming back.”

Muscogee (Creek) Nation Language Preservation and Revitalization Program Manager Judy Montiel is pleased with the new interest in the program. She said the program had conducted the Mvskoke Spelling Bee for four consecutive years. Excluding the pandemic, the event was hosted at the Eufaula Canadian Tribal Town, and Wetumka is the second location to hold the event.

“I think the more we do these, the more the word gets out,” Montiel said. “And we’re thankful that Wetumka reached out.”

The MCN Language Preservation and Revitalization Program has specific funds from its budget to hold events such as the spelling bees. Other events the department offers include language fellowship, hymn singing, Zoom classes, and in-person classes at the community’s request.

The department received a grant of \$82,609 in 2021 to increase the number of citizens listening and becoming familiar with the language. There are more specifics about the funding in a previous article on MvskokeMedia.com.

“We have a grant through the ARPA [American Rescue Plan Act] that we were awarded for a three-year grant to host storytelling events in the language,” said Montiel. “This next year, we will target eight different communities to host those language-speaking events.”

“We must have at least three fluent speakers to share a story in the language and translate for this next fiscal year.”

Yahola talked about his participation in classes offered by the Language program.

“I’ve taken a few beginner language classes and learned some of the basics,” said Yahola. “I did have a Creek Mvskoke song class that I was a part of a couple of years ago.”

“And that’s where I learned



A list of the Mvskoke words used in the competition sit on a table during the Mvskoke Spelling Bee on Sept. 17, 2022, in Wetumka, Oklahoma. (Mvskoke Media photo by Kaylea Berry/Reporter)

a little bit about pronunciation also.”

Before the spelling bee, Montiel said that if you know the “a,” “b,” “i” and “u” sound, then you can figure out how to spell the words.

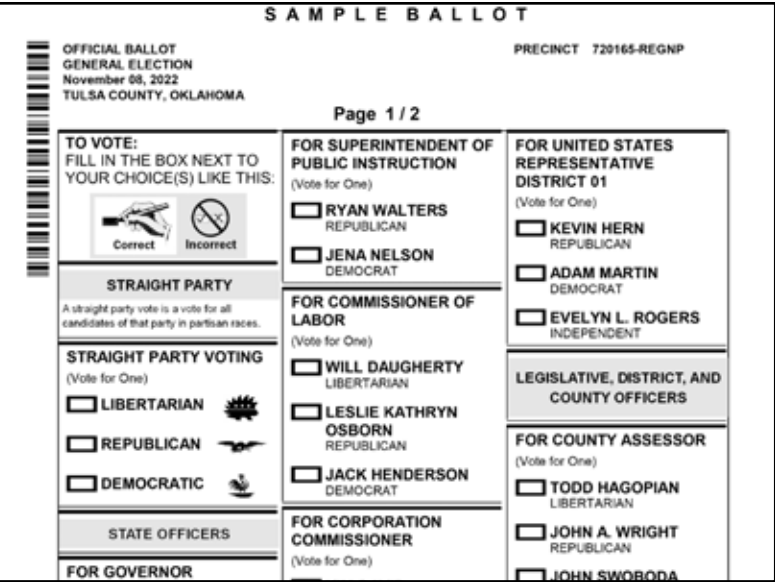
Yahola learned those sounds and now thinks Mvskoke is more straightforward than English.

“English has words with the same sound but spelled differently, like they’re, there, and their,” said Yahola. “That’s a little more confusing than Mvskoke because it’s more consistent and less tricky.”

“There may be a couple of

the double letters like “ff,” but other than that, when you know what makes each sound, I feel like I could spell just about anything if I hear it correctly.”

Those interested in hosting a Mvskoke Spelling Bee or participating in a storytelling event are encouraged to reach out to the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Language Preservation and Revitalization Program at 918-732-7649. Those interested in joining the Wetumka Indian Community or staying up to date on current community events are encouraged to attend the monthly meetings on the second Thursday at 7:00 p.m.



Official General Election Ballot offers many candidates who will have a role in state and tribal relationships. (Provided)

HOW THIS YEAR’S ELECTION COULD AFFECT TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY IN OKLAHOMA

TRIBAL CITIZENS FEEL THEIR PERSPECTIVE IS LEFT OUT OF POLITICAL COVERAGE

by BRITTANY HARLOW
VVN

(MUSCOGEE NATION) Community members voiced their opinions about news coverage relating to elections and politics during VNN outreach efforts this past summer.

People we talked with said there is a lack of Indigenous-focused politicians and election news coverage, which they believe prevents Tribal citizens from voting.

In an attempt to inform voters who are concerned about the Indigenous perspective, VNN has gathered information regarding three key races in the general election this November, the issues involved, and how the outcomes of those races could impact tribal sovereignty.

(The following positions and candidates are listed in order of appearance on sample ballots for the upcoming election. Sample ballots are available now through the OK Voter Portal.)

GOVERNOR NATALIE BRUNO (Libertarian)

“Tribes” are listed as the second top issue on Bruno’s campaign site, which states that both the state and federal government need to cease undermining tribal sovereignty.

Other comments on this page include:

· The Supreme Court’s McGirt decision reaffirms the United States’ treaties.

· The State of Oklahoma has been acting outside of its jurisdiction for over 100 years now.

· Working with the tribes rather than against them will create a better Oklahoma for all of its citizens.

Bruno describes herself as a businesswoman on her campaign page as well as a former CASA volunteer, board member of Oklahoma Lawyers for Children, and youth sports coach.

Click here to sign up for free VNN news and updates.

KEVIN STITT (Republican)
Stitt was elected governor in 2018 and assumed office in 2019.

Despite being a citizen of the Cherokee Nation, Stitt has been at odds with many of the state’s tribes since taking office, including the Five Treaty Tribes. From the Cherokee, Chickasaw, and Choctaw Nations suing Stitt over gaming compacts to the Stitt administration’s repeated attempts to reverse the Supreme Court’s McGirt decision, the current governor has received quite a bit of pushback for his refusal to work with tribal nations.

“Tribal Relations” are not listed under the top issues of his campaign site, though Stitt references the ongoing McGirt battle under Public Safety, saying he has “stood with District Attorneys, Sheriffs, and public safety professionals across the state in calling for the courts and the U.S. Supreme Court to deliver much-needed clarity on the Oklahoma v. McGirt ruling that is wreaking havoc in Eastern Oklahoma.”

JOY HOFMEISTER (Democrat)

Hofmeister is the current Superintendent of Public Instruction for the State of Oklahoma, a position she assumed in 2015.

She lists “Tribal Nations” as the 8th issue on her campaign site, which states that “Joy recognizes and supports the sovereignty of tribal nations in Oklahoma, and respects the significant contributions tribal members make to our communities through education, healthcare, law enforcement, charitable donations and economic impact.”

Other comments on this page include:

Oklahoma’s tribal nations represent a \$15 billion impact on our state’s economy.

Joy knows that a prosperous future for all Oklahomans depends on a shared understanding of sovereignty and a deeper partnership with tribal citizens.”

Hofmeister calls out Stitt on the homepage of her campaign site, saying in part that he wastes time “fighting with tribal governments and the Supreme Court”.

Hofmeister attended the United Indian Nations of Oklahoma (UINO) candidate forum in August, where she said she will work to advance partnerships that support Indigenous people.

Find more VNN Indigenous news coverage here.

DR. ERVIN STONE YEN (Independent)

Yen lists “Tribal Relations” as the 4th issue on his campaign site, which includes “An Apology To Our Nations First People”.

Other comments on this page include:

“My administration will be wholly committed to working with tribal leaders to resolve outstanding issues and mend relationships between the state and our tribes.”

“Once elected, I would immediately propose creating a specific position for a tribal-governmental relation liaison, to ensure that their voice is always present (and heard) as we are all working towards moving Oklahoma in a positive, forward direction.”

Yen practiced medicine in Oklahoma City for 38 years.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

LYNDA STEELE (Libertarian)

Steele attended the United Indian Nations of Oklahoma (UINO) candidate forum in August, where she said she respects both tribal sovereignty and tribal jurisdiction.

She also said currently there is no division for sovereign nations at the Oklahoma Attorney General’s Office and, if elected, she will create one.

Steele served over 12 years in the Oklahoma National Guard and became the first female artilleryman in the state.

STORY CODE: OKVOTE

GENTNER F. DRUMMOND (Republican)


In June, Drummond beat out current Oklahoma Attorney General John O’Connor (appointed by Stitt following the resignation of former AG Mike Hunter last year) for the Republican nomination.

Neither “Tribal Relations” nor “McGirt” is mentioned on Drummond’s campaign site, though a spokesperson for his campaign did tell The Frontier that “Mr. Drummond will collaborate with all parties to restore the partnership that has benefitted both the State and the tribes for decades.”

According to his campaign site, Drummond led the first U.S. combat mission of the Gulf War and is one of

OK ELECTION - 8

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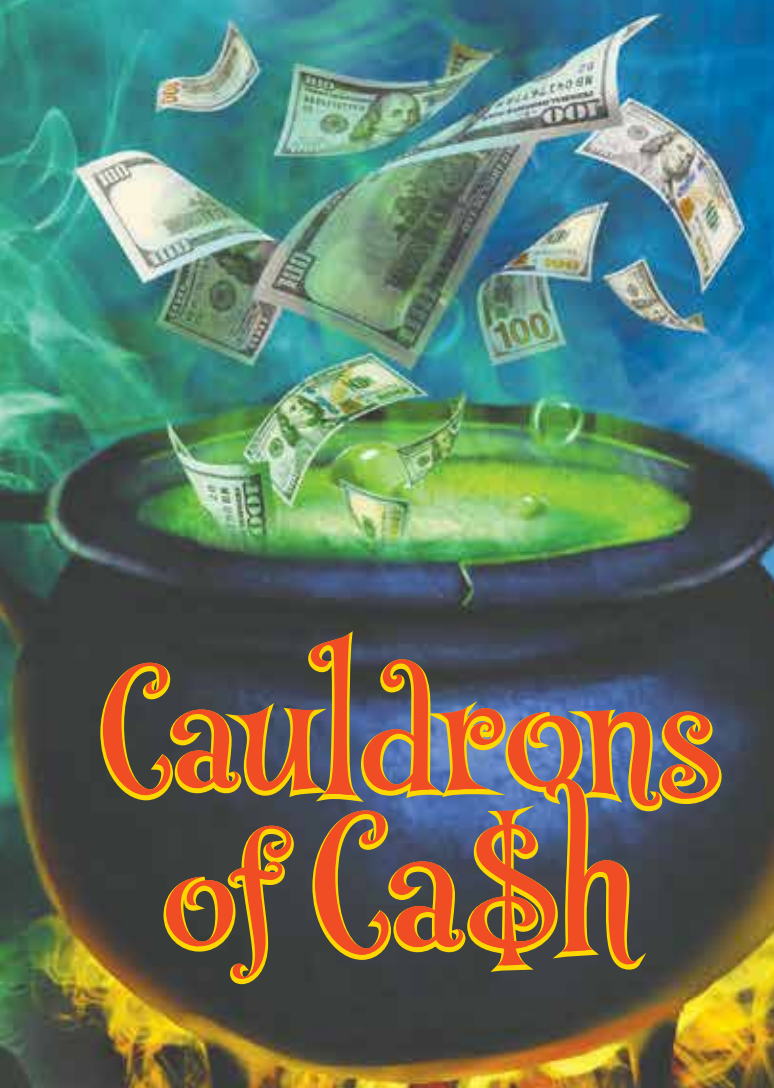
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OK ELECTION
Continued from Page 7

Oklahoma’s most highly decorated veterans. He is also a rancher, lawyer, banker, and business owner.

SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

RYAN WALTERS (Republican)
Stitt named Walters Secretary of Public Education in 2020.

“Tribal Relations” are not listed under the top issues of his campaign site.

Walters has been an outspoken supporter of House Bill 1775, a so-called critical race theory ban.

He lists “Critical Race Theory” as the top issue on his campaign site, saying “CRT is a dangerous and racist philosophy, and all it does is divide and characterize entire groups of people solely based on the color of their skin”.

Last month, KOSU reported that despite CRT being linked with HB 1775, the letter of the law does not in

fact ban CRT.

It does, however, ban concepts teaching that “Any individual should feel discomfort, guilt, anguish or any other form of psychological distress on account of their race or sex”, which has prompted some educators to stop teaching Indigenous history for fear of retribution.

The Osage Nation Congress recently adopted a resolution calling for a repeal of the law due to its chilling effect.

Walters taught eight years as a high school history teacher at McAlister High School.

JENA NELSON (Democrat)
“Tribal Relations” are not listed under the top priorities of her campaign site.

Nelson’s top listed priority is “Keeping Public Dollars in our Public Schools”, condemning a proposed voucher plan to use public funds for private schools.

Regarding HB 1775, Nelson said its structure is “full of ambiguity and this situation is just one example of

how vague this education legislation is in practice. With teachers — myself included — back in the classroom, it is urgent that we address these ambiguities and implement due process and clear protocols for our school districts and educators.”

After attending the Choctaw Nation’s Partnership of Summer School Education learning program earlier this year, Nelson said the tribe’s partnership with local communities and schools brings an enhanced learning experience to children, and serves as a shining example of what public education could be across Oklahoma.

Nelson is a 6th and 7th grade English teacher at Classen SAS Middle School.

The deadline to register to vote in the Oklahoma General Election is October 14.

Election Day is November 8.

All candidates will have a chance to share their views about protecting tribal sovereignty at the next UNO candidate forum happening October 27 at the First Americans Museum in Oklahoma City.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Pickett Chapel Gospel Singing

On Oct. 15 Pickett Chapel will host a gospel singing. The food sale will begin at 4 PM, Singing begins at 5 PM. MC’s are Rev. David Little and Rev. Ray Samuel. The event will take place at Pickett Chapel Church located at 17610 South Hickory Street in Sapula. For more information or directions call or text Salena at 918-269-8569 or 918-321-3109.

every second Thursday of each month from 8AM to 12PM for coffee & donuts. We will periodically have guests from various state and federal agencies as well as Muscogee Nation tribal departments in attendance to inform and assist Muscogee Veterans of the various services and programs available to you and answering any questions you may have. We look forward to your attendance and Mvto for your service.

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.

Lewis and Mandy Marshall Family Reunion
September 3, 2022
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
At the Wetumka Indian Community Center
Family are to bring three gifts: door prize, auction gift, and a gift for a child (ages 2-16)
It will be a potluck dinner
For any questions please contact: Edwin Marshall (405) 221-7940 or Beth Bell (580) 320-7420

POSITION AVAILABLE
TCIC has a position open for a Part-Time Cook. The hours will vary each week. To apply for this position, fill out an employment application. Applications are available at the TCIC office. Resumes may be emailed to tulic@muscogeenation.com or faxed to 918.298.2466. Applications/resumes will be accepted until the position is filled.

POSITION AVAILABLE
TCIC is currently looking for a Part-Time Handyman. If you are interested, submit a resume and/or an employment application to the Tulsa Creek Indian Community. Employment applications are available at the Tulsa Creek Indian Community. Resumes may be emailed to tulic@muscogeenation.com or faxed to 918.298.2466. Applications/resumes will be accepted until the position is filled.

Muscogee Veterans
Muscogee Veterans, please join us at the Muscogee Nation Veterans Affairs building on the tribal complex in Okmulgee, OK

OBITUARY



Pamela Turner Washington

Pamela Turner Washington passed away December 28, 2021

after a long battle with cancer. Pamela was born to Nancy Barnett and John Yandell on May 27, 1960, and was raised by Gil and Ina Turner. She received her PhD in rhetoric from the University of Southwest Louisiana at Lafayette. Pam worked at The University of Central Oklahoma for 28 years and was the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts from 2004-2012. When called upon, she was appointed to and selflessly served the College of Fine Arts and Design as Interim Dean and Dean until her retirement. In 2017, she retired and was honored by the Regional University System of Oklahoma (RUSO) regents for her outstanding service to higher education in Oklahoma granted the distinguished status of Dean Emeritus of the College of Fine Arts and Design and Professor Emeritus in the English department. She loved to

travel, and reading was her passion. She was a devoted wife and mother to her blended family.

She is preceded in death by her father, Gil Turner.

She is survived by her loving husband of 23 years Mike Washington; her parents Ina Turner, Nancy Barnett and husband Bob, John Yandell and wife Ann; daughter, Nicole Washington and partner Con Murphy; sons Cory Washington and wife Darcy, Bryan Pittman and partner Jennie Strupeck, Adam Pittman and wife Meghan; daughter Allison Snider and husband Michael; Grandchildren, Daniel, Luke, and Charlette Pittman, Avary Pittman, Brynlee, Shaylee, and Rhylee Washington; siblings, Craig Turner, Steve Warner, Becca Yocham, Lisa Hayden, Linda Ault, Kimberly Parham, Jaimee March, and Elizabeth Johnston

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