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INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY CELEBRATED ACROSS MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION

LARGEST CELEBRATIONS INCLUDED OKMULGEE, MUSKOGEE, AND TULSA

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

MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION, Oklahoma - Over 574 federally recognized tribes celebrated the modern-day Indigenous Peoples' Day in various states, including multiple locations throughout the Mvskoke Reservation, such as Okmulgee, Tulsa, and Muskogee, on Oct 10. President Joe Biden made the first federal proclamation of the holiday last year and did so again this year. However, it is still technically the nationally recognized holiday, Columbus Day. Two congressional bills aim to change that.

Since Biden's initial proclamation, over 130 states and cities have adopted the recognition and observance of Indigenous Celebrations for the day.

The controversy regarding

the holidays' meaning goes back some years, with South Dakota being the first state to recognize the holiday in 1990. Celebrations on the Mvskoke Reservation are a recent tradition that started within the last five years.

Creek Council House

Many people attended the Fifth Annual Indigenous Peoples' Day celebration on the historical Creek Council House grounds on Oct 11 in Okmulgee. Speakers, singers, and vendors provided entertainment for attendees. The Muscogee Lady Legends cooked and served a free lunch for everyone. Brenda Golden, Indigenous Peoples' Day co-organizer, spoke to everyone about the importance of this celebration.

"Our biggest goal is to come out and celebrate being Creek and Mvskoke and just being Indigenous," Golden said. "There are several cities here in Oklahoma that are celebrating today, ... we're just joining

in with the rest of the Natives across the state." Creek hymn singing, 'Indian Elvis,' Seminole Nation Historic Preservation, Sons of Mvskoke, and more entertained the crowd during the celebration. Through songs and stories, traditions were told and remembered.

Vendors sold traditional clothing, t-shirts, blankets, pillows, jewelry, and other handmade items. Some of the participating vendors were 4 Locv, Red Dirt Rags, Lucinda Hickory Research Institute, Mvskoke Nation Youth Services, and MCN Election Board.

"I believe that we fed about 500 people today," Mvskoke Lady Legends chairperson Rita Williams said. "The council legislation that passed to give us \$2,000 to help this year, I don't think without their help we would've been able to do this."

Terra Beaver, Indigenous Peoples' Day co-organizer, talked about the importance of everyone coming together and recog-

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MONAA and Bacone College hosted this year's celebration in hopes of educating attendees about Southern Plains tribes. (Morgan Taylor/Multimedia Producer)



Mvskoke citizens sing to the beat of the drum for the closing ceremony and prayer at the Indigenous Peoples' Day celebration in Okmulgee, Okla., Oct 10, 2022. (Kaylea Berry/Reporter)



Veterans Benefits Administration staff and advocates helped veterans and dependents fill out paperwork for new, existing, and previously denied claims based on their records during the Presumptive Conditions Campaign event at the College of Muscogee Nation campus in Okmulgee, Okla., Oct. 12. (Mvskoke Media photo by Kaylea Berry/Reporter)

VETERANS LIVE WITH THE RESULTS OF THEIR SACRIFICE FOR THEIR COUNTRY

MCN HOSTED THE VA PRESUMPTIVE CONDITIONS CAMPAIGN EVENT FOR VETERANS AND THEN DEPENDENTS

by **KAYLEA BERRY**
REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma - The Muscogee Nation Veterans Affairs Services Office, Veteran Affairs Office of Tribal Government Relations, and the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs worked together and hosted a US Department of Veterans Affairs Presumptive Conditions Campaign. The event aided 24 veterans in applying for benefits and services based on presumptive disabilities, conditions presumed to be military service related by the VA that can appear before or after being discharged from the military.

The Presumptive Conditions Campaign began in 2018 with nearly 30 tribal nations interested in holding a presumptive event. However, covid hindered the program's ability to go out to help service members and their families. This was the first

in-person event since the pandemic. During the 2022 fiscal year, the campaign has worked with 24 tribal nations and has six more events already planned for 2023, and that number is expected to increase before January.

Veterans were required to submit their DD-214, medical records, dependent records if applicable, and any other military documentation needed to support their time in service for their claim(s).

Veterans who have never filed are assigned to a Veterans Benefits Administration's Regional Office service representative or a state service officer. They help them submit an intent to file if they do not have all their necessary paperwork or help them file the claim if they have the documents needed to proceed. The intent to file gives the veteran or spouse a one-year window to bring the required documentation to file the claim.

The presumptive events allow

veterans to sit with a VBA rep one-on-one and tell their story. The reps can connect service members' disabilities with their actions based on the provided information.

According to Veteran Affairs Office of Tribal Government Relations Tribal Relations Specialist Mary Culley, the goal is to get the veteran approved.

"The more information you provide them about what your role was in the military, what you did in the military, allows them to kind of look for those triggers for things that might be in your military records that they can use to help approve that claim," said Culley.

VBA staff and advocates helped veterans and dependents fill out paperwork for new, existing, and previously denied claims based on their records.

"The VBA regional office staff here can access their [ser-

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LIGHTHORSE POLICE OFFICER RETURNS HOME AFTER AN EXTENDED HOSPITAL STAY

PATROLMAN LARRY PORTER SUFFERED TEMPORARY PARALYSIS

by **BRADEN HARPER**
REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma - Muscogee (Creek) Nation Lighthorse Police Officer Larry Porter returned home from the hospital on Oct. 14 after a prolonged stay, suffering from what was described as a "mysterious illness" that left him temporarily paralyzed. He was escorted home by a police convoy. The street outside his home was lined with MCN Lighthorse Police Department vehicles flashing red and blue lights. Porter was greeted by friends and family, an emotionally charged sight to behold.

Before Porter had the oppor-

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Muscogee (Creek) Nation Lighthorse Police Officer Larry Porter embraces Chief Richard Phillips after returning home from the hospital. Porter is a patrolman with a special operations team of officers from the north and south divisions. He had been hospitalized over the past month, suffering temporary paralysis. Okmulgee, OK, Oct. 14, 2022. (Braden Harper/Reporter)



(From Left) Secretary of Health Shawn Terry, National Council Speaker William Lowe, Principal Chief David Hill, OU President Joseph Harroz, and other leaders from the University of Oklahoma broke bread and announced their new healthcare partnership. Tulsa, OK, Oct. 12. (Braden Harper/Reporter)

COUNCIL OAK HEALTHCARE PARTNERS WITH OU TO PROVIDE ADVANCED SURGICAL SERVICES

MEDICAL SERVICES NOW EXPANDED FOR MCN CITIZENS

by **BRADEN HARPER**
REPORTER

TVLSE, Oklahoma - Muscogee (Creek) Nation Council Oak Comprehensive Healthcare announced a new partnership with the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine in a press conference luncheon on Oct. 12.

The partnership would specifically work with the OU-TU School of Community Medicine. It will allow healthcare professionals from the school to practice medicine at Council Oak Comprehensive Healthcare. This will open a wider array of advanced surgical services

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nizing Indigenous Peoples’ Day.

“Our time is now to be right here celebrating and embracing our culture and diversity always, and it’s always a good time to be out here with everyone interacting and fellowshiping.”

There is so much that goes into putting an event like this on. There was a collaboration between many organizations, including the Indigenous Peoples’ Day committee, Muscogee (Creek) Nation departments, the City of Okmulgee, and various individuals. Everyone came together for a common cause, to celebrate and recognize Indigenous People, their history, and their culture.

A Facebook page ‘Indigenous Peoples’ Day committee’ provides information on the event and can be used to contact Beaver or Golden. They can always use volunteers to help with the setup and takedown of the event.

Bacone College

At the oldest operating higher education institution, formerly an orphanage for Indian Children after the Trail of Tears, The Muskogee Oklahoma Native American Association (MONAA) partnered with the Bacone College administration to host their celebrations for Indigenous Peoples’ Day.

“We want the (Bacone) students to have an educational experience,” MONAA Media Relations Specialist Megan Kelly said.

Attendees gathered Monday morning in front of the Palmer Center to march in remembrance of the native children who were lost at boarding school.

According to Kelly, almost every Native American has been affected by boarding schools.

“Members of my family attended boarding school,” Kelly said. She mentioned how they fled from boarding school back home to escape abuse. “Some of those never made it home.” Which she claims adds to the number of cases of Indigenous Children who did not survive the boarding school era.

Mvskoke Citizen and renowned opera singer Barbara McAllister sang the Lord’s Prayer and Amazing Grace with Kelly’s accompaniment, signing in Indian Sign Language.

After the performances, the Mayor of Muskogee, Marlon Coleman, proclaimed the day Indigenous Peoples’ Day in Muskogee as he has in the past couple of years. He still hopes that it will become a state and national holiday in years to come.

Celebration speakers include interim Bacone College President Nicky Michael, a Delaware; Jerry Wacoche, assistant chief of the United Keetoowah Band of the Cherokee Nation; Brian Palmer, assistant chief of the Seminole Nation, and Sheila Bird, UKB, an advocate for preserving Native land.

Traditional bow shooting games started at Journeycake Field with friendly competition.

Food trucks were available for purchase, and vendors selling handmade and traditional items were on display.

A powwow was the first thing on the itinerary on Sat. Oct 8. With an array of activities ranging over the weekend into Monday, almost each southern plains tribe was represented in some way.

Hymn singing took place Sunday morning at the second annual All Nations Hymn and Worship Service held at the Bacone Chapel. Native Praise were special guest performers during the church service. Reverend Archie Mason conducted a cedar ceremony before the service for traditional attendees. Brandon Kemble, Larry Robinson, and Henry Birdtail delightfully provided sermons for the church.

Later that day was the fourth annual Indigenous Film Festival at the Historic Roxy Theatre, which included nine filmmakers with a feature film by Mark Williams (Choctaw). His film is about a group of Mississippi Choctaw women competitively playing stickball as a team and their journey to the final competition called “Tiak Hikiya Ohoyo.”

Dream Keepers Park

Meanwhile, in Tulsa, cascading rain showers from a gray, overcast sky could not dampen the spirits of the celebrations at Dream Keepers Park. The Greater Tulsa Area Indian Affairs Commission’s Native American Day Committee hosted the event. The event was attended by various tribal nation citizens and non-tribal citizens alike. Representatives from the Muscogee (Creek), Cherokee, and Osage Nations were in attendance.

Cheryl Cohenour (Cherokee Nation) is the former Chair of the Greater Tulsa Area Indian Affairs Commission and the current Tulsa Native American Day Committee chair who oversees the annual event. Although weather conditions at times throughout the day were adverse, Cohenour was still pleased with the event’s turnout.

“We’re happy for the rain. Rain is always good luck. It hasn’t seemed to put a damper on anyone’s spirits,” Cohenour said.

The celebration saw opening remarks from tribal nation dignitaries, city leaders, and a collaboration of Indigenous Princesses signing the Lord’s Prayer together. Weather conditions throughout the morning varied from drizzling to sudden downpours.

The rain stopped during the featured parade in a stroke of luck. The parade wrapped its way around the park. Tribal leaders and citizens marched and waved from decorated vehicles to cheering crowds. According to event leaders, it was one of the largest Indigenous Peoples’ Day Parades the city had ever seen.

A vibrant market featuring cultural arts and crafts from Indigenous Artists was found on the south end of the celebration. On the north end, tents from

tribal nations, including the Cherokee and Muscogee (Creek), offered information and cultural demonstrations.

One of the tents included the Tulsa Creek Indian Community. They provided snacks, lunch, and a place for elders to rest and socialize at the event.

MCN Citizen Pat Powell volunteered her time at the booth. She and her family are active members of the Creek Community in Tulsa. She also serves on the Greater Tulsa Area Indian Affairs Commission.

“Our family is very involved traditionally, our Creek Way. Seeing all these other tribes come together to celebrate Native American Day, it’s very special,” Powell said.

This marked the first time the Tulsa Celebration has been held in person in two years due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and the first time it has been hosted at Dream Keepers Park, formerly Veterans Park. The name was changed in Nov. 2021 to honor all Native American Tribes. This is the sixth time the event has been hosted in Tulsa.

“We’re really excited to have it down here (Dream Keepers Park) because this is a park that is dedicated to the Native American Citizens of Tulsa,” Cohenour said.

Dream Keeper’s Park holds special significance to the MCN.

“If you look across the street, that’s our Council Oak Park, and that’s where we ended on the Trail of Tears,” Principal Chief David Hill said.

Tribal nation dignitaries like Osage Principal Chief Geoffery Standing Bear expressed appreciation for Tulsa’s recognition of Indigenous Peoples’ Day and the opportunity to celebrate with the community.

“Osage Nation is, of course, honored to be part of this celebration we’ve had every year,” Chief Standing Bear said. “We know that the City of Tulsa is one of those cities that will recognize this day. Most places don’t.”

Cherokee Nation Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr. gave a rousing speech on the significance of the day and touched on the commonalities of all the tribes represented.

“The tribal nations represented here, and the tribal leaders across this state and across this nation share a great deal in common,” Chief Hoskin Jr. said. “One of the things we share in common is that we have overcome decades, centuries, and generations of a great deal of hardship. We have suffered dispossession. We have suffered suppression. We have suffered oppression at the hands of others. We’ve been removed from our tribal lands and lost a great deal along the way. Part of Indigenous Peoples’ Day is to reflect on that history.”

According to the City of Tulsa’s website, Native American culture is vital to Tulsa’s history.

“Native Americans have continuously inhabited the Greater Tulsa area for thousands of years. By celebrating Native American Day, Tulsa formally recognizes its Indigenous populations who have made valuable contributions to our community through

shared knowledge, stewardship of the land, labor, science, technology, philosophy, arts, and deep cultural influences that have substantially shaped the character of the city of Tulsa.”

The website says Native Americans also comprise a large portion of Tulsa’s population and Oklahoma’s.

Despite the less-than-favorable weather conditions in Tulsa, event leaders were pleased with the event’s turnout and look forward to hosting the 2023 Indigenous Peoples’ Day Event at the exact location.

Although President Joe Biden was the first U.S. President to formally recognize Indigenous Peoples’ Day, it is still not yet recognized as a federal holiday. That is unlike another holiday celebrated on the second Monday in October: Columbus Day. Tulsa Indigenous Day Event Leaders expressed their disappointment that the U.S. still recognizes Columbus Day as a federal holiday.

“I think that should be changed,” Cohenour said. “I think there’s probably a significant amount of Native Americans in Tulsa and in Oklahoma who think that should be changed as well.”

Powell concurred with Cohenour but said she is grateful for the opportunity to celebrate with her fellow tribal citizens in Tulsa.

In 2018, former Oklahoma Governor Mary Fallin had the choice to pass the bill but instead vetoed it. However, in 2019 Gov. Kevin Stitt signed off on the bill.

There are over a dozen states other than Oklahoma that celebrate Indigenous Peoples’ Day, including Alabama, Alaska,

Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Vermont, Virginia, Wisconsin, and the District of Columbia.

“The importance is for us to be proud of our heritage, proud of where we came from, and the fact that the United States still recognizes Columbus Day as a federal holiday,” Golden said. “We just want to counter that with our true history.”

While some say, there is progress to be made regarding the observance of the second Monday of October, that did not inhibit the spirit of the cultural celebrations.

“I’m just glad the mayor let us come in and do Native American Day on Columbus Day,” Powell said. “Hopefully, we can change it to where Columbus Day will permanently be taken off the calendar.”

Chief Hill was grateful for the opportunity to celebrate and collaborate with other tribal nations.

“That’s what we want to do with all the tribal leaders here, Chief Standing Bear, Chief Hoskins, that’s what we’re here to do, to work together,” Chief Hill said.

There are currently two bills introduced in Congress that propose to make Indigenous Peoples’ Day a federal holiday instead of Columbus Day; S. 2919 and H.R. 5473.

Regardless of what holiday was on the calendar for Oct 10, one certain thing was the sense of Indigenous Pride celebrated across the MCN.



Adorned in their traditional regalia, tribal princesses from various nations joined together to sign the Lord’s Prayer in their respective languages. Muscogee Royalty Tema Yargee and Chenoa Barnett were among the princesses featured. Despite heavy downpours, the celebration saw a big turnout, and the festivities continued as scheduled in Tulsa, Okla., Oct 10. (Braden Harper/Reporter)



Mvskoke citizens sing and shake cans during the social stompdance ending the Indigenous Peoples’ Day celebration in Okmulgee, Okla., Oct 10, 2022. (Kaylea Berry/Reporter)

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VETS

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vice member] military records,” said Culley. “They can access their military medical records, VA medical records.”

“The only thing we can’t access is tribal health records.”

However, tribal health information systems representatives were on site so that medical release forms could be signed the same day, allowing service members to accomplish multiple tasks at the same location. Muskogee VA Regional Office staff could speed up the process by reviewing claims on the spot to obtain same-day results.

“We try as much as we can to

approve the disability claim for a veteran or widow the same day, if at all possible,” said Culley. “Every claim we process today will be worked through the entire week.”

Same-day approval is not always possible; claims can take days, weeks, months, and even years to approve.

“For today, it’s to try to figure out how to best address the needs of the veteran and the widow, the disability they’re looking at, and how we get that approved,” said Culley.

Culley shared testimonies of how events such as this one have changed the lives of veterans and families.

One veteran felt like attending an event like this one to get

help was her last resort. She had previously filed a claim and was denied and battling mental health. Her husband worried that he might lose her if she could not be approved. It was not easy for her to talk about what she dealt with, but she got her claim approved at 100% permanent disability.

Another testimony comes from a widow of a Vietnam veteran whose claim had been denied initially, yet he passed away due to agent orange exposure. She had his claim looked at again 11 years later at a presumptive event and received back pay because the claim was denied due to a glitch in the system.

The presumptive does not

just help people with their claims, it brings different agencies to one location where veterans can learn what services are available.

“Right now, we have a guy that’s got a housing issue, and between the SSVF [Support Services for Veteran Families] and the Tribal HUD-VASH [Tribal Housing and Urban Development Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing program] they’re working together to see what they can do to make sure he stays in his house and that he gets the wrap-around services that he needs,” said Culley.

Representatives can help veterans with claims regarding a new law that passed on July 13,

2022. The new law regards the PACT Act, which affects veterans from multiple generations. The PACT Act acknowledges health issues and disabilities from exposure to burn pits and other toxic substances. Veterans and beneficiaries from multiple generations can now file disability claims tied to problems from their exposure and receive VA healthcare. There is more information about the PACT Act on the VA’s website or by calling 800-698-2411. To stay up to date with information regarding Mvsko veterans, follow the Muskogee Nation Veterans Affairs Facebook page, enroll with the VASO or call them at 918-732-7739.

RETURNS HOME

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tunity to step out of his vehicle, he was bombarded by family as they tearfully embraced him. The homecoming was decorated with many smiles and tears from the crowd of officers. A sign reading “Welcome Home Larry!” was seen as he pulled in.

When it was time for him to be discharged from the hospital, he had no idea what would be in store for him as he came home. He described his reaction as overwhelming.

“It really meant the world to me, I just felt like I really didn’t deserve it, but I’ve seen love,” Porter said. “Just the love from our department, love from our tribe.”

Porter is a patrolman with the special operations team, comprised of officers from the north and south divisions. The convoy was organized by Sergeant Lyndon Spears and Corporal Patrick Cantrell. Some of the officers involved participated on their day off.

According to North Division Captain Michael Fish, there is no official diagnosis of what caused Porter’s symptoms. At one point,

he was paralyzed from the neck down and had difficulty swallowing and talking. When he arrived home, Porter was seen walking upright once again.

“His homecoming is not only a blessing not just for him and his family, but for the department that has been following, praying for him,” Captain Fish said.

MCN Lighthorse Chief of Police Richard Phillips described the homecoming as an answer to prayer. According to him, Porter’s absence had emotionally affected the department.

“It’s just a blessing to be able to

bring him home in this capacity to show the love we have for each other here at our department,” Chief Phillips said. “We’re a family; what happens to one affects us all.”

“Outstanding father, outstanding officer, he’s done some great work in the community,” Captain Fish said. “He’s tried to go outside and above being a police officer.”

Porter’s fiancée, Alexis Simmons, has seen the day-to-day impact Porter and his fellow officers have had in the community. The department’s meaningful gesture also touched her.

“He really makes a difference,”

Simmons said. “All the officers make a difference, so to see all of this happen, it’s very overwhelming for them to show the love and support they have for him.”

Officer Porter is unsure what the future holds but knows the road to full recovery will require a lot of hard work. Seeing his friends and family waiting for him at home was a welcome sight after a prolonged stay in the hospital.

“This was just an amazing experience, and you don’t think how important you are,” Porter said. “It was just overwhelming seeing all the officers here.”

PARTNERS

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the nation provides.

A grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) has allowed the university to increase primary care services in tribal communities. The partnership will support medical training opportunities for resident trainees at Council Oak. Once residents finish their residency, they will have the chance to open their surgical clinics at the Council Oak Facility.

Leaders from the Muskogee (Creek) Nation and OU broke bread together and met with one another to discuss their exciting new partnership.

MCN Secretary of Health Shawn Terry was ecstatic to share the announcement after months of working closely with OU Leaders to finalize details. Terry would

correspond on the phone with OU Leaders as much as three to four times a week to make sure no point was left unattended.

“From now until the end of time, the Muskogee (Creek) Nation will be here. From now until the end of time, the University of Oklahoma will be one of the top universities in Oklahoma. It only makes sense for this marriage to happen,” Terry said.

The partnership did not happen overnight. It was the result of collaboration stemming back to the Floyd Administration. According to OU President Joseph Harroz, it is not the first time OU has collaborated with the MCN, nor will it be the last time.

“They’re critical because they prepare future positions to treat the unique needs of Indigenous Populations and the unique impacts that are born by that population of individuals,” Larrez said.

“The best kind of partnerships are those where each side of the partnerships is committed to doing more than the other.”

Between President Harroz and MCN Principal Chief David Hill, a recurring theme in their addresses was how successfully collaborating was in the best interest of everyone.

“It takes all of us. We all share the same priorities in life. The things that we hold priority most are our citizens and the health of our citizens,” Principal Chief Hill said.

MCN acquired the Council Oak Facility in Sept. 2021. The facility began providing monoclonal antibody treatments and worked closely with Tulsa City Leaders.

Over the following year, MCN would open more specialty clinics, including neurology, pulmonology, and diabetes care. All of this amid the COVID-19 Pandemic.

“It became a community center

for fighting COVID,” Terry said.

Over time, the facility would continue to expand its services and collaborate with other healthcare organizations. One of the most significant developments was the acquisition of a Da Vinci Surgical Robot. Terry said they expect to start performing procedures with the surgical robot by the first of the year once the healthcare staff has received training.

To utilize top-of-the-line equipment, you need top-of-the-line staff.

“At the core of all medicine is the relationship between the doctors and the patients,” Terry said. “At the core of getting physicians means you need a relationship with the medical schools.”

Council Oak’s location plays an immense role in how it can connect with vital services for citizens. It has also become an attractive employer in the

healthcare industry.

“Being in Tulsa is a game changer. One of the limiting factors we have in healthcare is the proximity to specialties,” Terry said. “Everyone (nurses and physicians) is running to us, wanting to become part of what we have over here.”

Although this is a big step for the nation’s healthcare services, it is only the beginning.

“As we stand here today, we are prepared to grow that partnership. I truly believe this is the first of many more steps. We are thrilled to engage in this partnership with surgery and bring that to this site that will help so many people.” President Harroz said.

With the new partnership, Council Oak Leaders were optimistic about what the future has in store for the nation as a model for providing expanded services for its citizens.

OKLAHOMA INDIGENOUS NURSES ASSOCIATION BRING AWARENESS OF INDIGENOUS CULTURE TO HEALTHCARE

CREATING ALLIANCES WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLE IN THE HEALTH FIELD

by KAYLEA BERRY
REPORTER

TVLSE, Oklahoma - The Oklahoma Nurses Association (ONA) held its annual convention on Sept. 28th and 29th. The theme of this year’s convention was Power of Nursing: Educate, Innovate, Celebrate. The Oklahoma Indigenous Nurses Association (OINA) conducted a breakout session on Thursday titled “The Journey of the First Native American Nurse.”

The overall objective of the presentation was not to be offensive, point fingers, or pass blame but for reconciliation, to bring awareness, and problem solve. Sonya Frazier (Choctaw/Chickasaw), OINA President, and Taloa Sharp (Choctaw/Chickasaw), OINA Staff, spoke about the first recognized Indigenous Nurse Susie Walking Bear Yellowtail, Indigenous movements, culture, and what needs to change in the healthcare field.

Yellowtail, born in 1903, was the first Native American and the first Apsáalooke (Crow) to graduate as a Registered Nurse in the United States. She attended boarding school in Oklahoma and Montana and graduated from Boston City Hospital School of Nursing in 1923. She was an advocate for Indigenous people, served at the tribal, state, and federal levels on Native health and education councils, and accomplished much more.

Indigenous movements are groups of people working together

to bring awareness, change, and healing. Discussed movements included Every Child Matters, Land Back, and MMIW/MMIP.

Every Child Matters is about remembering the survivors and missing children that attended boarding schools across Canada and the United States. Land Back seeks to restore or establish Indigenous sovereignty. MMIW/MMIP, Missing, and Murdered Indigenous Women/People stem from Every Child Matters and advocates to end violence against Native women and all Indigenous people.

“We’re not silent anymore, and we don’t have to be,” Sharp said. “It’s kind of a good feeling.”

Before colonization, Indigenous people had holistic views of the body, spirit, mind, and emotions. The belief is that there needs to be a balance between each aspect for a person to be healthy. Each tribe has its language, customs, and ceremonies; many tribes are matrilineal. Other aspects of Indigenous culture are traditional medicine, coping skills through storytelling, elders and children are considered sacred, and the Americas are called “Turtle Island” in the creation story. Assimilation tried to take all this away so they could “kill the Indian, save the man.”

There were 367 Native Boarding Schools, 83 in Oklahoma because of the high Indigenous population, and of those 83 schools, nine are still open. Children were removed from their families and taken far away to an unfamiliar place to be stripped of their language, culture, family, and

identity. They faced sexual, physical, and mental abuse. Children died away from their families, and many were never reunited. The disconnect and abuses trickle down from generation to generation, even to this day.

Dr. Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart, Ph.D. (Hunkpapa/Oglala Lakota) defines historical and generational trauma as “the accumulative emotional and psychological wounding over one’s lifetime and from generation to generation following the loss of lives, land and vital aspects of culture.”

The consequences of boarding schools continue to affect Indigenous people, families, and communities today. Diabetes, alcoholism, neglect, broken relationships, distrust, and many other issues are more prominent today than before assimilation.

Frazier and Sharp have multiple relatives who attended boarding schools and shared how those experiences have affected them and their children. Frazier said her father would bark at her and her siblings growing up, but they did not understand why. He told them he did it so they would not be scared or caught off guard by anyone or anything.

Some ways change can come about in healthcare include cultural liaisons, knowing different cultural beliefs, knowing how history continues to affect people, getting to know the patients, and “just being a decent human being.”

Questions and comments that Sharp and Frazier have encountered in the healthcare field include “Why do I need to know what tribe some-



Sonya Frazier (Choctaw/Chickasaw), OINA President, and Taloa Sharp (Choctaw/Chickasaw), OINA Staff, speak during “The Journey of the First Native American Nurse” breakout session at the annual ONA convention on Sept. 29, 2022, in Tvlse, Okla. (Kaylea Berry/Reporter)



ONA attendents listen to “The Journey of the First Native American Nurse” on Sept. 29, 2022 in Tvlse, Okla. (Kaylea Berry/Reporter)

one is?”, “It happened so long ago, though,” “Why is it important?” and “You get free healthcare.”

“No, it’s not free,” Frazier said. “It cost us those babies; it cost their lives, their culture, their identity.”

Nurses and everyone should be educating themselves continuously. We can always learn from others and their cultures and share our own. This is how we move from cultural appropriation to cultural appreciation.

“We’re moving towards healing, and to do that, we have to do it collectively,” said Sharp.

Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultures can coexist with healing and understanding.

During the presentation, many attendees had tears in their eyes, and many came up to Frazier and Sharp to express their interest and appreciation.

For additional information, Mvsko Media has an article about OINA on the website. The OINA program is open to all nurses and nursing students in Oklahoma. To become a member of ONA and OINA, visit the ONA website.



(Submission)

SEQUOYAH NATIONAL RESEARCH CENTER TO HOST WORLD WAR I FILM DOCUMENTARY SCREENING NOVEMBER 16 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Little Rock, AR – The Sequoyah National Research Center (SNRC) is pleased to host the film screening “More Than a Medal” on Wednesday, November 16 at 6:30 p.m. in the Stella Boyle Smith Concert Hall in the Fine Arts building at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. The screening is in partnership with the World War One Valor Medals Review and the George S. Robb Centre for the Study of the Great War. The documentary film produced by Lame Deer Films focuses on the stories of an African American World War I veteran and an Asian American World War I veteran and the work that the Valor Medals Review (VMR) Task Force is conducting. The Task Force is reviewing the military records of servicemembers who were African

American, Asian American, Hispanic American, Jewish American, and Native American. To qualify, the servicemember must have received a Distinguished Service Cross/Navy Cross and/or the French Croix de Guerre with Palm and/or been recommended for a Medal of Honor but was downgraded. Two hundred and fourteen servicemembers have qualified for review, including 23 Native Americans. SNRC has supported the research of the VMR Task Force concerning Native Americans in conjunction with the Modern Warriors of World War I project. The 23 Native American soldiers were members of the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, Choctaw Nation, Comanche Nation, Muscogee Nation, Northern Cheyenne Tribe,

Oneida Nation, Ottawa/Odawa, Osage Nation, Pueblo of Acoma, White Earth Nation (Chippewa), and Yakima Nation. About the Valor Medals Review The Valor Medals Review is being conducted by Park University’s George S. Robb Centre for the Study of the Great War and the Valor Medals Review Task Force which was formed in August 2018 in conjunction with the Foundation for the Commemoration of the World Wars on behalf of the U.S. World War I Centennial Commission. About the Sequoyah National Research Center The Sequoyah National Research Center houses the world’s largest collection of Native American expression. Located at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, SNRC is a unique facility dedicated to the collection, preservation, and access of all forms of Native North American expression and has served as an archive for Native Americans since 1983. Contact Erin Fehr at ehfehr@ualr.edu and 501-916-6098.



A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Health, Education, & Welfare/Land, Natural Resources & Culture Preservation Committee was held at the Mound Building in Okmulgee. (MM File) GRANT MONEY PROVIDES SHELTER FOR HOMELESS VETERANS OVER HALF A MILLION IN GRANT FUNDING PASSED BY COMMITTEE TO IMPACT HOMELESS VETERANS OR THOSE AT RISK OF BECOMING HOMELESS

by KAYLEA BERRY REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma – A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Health, Education, & Welfare/Land, Natural Resources & Culture Preservation Committee meeting was held on Oct. 18 at the Mound Building.

TR 22-160 A MCN Tribal resolution authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a contract accepting a donation of land located in Okmulgee County, Okla. Representative Galen Cloud sponsored the legislation, which passed 9-0.

The Nation is given a chance to accept a donation of roughly 0.30 acres of land in Henryetta, Oklahoma, which will expand the Nation’s land base. The purchase of the property will enable future development consistent with the goals and mission of the Nation’s Reintegration Program.

NCA 22-128 A MCN law appropriating

\$20,000.00 to use for transactional costs related to accepting donated real property located in Okmulgee County, Okla. Rep. Galen Cloud sponsored the legislation, which passed 9-0 to BFJ for approval. Accepting the donated land comes with expenses for title insurance, title opinions, surveys, environmental studies, and appropriate taxes. This law will set aside the money for consideration and other expenditures associated with accepting the donated land. NCA 22-129 A MCN law authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in the amount of \$696,600.00 for the benefit of the MCN Dept. of Housing. Rep. Charles McHenry sponsored the legislation, which passed 9-0. The grant money will be used to support the program’s administrative costs and provide 50 housing vouchers to qualified Native American veterans who are homeless or at risk of becoming so.

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A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Land, Natural Resources & Culture Preservation Committee was held at the Mound Building in Okmulgee. (MM File)

OKFUSKEE CEREMONIAL GROUND TO PURCHASE A TRACTOR AND RELATED EQUIPMENT WITH \$75K

MCN DOT GRANT FUNDS OF \$12,268.00 WILL BE USED TO PROVIDE FOR THE OPERATION OF A PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM IN RURAL AREAS

by **KAYLEA BERRY**
REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma – A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Land, Natural Resources & Culture Preservation Committee meeting was held on Oct. 11 at the Mound Building.

TR 22-152

A MCN Tribal resolution authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a legal services agreement between the MCN and Michael D. Parks to provide legal services for the realty department. Representative Joseph Hicks sponsored the legislation, which passed 3-0.

The MCN Realty Department needs representation to quiet titles and partitions for restricted and

trust lands to improve its program and services. It has selected attorney Michael D. Parks to provide legal services.

TR 22-153

A MCN Tribal resolution authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a memorandum of agreement with the Indian Health Service for Project OK 22-231, which will provide adequate wastewater disposal facilities for eight existing Native American-owned homes in Muskogee County, Okla. Rep. Charles McHenry sponsored the legislation, which passed 3-0.

IHS will fully fund the project in the amount of \$178,000.00, and the parties’ responsibilities have been outlined in a Memorandum of Agreement.

TR 22-154

A MCN Tribal resolution authorizing the Principal Chief to submit a 2022 competitive Indian Housing block grant application to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. Rep. Galen Cloud sponsored the legislation, which passed 3-0.

The Nation needs energy-efficient, low-rent housing opportunities to support low to moderate-income elderly tribal citizens.

TR 22-155

A MCN Tribal resolution amending TR 19-076 (A MCN Tribal resolution suspending all special appropriations and donations) as amended by TR 20-150, TR 21-080, TR 22-128, TR 22-143 and TR 22-150. Rep. Randall Hicks sponsored the legislation, which passed 3-0.

There is a need to amend TR 19-076 to allow for a special appropriation for the Okfuskee Ceremonial Ground.

TR 22-156

A MCN Tribal resolution authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a Coronavirus response and relief supplemental appropriations act agreement between the Oklahoma Department of Transportation and the MCN. Rep. Joseph Hicks sponsored the legislation, which passed 3-0.

Section 5310 of Title 49 of the US Code Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities authorizes the apportionment of funds for public mass transportation in rural areas to enhance access in those areas for purposes such as health care, shopping, education, recreation, public services, and employment by encouraging the maintenance, development, improvement, and use of passenger transportation systems.

TR 22-157

A MCN Tribal resolution authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a United States Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration grant agreement. Rep. Joseph Hicks sponsored the legislation, which passed 3-0.

The award aims to ensure the continuity of transit operations and provide greater access to job opportunities, education, health-care, and other services necessary to tribal citizens and the general public within the Nation’s Reservation. The Federal Transit Master Agreement waives the Muscogee (Creek) Nation’s sovereign immunity by subjecting the Nation to numerous federal laws.

NCA 22-120

A MCN Law authorizing the expenditure of 2022 NACD Technical Assistance grant funds awarded from the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) for the benefit of the MCN Conservation District in the amount of \$75,000.00. Rep. Joseph Hicks sponsored the legislation, which passed 3-0.

The grant funds will be used to identify and support citizens with agricultural interests who have not participated in the US Department of Agriculture and National Resources Conservation Service Programs to improve participation and service.

NCA 22-121

A MCN Law authorizing a special appropriation to Okfuskee Ceremonial Ground to purchase a tractor and related equipment with \$75,888.00. Rep. Randall Hicks sponsored the legislation, which passed 3-0.

The Okfuskee Ceremonial Ground is active and needs a tractor and related equipment to maintain its ground and accommodate its members and visitors in a safe environment. The tractor

comes with a six-year warranty, and at its expiration, the Okfuskee Ceremonial Ground will provide maintenance for the tractor.

NCA 22-122

A MCN Law authorizing the expenditure of the National Park Service Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) grant for the benefit of the MCN Historic and Cultural Preservation Department in the amount of \$72,214.00. Rep. Galen Cloud sponsored the legislation, which passed 3-0.

The grant funds will protect and preserve valued Mvskoke historic and cultural resources, including sacred places, cultural sites, cultural remains, and Mvskoke history for future generations.

NCA 22-123

A MCN Law authorizing the expenditure of funds awarded from the ODOT for the benefit of the MCN’s DOT in the amount of \$12,268.00. Rep. Joseph Hicks sponsored the legislation, which passed 3-0.

The grant funds will be used to provide for the operation of a public transportation system in rural areas.

NCA 22-124

A MCN Law authorizing the expenditure of funds awarded from the USDOT, Federal Transit Administration, for the benefit of the MCN’s DOT in the amount of \$899,975.00. Rep. Joseph Hicks sponsored the legislation, which passed 3-0.

The grant funds will ensure the continuity of transit operations and provide greater access to job opportunities, education, health-care, and other services necessary to tribal citizens and the general public within the Nation’s Reservation.

For video of committee meetings, visitwww.mcnn.com.

LIGHTHORSE APPROVED FOR \$899.9K VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT PURCHASE

\$449.9K APPROVED TO COMBAT CRIMES AGAINST NATIVE WOMEN



A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Business, Finance and Justice Committee meeting was held Oct. 20 at the Mound Building in Okmulgee. (MM File)

by **BRADEN HARPER**
REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma - A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Business, Finance and Justice Committee meeting was held in person and teleconference Oct. 20 at the Mound Building. All legislation will go before the full Council during the regular session.

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

NCR 22-011

Confirming Cynthia M. Tiger to serve on the Mvskoke Media Editorial Board. Representative Anna Marshall sponsored the bill, which was approved for do pass, 3-1. Representative Mark Randolph was the lone dissent.

If approved, Tiger’s term will begin upon confirmation from Full Council and end Oct. 29, 2025.

TR 22-158

Authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a legal services contract between the nation and

Cody Minyard, Attorney at Law, PLLC, for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Office of Child Support Enforcement. Representative Randall Hicks sponsored the bill, which was unanimously approved for do pass, 4-0.

Minyard was selected by MCN Office of Child Support Enforcement to secure legal services.

TR 22-159

Authorizing the extension of the Secretary of the Nation and Commerce to continue operations of the Onefire Holding Company, LLC. Representative Patrick Freeman sponsored the bill, which was approved for do pass as amended 3-1. Rep. Hicks was the lone dissent.

The extension will last 90 days after the enactment of the law.

NCA 22-161

Establishing tribal membership in the National Congress of American Indians. Speaker William Lowe sponsored the legislation, which was unanimously approved for do pass, 4-0.

Tribal membership dues will be

in the amount of \$30,000.00. Based on the current tribal enrollment of 97,507 citizens, MCN will have 180 votes in NCAI.

NCA 22-125

A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the expenditure of funds for the benefit of the Muscogee Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services 2022 Cops Office Tribal Resources Grant Program - Equipment and Training. Rep. Hicks sponsored the bill, which was unanimously approved for do pass, 4-0.

The grant will pay for travel for two employees to attend required CTAS New Grantee Orientation Training. It will also purchase seven Dodge Durangos with accessory packages, eight Dodge Ram Trucks with accessory packages and 71 bullet proof vests.

NCA 22-126

A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the expenditure of the U.S. Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women FY 2022 Grants to Indian Tribal Governments to exercise Special Domestic Violence Criminal Jurisdiction Grant Award for the benefit of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Lighthorse Police Department. Representative Sandra Golden sponsored the bill, which was unanimously approved for do pass, 4-0.

The grant will allow the MCN Lighthorse Police Department to hire one investigator, and one domestic violence analyst. This will allow the department to increase the capacity to gather, analyze, re-

port data, and respond to crimes against Native Women including domestic violence, stalking, and dating violence.

NCA 22-127

A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the expenditure of the National White Collar Crime Center Grant Award for the benefit of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Lighthorse Police Department. Rep. Golden sponsored the bill, which was unanimously approved for do pass, 4-0.

The grant will be used to purchase 14 Panasonic Toughbook Computers.

NCA 22-136

A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation repealing MCNCA Title 50, entitled “Lighthorse Police”. Representative Thomasene Yahola Osborn sponsored the bill, which was approved for do pass, 3-1. Rep. Hicks was the lone dissent.

Citing a lack of progress from the Lighthorse Police Commission including seat vacancies, not hiring an attorney for legal assistance and inconsistencies in meetings, the bill will place Lighthorse Police back under the executive branch.

NCA 22-137

A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation amending MCNCA Title 26 § 3-102 D. entitled “Compensation”. Rep. Osborn sponsored the bill, which was unanimously approved for do pass, 4-0.

This bill will increase compensation for MCN Supreme Court Justices. It cites the justices’ workload increasing due to the increased number of cases and bar applications filed since the McGirt

decision.
Referred Legislation:
NCA 22-119
A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation amending MCNCA Title 35, Chapter 3, entitled “Medical Travel Assistance”. Representative Robert Hufft and Representative Leonard Gouge sponsored the bill, which was approved for funding.

NCA 22-121

A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing a special appropriation to Okfuskee Ceremonial Ground to purchase a tractor and related equipment. Rep. Hicks sponsored the bill, which was approved for funding.

NCA 22-128

A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation appropriating funds to be used for transactional costs related to accepting donated real property located in Okmulgee County, Oklahoma. Representative Galen Cloud sponsored the bill, which was approved for funding.

NCA 22-135

A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing an appropriation for the Volunteer Tax Assistance Program for the benefit of the Office of the Secretary of the Nation and Commerce. Rep. Hicks sponsored the bill, which was approved for funding.

The BFJ Committee voted to enter executive session to discuss other business including MNGE (GOAB), Muscogee Nation Business Enterprise, and Muscogee International, LLC.

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

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Gerald D. Alexander

Retired SFC Alexander retired from the Army after 20 years and 9 months of service. He was born on September 8, 1940 at Claremore Indian Hospital. His education began at Haskell Institute where he graduated in 1958. He then went on to the NCO Academy. After that he received his Bachelor of Science degree from Austin Peay State University. This achievement lead to a successful career at the NASA Langley Research Center as an Engineer Technician.

During his military service Alexander was awarded the following: Meritorious Service Medal (3rd Award), Army Commendation Medal, Good Conduct Medal (5th Award), Expert Rifle Badge, and the Drivers Badge. He was deployed to Turkey, Germany (2 tours), and to Puerto Rico in support of the Cuban Missile Crisis. His stateside deployments included Fort Carson, Fort Gordon, Cameron Station, Fort Bliss, and Fort Campbell.

Alexander is currently a citizen at large in Virginia with his wife, Judy, 3 daughters, 7 grandchildren and 3 greatgrandchildren.

Jess Robert Anstett

Branch: U.S. Marine Corps

Years Served: Eight years

Anstett was raisedd in Madras, OR and currently living with his family in Molalla. He is a graduate of Madras High school in 1994 he began his military career directly after graduation. Honorably discharged after 4 years of service with a rank of E5 (Sergeant). During his years of service he served did two tours, one of them being Operation Desert Thunder on the Persian Gulf and was a part of the motor transport platoon driving various trucks but mostly ambulances for the Navy Corpsman medical platoon. He continues using the skills he learned in the military as he currently is a Heavy Equipment Operator and is a member of the electrical union IBEW. Anstett's grandfather, Robert Anstett, served in the Navy during WWII on the USS Pennsylvania, his Uncle Richard McNevin's served in the Army and during Jess's timeframe in the military his cousin served in the Marine Corps as well.



Kaylea Berry

Branch: U.S. Air Force

Years Served: 2017-2021, 4 years

Berry enlisted in June 2017 as a Broadcast Journalist and converted to a Mass Communications Specialist. She attended technical training at DINFOS (Defense Information School) on Ft. George G. Meade, Maryland. Her first duty station was at the 86th Airlift Wing on Ramstein Air Base, Germany. After two years, Berry PCS'd to the 316th Wing on Joint Base Andrews, MD, for the last year and a half of her four-year contract. During her time serving she made Senior Airman (E-4) and performed duties in seven countries. Military decorations include Air Force Achievement Medal, AF Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, AF Longevity Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, and AF Training Ribbon. Military education includes AF Basic Military Training, Broadcast Communications Specialist, and Law of War.

Leo Garland Bland

Branch: U.S. Army

Years Served: 1940-?

Bland was born May 20,1920, in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma to Jeanetta Haikey and Lewis Bland (Pakoska). He belonged to Locvpokv Tribal Town. He passed away July 15,2001 at the Veterans Hospital in Muskogee Oklahoma. He was buried at Fort Gibson National Cemetery. He was a Scout in the Infantry 145th Division of the Army during World War II. He received the Purple Heart for wounds he suffered from German gunfire near the Rhine River. Among other awards he was awarded were: Bronze Star Medal; Good Conduct Medal; European Campaign Medal (Bronze,Silver,and Arrowhead);WWII Victory Medal;Army of Occupation Medal;and Combat Infantryman Badge.

Leo married Betty Jean Bland and they bore 9 children together. Janice,Dorothy,James,Connie,Dennis,Virginia Lee,Lewis,Leona,Larry.



Christopher M. Bowers

Branch: USMC

Years Served: 6 YEARS CURRENTLY

Christopher M. Bowers, is the son of Sherry Girty, and Grandson of the late Andy and Frances Girty, of Lawrence, Kansas. He attended Boot Camp at MCRD in San Diego, CA in April 2016. He completed A school in Biloxi, MS in November 2017. His 1st Duty Station was at Camp Pendleton, Oceanside, CA. After a deployment to Centcom (Kuwait), Sgt. Bowers received Overseas PCS Orders to Iwakuni, Japan in March 2021. He then deployed to Southcom (Chile) for an exercise. He is currently a Weather Forecaster in Iwakuni, Japan. He recently was chosen as the Honor Graduate at Sergeants School 11-22 in Okinawa. Sgt Bowers has earned medals for Global War on Terrorism, two Armed Forces Service Medal, two Good Conduct Medal, a National Defense Medal, a Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary, a Sea Service Ribbon, an Overseas Service Ribbon, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal.

Dick Bland Breeding

Branch: U.S. Army

Years Served: 1916-1918

Killed in action in the Battle of Chateau Thierry on July 29, 1918. Awarded Distinguished Service Cross

American Legion Post in Holdenville named in honor of him.



Gary Breshears

Branch: U.S. Army

Years Served: 1966-1967

Breshears was born in 1946 to Elbert (Chief) and Peggy Breshears in Muskogee, OK. He was a Sergeant in the 199th Infantry Brigade (Redcatchers) serving as an Infantry Squadron Leader in Vietnam during Operation Fairfax. He was awarded the Purple Heart after being wounded in action.

Following his military service, Gary worked in the mental health field and later served as Executive Director of Muscogee Creek Nation from 1978-1991. In 1992, he joined Indian Health Service as an Executive Officer and retired in 2008. Gary lives with his partner Bonnie in Arizona near his children Trent (Kris-ti), Laura (Mike), and grandsons Joshua (Paigei), Will, and Kellan.

Paul D. Brown

Branch: U.S. Air Force

Years Served: 1964-1968

Brown was stationed at Amarillo Air Force Base and McCord Air Force Base. He served in Vietnam in July 1966 to July 1967. Brown is proud to be Mvskoke. He resides in Sapulpa and attends Pickett Chapel United Methodist Church.



Jim Byrd

Branch: U.S. Army

Years Served: 4-1981 / 9-1992

Byrd was a U.S. Army Reserve Officer Training Corp Scholarship recipient while attending Washington State University in Pullman, Washington. Upon graduation from WSU, Jim received a Presidential Commission as an Infantry Officer in the U.S. Army. Jim simply describes his military service as an Airborne, Ranger, Pathfinder, Infantry Company Commander. Jim served as an Infantry Platoon Leader and Company Executive Officer at Fort Hood, TX. While assigned to the 2nd Infantry Division in the Republic of Korea, he served as a Support Platoon Leader for an Infantry Battalion and a Brigade Logistics Officer in the 2d Infantry Brigade. Jim's next duty assignment was in the Federal Republic of Germany with the 8th Infantry Division. In this assignment, he commanded Company A, 3rd Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment in Mainz, Germany. Upon his return to the USA, Jim was assigned as the Commander of the Seattle Recruiting Company in Seattle, Washington. Jim received several awards for his performance of duty.

Jimsey Ray Chalakee

Branch: U.S. Army

Years Served: 3

Chalakee is the son of Wilson and Mahala Chalakee of Okmulgee. He served in the U.S. Army from 1969 to 1971. He is a graduate of Wilson High School and was honorably discharged in April of 1971 after service in Vietnam.

Chalakee earned a Bronze Star Medal, a Bronze Star Medal with a V, The Air Medal, The Army Commendation Medal, First Oak Leaf Cluster, and a Combat Infantry Badge. "I will always be proud of my country. I consider it an honor to have served," Chalakee said. "It is the period of my life for which I am most proud."



Marchie Joe Childers

Branch: U.S. Air Force

Years Severed: 1967–1969

Childers joined the United States Air Force on August 25th, 1971. He served honorably until April 1980, for a total of eight years. His first job in the USAF was Security Police at Carswell AFB TX. From there here went to Blytheville AFB Arkansas. Childers was stationed in Iceland for a time where I was promoted to E-5. His last appointment was at Eglan AFB Florida, where he cross-trained into the pharmacy career field. His service medals include National Defense Service Ribbon, Small Arms Marksmanship, Air Force Longevity Service Ribbon, and the Air Force Good Conduct Medal w/2 Oak Leaf Clusters. His military education includes Security Supervisor, Pharmacy Specialist, and Advanced Pharmacy Concepts.

Howard L Cooper

Branch: U.S. Marine Corps.

Years Served: 1966-67

Howard is a graduate of Sapulpa High School 1965. He enlisted in the Marine Corps and served in Vietnam in 1966-67. He Was awarded a Purple Heart and numerous other awards and citations and is a 100% Disabled Veteran.

After the service, he working and owning several different companies in the construction field. He has been married to his high school sweetheart, Paulette Cooper, for 54 years. Howard has two daughters, Emily Cooper and Melissa (her husband Chris) Francis; three grandchildren Jessica Place, Austin and Lynzie Francis; and two great grandchildren Madilynn and late Brayden Hudson. He is the son of the late Joel A. (Fay) and Nevada (Ralston) Cooper.

He is a member of Bristow Indian Community Center.



Rufus Vernon Cox Sr.

Branch: U.S. Amy

Years Severed: 1942 - 1945

World War II Veteran Staff Sgt. Rufus V. Cox, a 25th Division Infantryman, son of the late Porter and Stella (Haynes) Cox, entered the service in 1942 and was honorably discharged in 1945. A veteran of more than five consecutive months of action with the Division of Luzon, (Jan.1945) he fought in the battles of Central Plains and the Balete Pass, to liberate North Luzon and defeat the Japanese Army. He was decorated for his meritorious service achievement in combat with the Bronze Star, Philippine Liberation Medal, and Good Conduct Medal. He received the Purple Heart after being wounded in combat. Mr. Cox had two children Rufus (Buddy) Cox Jr. and Carolyn (Cox)Torix of Preston. He was from Hechetee Town and the Raccoon Clan.

Billy J. “Bill” Davis

Branch: U.S. Army

Years Served: 1968-1970

Davis was born at Talihina Indian Hospital and lived between the South Canadian and Little Rivers in Hughes County. He was born to Bennie and Carrie (Floyd) Davis and moved to Oklahoma City when he was 5 years old. He attended OKC public school until graduation. In 1968, he was drafted into the US Army. His Basic Training was in TigerLand at Fort Polk, LA and the US Armor School at Fort Knox, Kentucky for AIT. Davis' MOS was 11E20, Combat Armor Vehicle (M48) Tank Crewman with additional training on a prototype armored vehicle (Sheridan). From Fort Knox, Davis received orders for deployment to Vietnam where he was assigned to 2nd/34th Armor with the 25th Infantry Division. During 11 months of in-line duty, was awarded two Bronze Stars with "Oak Leaf Clusters" and two Army Commendation Medals with "V Device".





Eugene Ray DePriest

Branch: U.S. Army
Years Served: November 1942 – February 1946
Ray began his service in the Army stationed in Kentucky. His service travels took him to California, Maryland, and the Phillipines, before ending his military career in Okinawa, Japan. He married Esta Mae Ross from Checotah, OK, on September 8, 1944. They were married for 56 years upon his passing on December 8, 2000. They had 3 girls, Peggy Bradley, Judy Gregory, and Jean Mortimer. The DePriest family, having arrived in Oklahoma before 1898, was honored as one of the founding families of Bixby. Ray's great great grandfather, Alex DePriest, traveled to Oklahoma through Tennessee and Arkansas arriving in Oklahoma in 1875.

George C. Dunn Sr.

Branch: U.S. Army
Years Served: 22 years 8 months
While a Junior at Morris High School (MHS) George C. Dunn Sr. enlisted in the Oklahoma Army National Guard HHC 120th Engineer Combat Heavy Battalion in 1981. Enlistment contract was under the split training option program. In Summer 1981, he began basic training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina for eight weeks. He came back to graduate from MHS in 1982. Left for Advanced Individual Training the Summer of 1982 for eight weeks at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. In 1984, he started his full-time career with the U.S. Army-Okmulgee Armory. He served two tours to Jamaica and one to Panama. He received several awards during his military career and retired October 31, 2003 with 22 years 8 months of service. Wife-Barbara Dunn and 3 children, George II, Holly and Michelle Dunn and five grandchildren Destiny Dunn, Mercedes Dunn, Giorgio Dunn, Giannah Munds and Bishop Bert.



Shannean Fields

Branch: U.S. Marine Corps
Years Served: Five years
Shannean Fields is a Mvskoke Veteran. She served in the U.S. Marine Corps 2014 to 2019. She enlisted and served 5 years. She was a Sergeant at the end of her enlistment. She was stationed at the Marine Corp Base at Camp Pendleton in California. She served as an ELINT officer handling Electronic Intelligence.

Joe Chochie Fish

Branch: U.S. Army
Years Served: 1942 - 1945
Joe Chochie Fish was born in Henryetta, Oklahoma, around 1914, to Little Fish and Lona (Williams) Fish. He received his education from Nayaka and Chilocco Indian Schools. He was inducted into the United States Army on January 10, 1942, serving with the 7th Division in the WWII Pacific Theater. During his tour of duty, he fought on the Aleutian island of Attu, on the Philippine Islands, and in the Easter Invasion of Okinawa. He spent time in Hawaii recovering from an injury. He received the Bronze Arrowhead Award, Philippine Liberation Ribbon with one star, and Good Conduct Medal. He was honorably discharged on November 27, 1945, at the rank of Sergeant. After discharge he worked as a carpenter, and an aircraft electrician at Tinker Air Force Base. Since retirement, Joe spent his time raising cattle, pigs, and chickens, and enjoying life on his farm. He died on September 4, 2016.



“John” Frazier Fish

Wagoner Sup Co 56 FA
World War I
“John” Frazier Fish was born January 13, 1896, in Creek Indian Territory, Oklahoma, his father was Thomas “Little Fish” Fish and his mother, Eliza “Lizzie” Barnett Fish. He had five sons and six daughters with Julia Marie Shade Fish. He died on August 5, 1972, in Henryetta, Oklahoma, at the age of 76, and was buried at the Fish Cemetery. He was a full blood Mvskoke citizen and a member of the Tuckabache Tribal Town.

Newman Frank

Branch: U.S. Army
Years Served: 1950-1952
Sergeant Newman Frank, the son of Austin and Ida Frank, was drafted into the Army, October 1950, discharged October 15th, 1952 with the rank of Sergeant. Frank went to work for Hale Halsell whole sale grocery and retired after 42 years. Frank was the Pastor of Bixby Circuit (United Methodist) for 13 years, one year at Broken Arrow Indian United Methodist church, and retired from ministry June 1995. Frank passed away October 1995. Those who miss him very much are wife-Louvinia, Son-Newman Jr., Daughters- JoEllen, Doris, Ida and Grandchildren.



Roger W. Frank

Branch: U.S. Army
Years Served: 1966-1967
Frank is a Vietnam Veteran. He served as a truck driver in the 1st Infantry Division, supply and transportation. He is a full blood citizen of the Mvskoke (Creek) Nation. His tribal town is Tukvptvce and his clan is the Tiger Clan. Frank retired in 2005 after working as an inspector in the steel industry for 38 years. He resides in Oklahoma City, OK with his wife Teresa.

Jess “Mick” Freeman Jr.

Branch: U.S. Army, Army National Guard, Air National Guard
Jess “Mick” Freeman Jr. is a retired veteran, federal government employee, Sunday school teacher and dedicated community volunteer. He is a member of the Katcv Clan and lives on the outskirts of Holdenville with Ruth, his wife of 36 years. Freeman attended Euchee Mission Indian Boarding School. He graduated from Central High School in Tulsa. Following graduation, he served his country in the U.S. Army, 7th Cavalry Division, during the Korean War. After his tour of duty, Mr. Freeman continued to serve the country in the Army National Guard for seven years and the Air National Guard for 21 years, where his highest rank was a tech sergeant. He attended Central State and Rose State College. He earned an airplane mechanic licenses and repairman certificate in electronics. Freeman worked for the Federal Aviation Administration for nearly 28 years. He also worked at Tinker Air Force Base as a B-52 technician.



Stephen D. Fultz

Branch: U.S. Army
In 1976 I joined the U.S. Army seeking Soldiers life, I tried enlisting as a 16 year old High School Senior and was rebuffed by the local Army Recruiter for being too young to enlist. The moment I turned 17 I returned and was told I needed my parents’ permission and was given a document for them to sign. My Dad took about 2 minutes to sign it and said it would be good for me. That summer I took my first flight on an airplane to start basic training. During training a recruiter for the 82nd Airborne Division came looking for volunteers. I was quick to volunteer. As I completed Basic training I was soon off to Fort Dix NJ for Wheeled and Track Mechanic training then on to Fort Benning to become a Paratrooper. I was assigned to Fort Bragg NC for almost 7 years before I volunteered to become a Drill Sergeant with the 95th Training division. I served as an Infantry and Artillery Drill Sergeant for 10 years before being promoted to First Sergeant and served as a Drill Sergeant Trainer until I retired with 23 years of service.

MSG Leonard Gouge

Branch: U.S. Army
Years Served: 1984-2013
MSG Gouge joined the Army in 1984 as Private First Class he did his basic training at Ft. Dix, New Jersey. From there he went to Ft. Benning, Georgia for his AT. MSG Gouge was stationed in Germany, where he achieved the rank of Sgt. Upon return to the States, MSG Gouge went into the Army Reserves where he became a Drill Sgt. He would train hundreds of Army soldiers of the years as a Drill Sgt. In 2003, he was activated where is he was stationed at Ft, Sill, Oklahoma for a year training soldiers. In 2006, MSG Gouge was once again activated and sent to Afghanistan for 15 months. While in Afghanistan he achieved the rank of MSG and was awarded the Bronze Star for his ability to work directly with the Afghan soldiers. MSG Gouge retired from the U.S. Army in 2013.



Andres C Guerrero Jr.

Branch: U.S. Army
Years Served: 3 years active duty
Basic training at Ft. Leonard Wood, Mo, AIT Redstone Arsenal, AL and stationed at Ft. Hood Tx., Honorable discharge in 1989.

Eugene M. Harjo

Branch: U.S. Army
Years Served: 1940-1945
Harjo was born on March 3, 1918 to Alex and Nancy Harjo in Okemah, OK. Harjo was a full blood Muscogee (Creek). He graduated from Chilocco Indian School in Newkirk, OK. Harjo met Suzanne Tiger of Henryetta, OK while at Chilocco and they eventually married in 1943 and bore seven children. Harjo enlisted in the Army in September of 1940. He earned the rank of staff sergeant and was in the military police. He did a tour of duty in Naples and Sicily during June, 1943 to July, 1944. Harjo was honorably discharged in September 1945. He earned the EAME Service Ribbon with two Bronze Service Stars, Silver Star Medal, American Defense Service Ribbon and the Good Conduct Medal. Harjo was killed in a construction accident in 1954.



Kenneth Gene Harjo

Branch: U.S. Army Air Force
Years Served: 1963-1967
Harjo was born on July 11, 1945 in Henryetta, OK to Eugene and Suzanna (Tiger) Harjo. He is a full blood Creek citizen. Harjo graduated from Henryetta High School in 1963 and enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in October of 1963. He did a tour of duty in England. Harjo was honorably discharged in March of 1967. He attended Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, OK. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree majoring in Accounting and Business Administration. Harjo married Marsha Ryals in 1968 while both attended NSU. They bore two sons Jeff and Ryan, and one granddaughter Finley. After graduating college, he worked as an accountant for several organizations in Kansas. In 2011, Harjo moved his family to Muskogee, OK and is currently employed by the MCN as the General Ledger Accountant.

Norman Alex Harjo

Branch: U.S. Marine Corps
Years Served: 1969-1971
Harjo was born on October 1, 1946 to Eugene and Suzanna Harjo in Henryetta, OK. He is full blood Creek citizen. Harjo graduated from Henryetta High School in 1964 and in 1969 graduated from Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, OK with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education. In 1980, he earned a Masters of Science Degree in Adult Education from Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, OK. Harjo enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1969 and served a tour of duty in Vietnam. He was honorably discharged in 1971. In 1973, he began working for the Creek Nation in the Adult Education Department. He also worked for the Summer Youth Program and Adult Vocational Services. Harjo retired in 1998 due to disability. He passed on Sept. 5, 2012.





Paul Michael Harjo

Branch: U.S. Marine Corps
Years Served: 1973-1975
Harjo was born on June 21, 1954 to Eugene and Suzanna Harjo in Okemah, OK. He was a full blood Creek citizen. He graduated from Sequoyah Indian School in 1973. He went on to graduate from East Central State University in 1985 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Recreation and Physical Education. Harjo enlisted in the Marine Corp in 1973 and was honorably discharged in 1975. He worked for the Tulsa Community College as a test monitor, recruiter, and tutor until he retired from college in 2012. Harjo married Darlene Meeks on November 28, 2009. They lived in Sapulpa, OK until he went home to meet his Lord and Savior on December 17, 2020.

Please Hawkins

Branch: U.S. Army
Years Served: 1944-1946
Served in the European Theater and fought in the Battle of the Bulge. Wounded twice, Belgium 28 Dec 44 and France Feb 45. Awarded European African Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with Bronze Arrowhead, World War II Victory Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart with Oak Leaf Cluster and Distinguished Unit Badge with Oak Leaf Cluster.



Michael Herrod

Branch: U.S. Air Force
Michael Herrod, born in Ada, Ok, to Glenda Herrod-Fixico, joined the Air Force in 2003 out of Albuquerque, NM. While Michael joined the USAF from Albuquerque, the Herrod family roots run deep throughout Oklahoma, beginning with Great-Grandfather Reverend Willie Herrod, who led a congregation at Tookparfka Baptist Church and, with his wife Betsy Herrod, raised their family in Wetumka, OK. Michael's career as a Utilities Systems Journeyman afforded him travel across the world to places such as the Azores, Hawaii, Japan, Germany, England, Iraq, Qatar, and multiple stateside locations. Michael currently resides in Menifee, CA, with his wife, Frances, son, Gabriel, daughter, Alana, their 3 dogs and 3 cats. He now concentrates on his art and has several projects in development. The mural in his photo is one he painted while deployed to Balad Air Base, Iraq.

Carlos L. Kimbrough

Branch: U.S. Air Force (USAF)
Years Served: 22 Years
Carlos L. Kimbrough, Born Euchee in Wichita KS graduated Beggs High School in 1978. Joined the US Air Force in 1979 as a Fireman. Later retrained to Transportation, then Manpower (Industrial Engineer). Deployed twice to the Gulf War and Bosnia Conflict as a wartime IE. Completed his Master's degree at the University of Oklahoma in 1997. Retired as Master Sergeant in 2001.



John David King

Branch: U.S. Army
First enlisted in the Oklahoma National Guard as a teenage student at Chilocco Indian School where he joined the famed Charlie Company, 279th Inf., 45th (Thunderbird) Division. In September 1950 (rank SFC), the unit was activated for the Korean Conflict. After he returned, the unit was activated again (rank M/ Sgt) during the aftermath of severe F5 tornado damage at Blackwell, OK. While in college, (rank PSG) he served with Stillwater's Co. A, 245th Combat Engr. Bn. and later transferred to Okmulgee's Co. A, 120th Combat Engr. Bn, 45th Division. In 1973, the unit was activated during the prison riot in McAlester, OK(later reported as one of the worst in U.S. history). John David retired in 1979 with the rank of Chief Warrant Officer (CW/2) after 26 years of service.

Whitney (Nooney) Dagenet

Branch: U.S. Navy Sea Bees
Years Served: 1988-1992
Dagenet enlisted at 17 years of age. She knew she wanted to serve her country and her mother had to sign my enlistment papers, because I was still a minor. During her service she was an equipment operator in the Navy Sea Bees during Operation Desert Shield and Storm. She learned to drive a truck from Uncle Sam, and employs those skills today.



Dewayne Marshall

Branch: U.S. Marine Corps
Years Served: 3
Dewayne Marshall, graduated from bootcamp at MCRD San Diego in 1981. Attended combat training at Camp Pendleton CA, after bootcamp. Stationed at NAS.Moffett Field Ca. Guard Detachment until 1983. Transferred to Camp Lejeune NC. 3rd BAT / 6th Marines, Weapons Plt. as a M60 Machine Gunner. Toured the Philippines, Japan and pulled guard duty on Diego Garcia with West Pack. Meritoriously promoted to Corporal in 1983, youngest Marine ever to reach that rank in 3/6 at that time. Complete my duty with the USMC on March 24th, 1984 never regretting a single day of military discipline and the best friends I ever had that would cover my 6 whenever needed. I graduated from Sequoyah H.S. in 1979 where I met my wife Tammy and have been happily married for 42 years. We have 4 successful children, Jamie, Jeremy, Amanda and Jaron. We blessed with 5 grandchildren that we love dearly. I strongly believe that my creator and The United States Marine Corps prepared me for the everyday trials that life throws at me. "SEMPER PARATUS"

Lawrence O. Miller

Branch: U.S. Army
Years Served: 1967-1969
Lawrence is now retired and enjoying spending time with family, especially with his grandchildren and grand-dog.



John Morgan Jr.

Branch: U.S. Marine Corps
Years Served: 4 years Active Duty
Prior to his first deployment, Morgan was a Saw Gunner. In addition to his role within the infantry platoon he trained in defensive operations, offensive operations, patrolling, close quarters battle, and personal security. Sangin Afghanistan- (10/01/2010-04/28/2011) 3rd Battalion 5th Marines India CO. During his first deployment he provided quick reaction force for the company as a MAT-V gunner. Nowzad & Musa Qala Afghanistan- (03/03/2012-09/21/2012) 2nd Battalion 5th Marines Weapons CO. During his second deployment he assumed responsibility for the training and well-being of the Marines under his charge. He assisted in the execution of multiple outer cordons during company and battalion level clearing operations and conducted clearing operations to clear enemy strong holds, and search for high value targets. He provided high ranking individuals with safe transportation to and from different company and battalion forward operation bases.

Sylvia O Bailey-Munoz

Branch: U.S. Air Force
Years Served: 6 Years
I enlisted in 1952 during the Korean War. First enlistment 3200 Maintenance Wing (Test), Eglin AFB, Florida. CO was Col. Paul Tibbetts. My assignment was to the Consumption Data which was the time each item on the plane had when it needed to be changed, this way supplies in Korea would have necessary parts to keep the planes flying. Second Enlistment was at McGuire AFB, New Jersey in the 18th Air Transport Squadron (MATS) as a Flight Traffic Specialist/ Load Master on C-118 Aircraft. Too many stories to tell, but the one thing I am most proud, I convinced a General to never again touch a young WAF inappropriately. Traveled to 10 Foreign Countries and over 2600 Flight Hours.



Bobby Wayne Rush

Branch: U.S. Army
Years Served: 1946 to 1941
Mr. Rush was sent to Japan in 1946. His first duty was with the 46th Engineer Construction Battalion, and he was assigned the task of removing barrels of ammunition from caves. Several men died when the unstable munitions would explode. Since Mr. Rush was the only soldier who could type, he was sent to the recruiters office where was assigned administrative duties, prepared information programs for the troops, and he was involved in the reenlistment and retention efforts.

He received the world War II Victory Medal

Jack L. Sanders

Branch: U.S. Navy
Years Served: 1961 – 1970- 9 years
Looking back, I feel lucky that I was assigned to a warship the Richard S. Edwards DD950 nickname was "The Ready Eddie". She took us to war and back home twice during my time onboard the Edwards. First to the "Pocket Vest War" – Quemory/Matsu Islands off mainland China (1963). Second to "North Vietnam" (1964 - 1965) the Edwards was one of several ships assigned to serve in the "Desoto Mission" a U.S. secret operation. The Desoto Mission was the U.S. Navy's part in the involvement of getting the U.S. military into the Vietnam War in 1964 and in 2005 it was classified. The Edwards also patrolled Gulf of Tonkin Numerous times from the DMZ North along North Vietnam coast line. As a "tin can sailor" I feel special to have served.



James Sevier

Branch: U.S. Army Reserve
Years Served: 1985 - 1990s
James Sevier. He is 57 years old, single and lives alone. He currently employed by Tulsa Public Schools. Sevier has worked for the district for 30 years. He has a Bachelor's Degree and a Master's Degree from the University of Phoenix. He served in the United States Army Reserve from 1985 to the end of term in the 1990s.

Jackie Leon Sullivan

Branch: U.S. Air Force/Air Force Reserve
Years Served: Active duty 1962-1970, AF Reserves 1974-1989
Sullivan born June 20, 1945, Okemah, OK. To Chapley/Juanita Sullivan. Tribal town: Fish Pond, Clan: Wind. Enlisted in the USAF in 1962 Basic Training at Lackland Air Force Base (AFB) TX, attended Fighter Aircraft Maint Training at Amarillo AFB TX. 1973- 1967 Perrin AFB as Crew Chief (CC) working F102 aircraft. 1967-1968 Tan Son Nhut AFB Saigon Viet Nam as RF101 CC (Received AF Accommodation Medal). 1968-1969 Kirtland AFB NM as F104D CC, 1969-1970 Sheppard AFB TX as an Aircraft Maint instructor. Joined the AF Reserve 507 Tac Fighter Group 1974-1989 worked as CC on F105, F4, and F16 aircraft. Now Master Sergeant retired. Family: Married 1964 to present, Daughter Professor at Windsor University Canada, Son (US Army) now works for the BIA Washington DC, 8 Grand Children and 1 Great Grandchild.





Tracey June Tell

Branch: U.S. Army Reserve

Years Served: 1985-1993

Tracey was interested in the military because of family service legacy. She inherited her interest from long line of family members who served in all branches. She enlisted during her college years and trained as a medic. Most of her years were spent at 810th Station Hospital, Little Rock, Arkansas. She currently lives in Arkansas.

Donald Algin Wallace Jr.

Branch: U.S. Marine Corps

Years Served: 24 years served

Donald Algin Wallace, Jr., U.S. Marine Corps, 24 years served, Bio-Master Sergeant Wallace joined the Marine Corps in August 1995. Donald is the son of Georgia Coser Frye and Donald Wallace of Muskogee. He is also the grandson of the late George and Stella Coser, and the great nephew of Joe Halley, USMC. Wallace retired in 2018 and resides with his wife Alfreada in N.C. Donald has 3 children and 3 grandchildren. His clan is fox and his tribal town is Cussetah. Donald is a volunteer basketball coach for White Oak High School and a mentor for several young people.



David Jack Ware

Branch: U.S. Air Force

Years Served: 1968-1974

Ware served on Active Duty during the Vietnam era, mostly in the Philippines and in Okinawa, which was still under U.S. occupation since World War II before reversion to Japan. His assignments include: Lackland AFB, Texas (1968-'69), Goodfellow AFB, Texas (1969-'70), Altus AFB, Oklahoma (1971-'72), Clark AB, Philippines (1970 and 1972-'74), and Kadena AB, Okinawa (1970-'71). He received an honorable discharge due to malaria during his time in the Philippines. Ware is retired from U.S. Customs and Border Protection and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security with 42 years combined Federal Military and Civilian Service. Ware is an at-large Muscogee (Creek) citizen who now resides in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Jared Ware

Branch: U.S. Army

Years Served: 1993-2018

Jared Ware was born and raised in Hot Springs, Arkansas. He served in the United States Army from 1993 to 2018. He was a career Corps of Engineers officer commissioned through the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York. He served throughout the United States and in overseas assignments including Iraq, Korea and the United Kingdom. His final military assignment was as a faculty member in the Department of Geography and Environmental Engineering at the United States Military Academy. His military awards include the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star, and the Defense Meritorious Service Medal. He received the Military Meritorious Service Award from the Society of American Indian Government Employees (SAIGE) in 2017 and is a member of the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES).



Joe Wesley Watashe

Branch: U.S. Marine Corps

Years Served: 1966-1981

Watashe was born March 12, 1947 in Claremore, OK to Jesse and Annie Watashe. He graduated from Kellyville High School in 1965. Watashe enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1966 and was honorably discharged in 1981 after serving 15 years. He served two tours of duty in Vietnam. Watashe received the Joint Service Commendation Medal and the RVN Moritorious Medal and the RVN Armed Forces Moritorious Unit Commendation Cross of Gallantry Award. He served as an Honor Guard for the tribe. Watashe attended church at Little Cussetah in Sapulpa, OK. His clan is turtle and he was a member of the Polecat Ceremonial Grounds in Kellyville. He passed away on Sept. 4, 2020.

Jamie Wilde-Barrientos

Branch: U.S. Air Force

Years Served: 6 years

Wilde-Barrientos entered active duty Air Force in Feb 1998. Her first duty station was Andrews AFB, MD where she was a High-Frequency Global Radio Operator. While at Andrews, she did a phone patch to the Weather Channel for the pilot to report hurricane conditions as it aired live on TV. In 2000, she was assigned to Lajes AB, Azores for 2 years where she moved into SATCOM after radio operations were outsourced. She retrained into radiology in 2002 and was stationed at Lackland AFB, TX where she separated in late 2004. She is bird clan, from a family of veterans including her parents, her daughter, uncle, and several cousins and currently living in Dallas, TX.



James O. Wilde

Branch: U.S. Navy

Years Served: Eight years

Wilde joined the Navy he was not doing well with being away from home and trying to fit in with college routine at OU. He joined the US Navy in 1972 and was trained as a Hospital Corpsman, which most people equate as a medic. He became a Medical Technologist and served most his time in the beautiful area of Beaufort, South Carolina. His last duty station was at US Naval Research Center in Bethesda, Maryland. He was medically discharged in 1980.

Richard E. Wilde

Branch: U.S. Navy

Years Served: 1970-1974

Richard is the second son of the late James O. Wilde and Kathryn Nell Bible Wilde Jones. Brother to James O. Wilde, Jr., Karen D. Wilde, and the late Rev. David Lee Wilde. Nephew of Lucille Bible Miller and Robert "Bear" Bible, the late Mary Louise "Roxie" Bible Lowe, Shirley Bible Kelly Thomas, David Eugene Bible, and Betty Jo Bible Bush. Maternal grandparents, David "Dave" Bible and Leona Grayson Bible Bemo. Great grandson of Lewis Bible and Mulsie Chisholm Chalakee. Great grandson of Henry Grayson and Maggie Drew Grayson. Following high school graduation Wilde enlisted and served during the Vietnam era conflict. The ships he served on were not deployed to the coast of Vietnam; however, the ships he served upon were ready and if the need arose to be deployed to Vietnam. Wilde was considered a cold war veteran during his service.



Brendalyn Pace – Williams

Branch: U.S. Air Force

Years Served: 4 – 5 GT

Entered into the United States Air Force Delayed Program at the age of 17. Attended Base Training in Austin, Texas in January for 6 weeks in 1976. Attended Special training at Sheppard Air Force Base in Texas for 3 months. Was assigned and stationed at Luke Air Force Base in Glendale, Arizona as a Disbursement Accounting Specialist (67252). Received the Air Force Longevity Service Ribbon, Outstanding Unit Award and Good Conduct Medal from November 14, 1975 thru November 13, 1978. Last assignment and Major Command in the 58CSG – TAC. Rank – SGT – Character of Service Honorable Discharge – Feb 13, 1980.

Allen D. Wind

Branch: U.S. Army

Years Served: 1968 -1971, Korea and Germany

Wind is of the Deer clan and Ueokofke tribal town. He is celebrating 50 years with his spouse, Susie A. Fixico. He was honorably discharged as Sgt, E-5.



Christopher Winters

Branch: U.S. Army

Years Severed: July 1986 thru May 1992

Served in the 8th infantry division after basic training in Oklahoma and stationed in Mainz, Germany. Reenlisted in 1989 serving in the 9th Infantry Division stationed at Fort Lewis, WA. In 1990 served in the 1st Infantry Division at Fort Riley, Kansas, where he was deployed to fight in Operation Desert Storm/Shield serving under Colonel Gregory Fontenot in HHC 2/34 Armor for 2 years as an M1 Armor Crewman. Upon honorable discharge in May of 1992, Chris joined many veterans' groups including lifetime memberships in the DAV and the VFW and continues to do all he can, to assist veterans. Chris currently directs Tribal and Military programs, which he started for his current employer and volunteers on a weekly basis at JBLM. While in Washington State, Chris met his wife of 31 years, Michele, where they continue to live.

Geri Wisner

Branch: U.S. Marine Corps

Geri Wisner is a member of the Muskogee Nation, a former United States Marine and a mother. She is the Attorney General for the Muskogee (Creek) Nation. Ms. Wisner is a nationally recognized speaker on issues of criminal justice in Indian Country, collaborative responses to address violent crimes and integrating traditional Tribal healing and cultural practices. Ms. Wisner has been appointed to serve on several Congressional committees focusing on the improvement of Tribal justice, the protection of Native children and safer communities in Indian Country. Ms. Wisner was appointed as the first Ambassador to the United Nations for the Muskogee (Creek) Nation, making presentations to the UN in Geneva, Switzerland and New York City. Geri received her B.A. in 2001 from Oklahoma State University, and Juris Doctorate from the University Of Law in 2003.



Brian D. Worthy

Branch: U.S. Army

Years Severed: 1990 - 1993

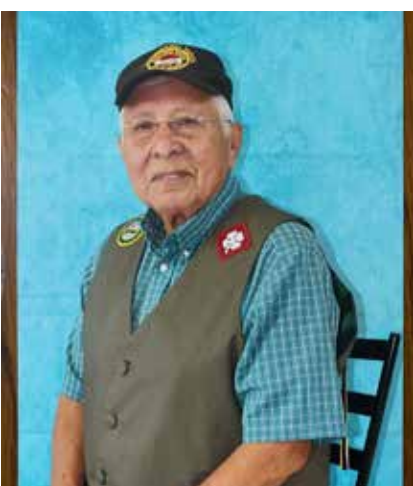
Worthy served in the U.S. Army from 1990 to 1993. He is of the Lovcpokv Tribal Town / Turtle Clan. He was a petroleum supply specialist and served in Operation Desert Storm. He is a Mvskoke language speaker and owns his own small business.

Thomas Yahola

Branch: U.S. Army

Years Served: November 20, 1961 to November 19, 1963

Thomas Yahola, US Army, served from November 20, 1961 to November 19, 1963. Assigned to Ft. Carson, Colorado, for boot camp, following graduation, transferred to Ft. Sill, Oklahoma. Following AIT training on the 105 Howitzer towed, transferred to B Battery, 2nd Howitzer Battalion, 2nd Artillery, Fourth Army. Following, transferred to Service Battery, 2nd/2nd as a Personnel Specialist E-4. Decoration awarded was Marksman (carbine) and Good Conduct Medal. Was Honorably Discharged following Reserve Obligation November 19, 1967.





Corporal Yazzie served in the United States Marine Corps from 1991-1995. Corporal Yazzie served in operations "Provide Promise," "Deny Flight," and "Sharp Guard," which provided humanitarian relief, joint naval blockade in the Adriatic Sea, and enforcement of a United Nations No-Fly Zone over Bosnia during the Yugoslav War.

Dylan is the son of Lisa (Lekapv) Strange and Tyson Strange. At the time of his birth, Dylan's maternal grandfather named him Rvo Lvmhe, and he has been known all his life as Lvmhe to family, friends, and schoolmates. Lvmhe's maternal grandparents are Kelly (Mekko) Bell and Esther (Bear) Bell. His paternal grandparents are Lee and Ellen Johnson. Lvmhe and wife, Makalya, have a two-year old son and are expecting their second child in December. Lvmhe enjoyed spending time with his Poca, (Kelly - Muscogee/Seminole) learning the tradition of ballstick making. Lvmhe is a member of Earlsboro Indian Baptist Church. He was baptized at the church by Rev. Tim Randall. Lvmhe's clan is Kono.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE

September 3, 2022
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
At the Wetumka Indian Commu-
nity 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

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Dr. Kirsten C. Kunkle spoke with Mvskoke Media Assignment Editor Jerrad Moore about the new production on an episode of Live Wire. Dr. Kunkle wrote the story, and Sarah Van Sciver wrote the composition. The story follows six Girondine women living through the French Revolution, a tumultuous time of political and societal change in 18th-century Europe. Okmulgee, OK. Oct. 11, 2022. (MM File)

NEW OPERA “GIRONDINES” DEBUTS

DR. KRISTEN C. KUNKLE APPEARED ON LIVE WIRE TO DISCUSS THE NEW PRODUCTION

by JERRAD MOORE
ASSIGNMENT EDITOR

& by BRADEN HARPER
REPORTER

WILMINGTON, Delaware – A new opera, “Girondines,” debuted at the Presbyterian Church of the Covenant and ran from Oct. 21-23. One of the opera’s creators, Muscogee (Creek) Nation Citizen, and artistic director for the Wilmington Concert Opera, Dr. Kirsten C. Kunkle, appeared on Live Wire to discuss the new production.

“Girondines” follows six women living through the reign of terror during the French Revolution. Dr. Kunkle described the characters as neither wealthy nor poor but did share the same Girondin Political Views of the time.

The Girondin movement comprised people from all walks of life, including politicians, merchants, and lawyers. They were characterized by their criticisms of the court and supported foreign wars as a way of uniting people in revolution. Many of the Girondins were infamously purged and executed by guillotine, including three of the characters from the opera.

The title Girondine is the fem-

inine form of the movement’s name. The opera’s characters are based on actual women from history, including artists, writers, and scientists. The production consists of 12 roles exclusively for women, and there are no male characters.

“They all have these significant historical backgrounds, and it’s all true except for a slight twist of fiction where I make them all friends,” Dr. Kunkle said. “They discuss politics and what’s important to them, but they also support each other through the opera.”

Because certain events in the story did not happen, the production is not a historical account. However, it is a story that depicts women supporting one another, a trope not always found in mainstream theater, cinema, or media.

“Girondines” was a collaboration between Dr. Kunkle and composer Sarah Van Sciver. Dr. Kunkle wrote the libretto, or the opera’s text, and Van Sciver composed the music for the text.

Although Van Sciver is California based, the duo was able to work on the story together remotely. According to Dr. Kunkle, the pandemic lockdowns freed up a lot of time for them to work together.

“Where are we going? We’re not going anywhere; let’s write an opera,” Dr. Kunkle said, recalling

the early stages of the script. The production is unique in that it is a story told by women, for women.

It was written and produced by a woman and featured an all-female cast. According to Dr. Kunkle, although you probably never learned about these characters in history, they are still important.

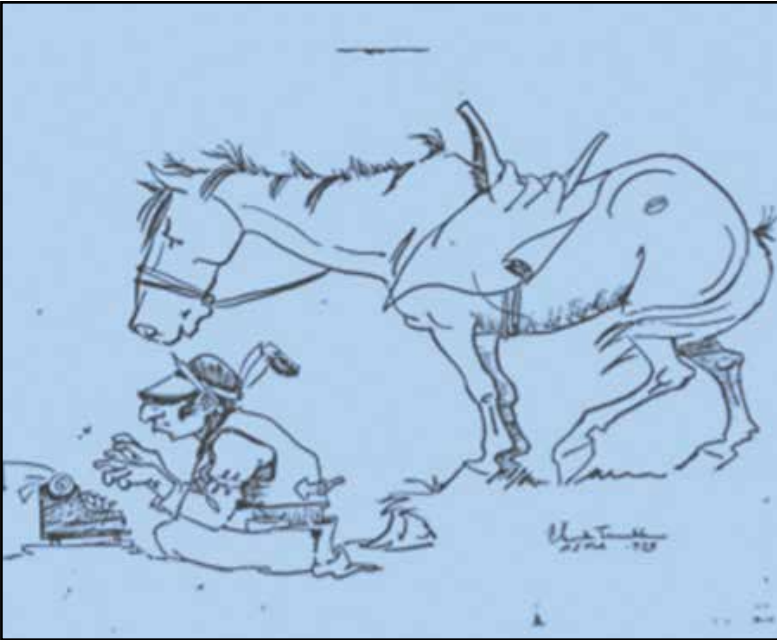
“This is part of our attempt to change that (female representation in theater) and create a legacy for women in opera as well as bringing up a legacy of these historical figures, most of whom are not remembered today,” Dr. Kunkle said.

The Wilmington Concert Opera is a nonprofit organization that is funded by grants. Performances produced by the nonprofit are also supported through fundraisers and donations.

Dr. Kunkle does not take her position in the arts for granted. Her presence and perspective as a Muskogee woman is unique and a beacon for others.

“If I can be somebody that encourages anybody to get out there and just try it, that is such a blessing,” Dr. Kunkle said. “I love what I do.”

Dr. Kunkle invites anyone who has questions about the performance to contact her by email kirstenckunkle@gmail.com.



(MM File)

LOSSES, GAINS, LAW CHANGES

PASSAGE OF WELL KNOWN NATIVES; LEGAL REVISIONS; ANOTHER FAKE, FLEEING RUSSIANS

by GARY FIFE
RADIO COMMUNICATIONS

Okmulgee, Oklahoma—First, the saddest news. Sacheen Littlefeather, 75, the woman who refused Marlon Brando’s 1973 Academy Award Oscar for the Best Actor died at the beginning of October.

Reporting an Apache/Yaqui/Pueblo heritage, she was asked by Brando to stand in for him during the presentation ceremony. Brando refused the Oscar for the way that the film industry had portrayed and treated Native American images on the screen. She became a symbol of pride and courage for Native peoples, but her acting career suffered because of her stance. Hollywood scorned her and she lost work.

Ironically, the Motion Picture Academy offered its public apology for her treatment just three weeks before Littlefeather passed away.

Perhaps making things even sadder, the San Francisco Chronicle reported, her sisters, Orlandi and Rosalind Cruz said Littlefeather had a white mother and Mexican father.

In another item concerning the loss of a well-known Native, Kevin Locke, 68, educator and acclaimed hoop dancer also walked on. The Standing Rock Lakota man shared his culture on a world-wide basis and won many honors for his work.

News of his passing got national media notice. That was an encouraging development and a sign that the Native American presence is becoming more incorporated into national news headlines.

The U.S. Department of the Interior has announced it intends to make some revisions to the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. The Interior Department said the changes are “long overdue and will strengthen our ability to enforce the law and help Tribes in the return of ancestors and sacred cultural objects.”

Amen to that. Tribes and Native individuals have long complained that NAGPRA was ‘toothless’ in its effort to get Native remains and artifacts returned to their tribes of origin. The law was supposed to get museums and federal agencies to repatriate these objects but has been only partially successful. Several major universities and museums have been dragging their feet in fulfilling these legal obligations. According to the government announcement, “The public can comment on the proposed rule until Jan. 12, 2023, at www.regulations.gov. “

Let’s see if their new bite is worse than their bark.

The Governor of New Mexico has rescinded some anti-Indian laws that were still on the books in that State. Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham issued an Executive Order that abolished five declarations that were still official. This action took

“THESE OUTDATED LAWS PERMITTED THE EXCLUSION OF NATIVE FROM THEIR CENSUS, PURSUE AND ATTACK ANY HOSTILE TRIBES, LABELLED TRIBES AS OUTLAWS AND PERMITTED KILLINGS.”
—NEW MEXICO GOVERNOR

place during that state’s observance of Indigenous Peoples Day.

These outdated laws permitted the exclusion of Native from their census, pursue and attack any hostile tribes, labelled tribes as outlaws and permitted killings. Grisham did call these ancient statutes shameful and that it was “appropriate to remedy some of the injustices our government has perpetrated.”

Speaking of shameful, Georgia Senate candidate, Hershel Walker is another politician claiming Native heritage without showing any proof according to Native News Online. In September he claimed his grandmother was full blood Cherokee. After that, in January, he said he just found out that his mother was 40 percent Native American.

The three federally recognized Cherokee Nations say, ‘Nope, not happening.’ What Herschel, no Princesses?

The National Native American Veterans Memorial will be dedicated November 11 in Disneyland-On-The-Potomac. Native veterans from across the country will be taking part in procession on the Mall to mark the occasion.

Mvskoke Media reporter, Kaylea Berry served in the U.S. Air Force and will be taking part in the procession and ceremony as part of the Mvskoke delegation. The event will be livestreamed on the National Native American Veterans Memorial website: NMAI-Native-VeteransMemorial@si.edu

You hear about all the commotion about immigrants crossing the southern borders, right? Well, here’s one about illegal immigrants crossing a Northern border.

Two Russian nationals crossed the Bering Strait to the Inuit Eskimo village of Gambell on St. Lawrence island to escape being drafted into the Russian army and being sent to fight in Ukraine. Local and state officials asked for help from the feds ‘cause nobody knew what to do with them.

Words of advice to the Inuit tribal government: don’t sign any treaties or let them build a fort.

Christmas is coming fast. Shop with Native vendors and remember those who could use the help. Eat lots of penwv. Hvtvm cerecraes!

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

OBITUARY



Priscilla Waybourn

Priscilla (Fish) Waybourn, a resident of Okemah, passed away Tuesday, August 16, 2022 in Jenks, OK at the age of 86. She was born January 9, 1936 in Henryretta, OK to Frazier John Fish & Julia (Shade) Fish.

She was preceded in death by her first husband, Cecil Childers, second husband, Joe Waybourn, daughter, Mary Ann Hall, and by eight brothers and sisters.

Priscilla is survived by her daughter, Lorene Fraser & husband Doug of Sapulpa, daughter, Retha Dodson of Okmulgee, four grandchildren; Barbie Dodson & husband Jerry Walker of Okmulgee,

Rachel Pierce of Henryretta, Leeanna Dodson of Glenpool, and Mary Jo Hall Graham of Tahlequah, nine great grandchildren, Sister, Mary Dearman of Okemah, brother, Calvin Fish of Arkansas, and many other relatives and friends.

Viewing will be from 5-8 PM on Thursday, August 18, 2022 at Integrity Funeral Service.

Funeral Services are scheduled for Friday, August 19, 2022 at 1:00 PM at Integrity Chapel with Wesley VanMeter, officiating. Interment will follow at Hillcrest Cemetery in Weleetka. Services are under the care and direction of Integrity Funeral Service.

Malack Wayne Blackfox

Malack Wayne Blackfox, infant son of Cody Blackfox and Kaylee Franklin died September 16, 2022.

Malack is survived by his parents; maternal great grandmother, Barbara Franklin; maternal grandparents, Lori Lacefield and Barry Wilson

and paternal grandparents, Genia and Thomas Yeager; aunts Kristina Bishop and Morgan Partin and uncles, Jeremy Franklin and Ian Beaty.



ANONYMOUS
TIP LINE
918.777.3429



MVSOKEMEDIA

LEGALS

[Seal]

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Notice is hereby given that any person who is a Muscogee (Creek) registered voter and a resident of the Muscogee (Creek) boundaries of the MCN Conservation District and has entered into or will enter into a Cooperator Agreement with the said District, may have their name placed on the official ballot of the District Commission Election of said District for "Seat B" – restricted landowner and "Seat D" – fee landowner by filing a Notification and Declaration of Candidacy with said District located at the MCN Housing building Room 220 or call 918-549-2609 between the dates of November 2-18, 2022. Notification and Declaration of Candidacy forms may be obtained at the above location and must be returned to the same location before close of business on the last day of the filing period. The Election will be held in December 2022.

CONTACT US TODAY TO PLACE YOUR ORDER
918-732-7720, OR EMAIL
 CREATIVE@**MVSKOKE**MEDIA.COM