



MVSKOKE NEWS

PRODUCED BY  MVSKOKEMEDIA



Principal Chief David Hill addressed the Nation on Jan. 28 at the Muscogee Nation Mound Building in Okmulgee, Oklahoma. (Kaylea Berry/Reporter)

CHIEF HILL ADDRESSES THE STATE OF THE NATION

MUSCOGEE NATION LEADERSHIP LOOKING AHEAD TO PROSPERITY

by **KAYLEA BERRY**
REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma - Principal Chief David Hill addressed the Nation on Saturday, Jan. 28, before the National Council Quarterly session began. Chief Hill highlighted the accomplishments and areas needing improvement for the previous year.

“Our people have been here for thousands of years and navigated

every challenge, always looking ahead with a prosperous future in mind,” said Chief Hill. “Today, it is my honor to stand before you to report that while we continue to face many challenges, the state of our Nation is stronger than ever, and our future is bright.”

The covid pandemic presented a new threat to the Nation, forcing change and innovation across the reservation. The change was a challenge, but the Nation learned that there were more efficient

ways to get things done.

During this administration, the Muscogee Nation has achieved many goals for its citizens and their neighbors living within the reservation.

“The AG’s office has worked tirelessly to put this Nation in a position to not only take on the increased caseloads but also to identify areas where we can provide more resources and communication agencies like our Muscogee (Creek) Nation Center for Victim Services so that we have a greater level of advocacy for the citizens and the public,” Chief Hill said.

Another accomplishment includes building the Light-horse Department by adding 40 new officers to the force, a certified SWAT team, a certified dive team, mobile command unit, and additional programs and agreements with partners and agencies. The K-9 unit recently saved over \$1,000,000 of stolen property and took drugs and firearms off the streets.

“To the naysayers who wish to work against us instead of alongside us, we will continue to prove our effectiveness, and we will keep our hands extended in the spirit

STATE OF THE NATION - 2



The Road to Healing Tour started in OK, where there were the most documented Indian boarding schools. (Oklahoma Historical Society)

SEC. HAALAND TOURS THE COUNTRY COLLECTING ORAL ARCHIVES

SECRETARY DEB HAALAND CONTINUES HER TOUR ACROSS THE COUNTRY, COLLECTING NATIVE AMERICAN BOARDING SCHOOL SURVIVOR STORIES

by **MORGAN TAYLOR**
MULTIMEDIA PRODUCER

LAVEEN, Arizona - The Secretary of the U.S. Interior Deb Haaland leads the Road to Healing Tour into the New Year, making the fourth stop at the Gila River Indian Community on Jan. 20 and Navajo Nation at Many Farms on Jan. 22. The Sec-

retary and Assistant Bryan Newland kicked off the tour from the eldest operating boarding school, Riverside Indian School in Anadarko, Okla. on July 9, 2022.

Multiple stops along the way included Michigan, South Dakota, and Arizona, with more events to

HEALING TOUR- 2



Eli Rowland teaches a class on finger weaving for the Connect the Disconnect series. Students learn how to make keychains and belts. The class is offered bimonthly and allows students to participate in a constructive activity while learning a new cultural skill. Jan. 19, 2023. Okmulgee, OK. (Braden Harper/Managing Editor)

YOUTH SERVICES WEAVES CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

CONNECT THE DISCONNECT CLASS TEACHES FINGER AND BASKET WEAVING

by **BRADEN HARPER**
MANAGING EDITOR

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma - One of the many traditions of Mvskoke culture is the unique crafts made by the Mvskoke people, passed down from generation to generation. Those traditions continue to be passed down through the Connect the Disconnect cultural art class series.

The series is a collaboration between Muscogee (Creek) Nation Youth Services and Behavioral Health. This month’s classes included finger and basket weaving.

Eli Rowland is the Language Revitalization Manager with the MCN Language Department. Her job involves working closely with surrounding public schools to implement the Mvskoke language into the curriculum. For her, these cultural classes are special because it connects her with the tribe and allows her to pass on what she has learned.

“I felt pretty disconnected, and I’ve always been very art-oriented,” Rowland said. “Anytime that I heard that a master was

teaching a class, I would be like, ‘can I go learn that so we can teach it?’”

One of those masters includes longtime Mvskoke artist Sandy Fife Wilson. Rowland was first introduced to the colorful world of finger weaving from a class taught by Wilson at the Council Oak House. After successfully weaving her first belt, Wilson was hooked.

“It felt so good because when you first start finger weaving, it looks like you’re doing it wrong,” Rowland said. “I was worried that I was messing it up, but I kept going, and you start to actually see the pattern.”

Rowland began to weave her own patterns and started a practice of teaching classes entwining culture and community through extracurricular courses.

Rowland makes her traditional clothing, including ribbon skirts, vests, and dresses. She also makes accessories, including moccasins, collars, bracelets, necklaces, and pendants. Outside of attire, her craft knowledge extends to weaponry like blowguns, darts, and corn husk dolls.

Jasmyne Jack is a youth counselor advisor with MCN Youth Services. She has seen the Connect the Disconnect series evolve over the past few years. According to Jack, the program initially began pre-pandemic but temporarily went entirely virtual. However, it is now back in person with a limited capacity.

“We want to ensure the youth are doing something positive,” Jack said. “We do believe culture is prevention. This is also a good tool to get the parents involved and family members that can teach them.”

Sometimes students do not always finish their projects during class. They take home what they make, and it is up to them to finish it. Jack shared that the most rewarding part about the program is seeing students send in pictures of the projects they completed on their own.

These classes have had huge impacts on former students. According to Rowland, she has even had some former students reach a skill level where they are confident in selling their ribbon skirts, supporting themselves through college while doing so.

While the classes serve an essential purpose in providing students with constructive activity, it also holds a dual purpose in passing down the Mvskoke traditions.

“It felt like you could see something preserved in the culture when you looked at their stuff,” Rowland said. “I wanted to be able to do that.”

The Connect the Disconnect series will continue bimonthly throughout the year. February’s classes will focus on beading. Classes are in person, masks are encouraged, and they are open to Native youth ages 12-24. The course is free to participate. However, pre-registration is required. Those who wish to register for a cultural art class can visit their website, mvskokeyouth.com/event-registration.



The Mvskoke Language Symposium introduced a video game demo that incorporated the usage of Mvskoke Language to win the game. (Shutterstock)

VIDEO GAME FEATURING MVSKOKE LANGUAGE DELAYED

NATIONAL COUNCIL POSTPONED THE LATEST BUDGET NEEDED FOR THE FULL-SCALE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GAME.

by **MORGAN TAYLOR**
MULTIMEDIA PRODUCER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma - A movement to revitalize the Mvskoke Language Program plans to release a video game using the Mvskoke Language to win the game.

The game is in its early development stages, with a demo already played by citizens who attended recent language symposiums.

College of Muscogee Nation President Dr. Monte Randall has led the project since it was introduced to him through a partnership with an Oral Roberts University Alumni who is a video game developer and owns Sound Puzzle, Inc.

Randall’s outside-of-the-box thinking carried the idea and later developed it into the game, implementing the language and making it a part of the revitalization process.

According to Randall, no other video game uses a Native language. “This is a one-of-a-kind opportunity and one-of-a-kind video

game,” Randall said.

With the growing potential of this opportunity, Randall knew this video game would be able to reach a much larger audience than the CMN students. He contacted Principal Chief David Hill to discuss this development. Second Chief Dell Beaver also supported the idea.

“He understood that language revitalization is more than just one method,” Randall said. “It’s not just this video game. It’s going to be multiple approaches to a comprehensive revitalization plan.”

After the discussion, the language program was then tagged into the process. Surveys were sent to citizens for feedback on how they believed they could best learn the language. From this point, symposiums were planned to collect more data.

“This video game started to emerge again, and we wanted to see more of it,” Randall said.

The National Council voted to approve the purchase of the demo played at a ten percent value of

VIDEO GAME - 2

STATE OF THE NATION

Continued from Page 1

of collaboration and partnership,” said Chief Hill.

Keeping our language and culture alive is a priority. The Mvskoke Revitalization Committee was created to ensure it is preserved. A partnership with the College of Muscogee Nation, headed by CMN President Dr. Monty Randall, formed the committee consisting of Mvskoke language speakers and teachers. The end goal is to have an immersion school.

The Cultural Preservation Department has also ensured that sacred Mvskoke sites are kept sacred and that the Nation is included in any and all discussions concerning them.

Chief Hill said, “We have been proactive through the media in telling our story, and we hold those accountable who are not compliant in law and who do not reach out to us and show the proper respect this Nation demands when it comes to all that we hold sacred.”

Another area that saw opportunities was healthcare. With the addition of Council Oak Comprehensive Healthcare Center, the Nation’s fourth community hospital, vaccinations and antibody treatments are available to the public. Council Oak also has an agreement with the University of Oklahoma School of Medicine, offering surgical training and other services.

To combat the mental health crisis, a new Behavioral Health facility opened. The Nation hopes to conduct more research and treatment options for behavioral health.

Dr. Lance Fry was appointed the Surgeon General by the Muscogee Nation, the first Tribal Nation to do so. This allows the Nation to attract community health, analyze research and studies, formulate plans and recommendations for wellness innova-

tions, and combat sickness and disease.

Citizen services that the Nation has been working on include offering Tribal tags to all citizens within Oklahoma, even those outside of the reservation. A total of five tag agencies are now open across Mvskoke lands to bring those services to citizens. The Wildlife program also offers citizens more hunting and fishing opportunities, including licensing through the Tribe. Housing services are another area that is being evaluated also.

“We all know there is a need for veterans, our homeless relatives, and our elders,” said Chief Hill. “We have projects underway in housing to meet all these needs plus the affordable residence for low-income families, and exploring options for temporary housing.”

A new Tribal Liaison was hired and developed the Citizens Beyond the Reservation program. Over 300 citizens live in Fresno, California, and were able to build a connection with the Muscogee Nation and feel more connected to their roots. Social media has also played a role in making those connections and educating citizens on programs and culture.

Continuing the former administration’s efforts in reconnecting and establishing a presence in the original southeastern homelands in Georgia and Alabama for education, preservation, opportunity, and progress. To formally mark Muscogee Nation’s return, a festival was held in Oxford, Alabama, the original Arbeka Ceremonial Grounds site.

“It is important to us that our story is told correctly and by Mvskoke,” said Chief Hill. “We made history with our friends at Macon, Georgia, and now and forever, the Muscogee (Creek) Nation flag flies above the City Hall in Macon Bench County.”

Chief recognized a few citi-

zens that made history in 2022. Rear Admiral Calvin Foster is the first Mvskoke citizen to reach the rank of Admiral in the U.S. Navy. Joy Harjo was inducted into the Oklahoma Hall and Fame as the 23rd U.S. Poet Laureate. Lauren J. King is the first Indigenous person appointed Federal Court Judge in Washington state history. Chief also recognized Sterlin Harjo.

“Mvskoke citizen Sterlin Harjo, I want to thank him for his awareness and representation of our people and our communities and for providing a global audience,” said Chief Hill. “We have strengthened our working relationship with the hit television series, Reservation Dogs, and are now preparing the third season with the award-winning show.”

There are 500 enrolled Mvskoke citizens making up 43 percent of gaming’s workforce. During 2022, gaming was given the Reader’s Choice Award and was frequently recognized by the media, public, and trade publications for its excellent facilities, superior customer service, and employees. Funding from gaming operations exceeded budget levels and was nearly equal to the prior year’s.

A detailed report for each department and available programs is in the quarterly report on the Muscogee Nation website.

Nicole Spencer, a River Spirit Casino security officer, saved the life of a two-year-old child underwater for two minutes by giving CPR and other life-saving procedures.

The historic Memorandum of Understanding with the cities of Tulsa and Jenks, building a low-water dam will provide an avenue for development and prosperity well into the future. The low-water dam project has been in the works for over a decade.

Muscogee Nation was the first Tribe in history to receive a disaster declaration from FEMA,

allowing communities within the Nation’s boundaries to file for disaster assistance through the Nation instead of the State. MCN is also the first Tribe to meet in person with FEMA Administration in Washington, D.C.

Bobby Howard, Director of Emergency Management, is the only Tribal representative on the Homeland Security Guidance Council and serves on the FEMA Public Assistance Steering Committee. Howard was out in the winter storms delivering water to communities throughout the reservation.

Second Chief Del Beaver was selected to serve on the Department of the Interior’s first-ever Secretary Tribal Advisory Committee. This position allows the Nation to have a voice in decisions that affect Mvskoke citizens.

For 2023, there are many things on the agenda.

“We have an ambitious agenda to continue strengthening our Nation, defend our sovereignty, expand services to citizens, and grow our economy,” said Chief Hill. “Today, we find ourselves in a position of great opportunity to re-establish the Mvskoke presence throughout the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Reservation.”

“These opportunities consist of creating new Tribal economies, tax collection, manufacturing, and bringing partnerships to the Muscogee (Creek) Nation.”

Areas of concern, ranging from jurisdiction to language preservation, were outlined by the Muscogee Nation Reservation Protection Commissioner.

“I’m calling on my fellow elected leader to work with me to fund a smaller commission that is focused on bringing these matters to the action of the administration and National Council so that we can institute necessary loans and policies that will ensure the Nation is on solid footing when issues are challenged by state elected lead-

ers or other outside threats to the Nation’s sovereignty,” said Chief Hill.

Expanding citizen services is an area focused on, including how they are delivered. There are multiple Human Resource training working on improving customer service skills, such as answering phones in a professional and courteous way.

The Nation is also focusing on the southern region of the reservation and how to bring jobs and resources to the areas and stimulate the economy. There are plans for an IHS clinic in Holdenville and a historic agreement with the Seminole Nation to share capacity in the court system allowing for a presence in that area.

Two historic partnerships in Okemah and Dustin will provide new, much-needed infrastructures. A new water treatment facility in Okemah and a water tower in Dustin will serve the communities and surrounding counties funded by a historical \$1,000,000 grant.

Chief Hill said, “We know the future holds challenges we all may face that can hinder our momentum, but our resolve will stand firm, and our commitment to our duties and public servants of this Nation may never waver.”

“If we stand together, we will continue to grow and thrive as a Nation,” Chief Hill continued. “So I invite the National Council and each Mvskoke citizen to stand with me.”

“We won’t always agree on everything, but we all share the duties to find common ground to work for our great Nation,” Chief Hill said. “This is how we will succeed and keep the prosperity and progress moving forward for all people, our communities, and our future.”

The full State of the Nation Address video can be found on the Muscogee Creek National Council YouTube.

HEALING TOUR

Continued from Page 1

come during the year.

“The road to healing will continue through 2023,” Haaland said. “We have more events to do in every part of the United States.”

The tour was launched after the Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative released a volume one report written by Assistant Secretary Bryan Newland in May 2022. The report concluded that connecting with the Native communities and gathering their oral stories would be the most beneficial tool for healing and identifying resources the agency will need to continue.

These oral histories will be released as a part of the report’s second volume. “As we keep investigating the federal Indian Boarding School system and learning about the experience in specific schools and the overall system, it paints a history that records alone can’t fully provide,” Newland said.

Newland explained that DOI’s next steps, in addition to collecting oral testimonies, will include identifying unmarked burial sites across the federal Indian Boarding School system and the total amount of funding the federal government put towards erasing Native culture.

Haaland has heard the horrors personally from her grandparents,

who were taken from their homelands in Laguna Pueblo, New Mexico, and sent off to boarding schools. As a descendant, she can feel the trauma in herself and the effects that ripple through her family generation after generation.

“My grandmother went to boarding school, and I suffer from inter-generational trauma as much as anybody,” Haaland said during an interview with Native News Online. “So because I understand it, I am going to be understanding to other people.”

So far, the duo has recorded the horrible accounts of those traumatized for a lifetime by the attempted assimilation and dissertation that has been bottled up among tribal members for more than half a century.

From the 1870s until the 1960s, there were more than 350 taxpayer-funded, often church-run, Native American boarding schools, according to the National Native American Boarding School Coalition.

There were more than 400 federally run or supported Indian schools in the country, with Oklahoma having the highest number of 76 Indian boarding schools; Arizona comes in second with 47.

These may include stories of physical, emotional, mental, and sexual abuse. Identities were stripped of the children, and language and cul-

ture were disposed of, even down to hair being cut to short lengths.

Children lived in confinements and unfair punishments, dealing with the forced removal from their families, which some never saw again. Some children never made it home and died at the hands of the federal government without notifying the family of said children. Unfortunately, some were laid to unrest with not even a name of identification.

The investigation also found more than 500 children died while attending these schools, although that number is likely higher.

Haaland claims that being an open ear to these survivors who may be sharing their stories for the first time is an integral part of the healing process. “We understand that sometimes, just getting things off your chest, just being able to say it out loud, means something to them,” Haaland said. “So, I think most of all, we want to make sure we are there to listen.”

Many have shed tears when sharing their testimonies, and Haaland shed many as she tirelessly devoted time and attention to each survivor.

“I’m with you on this journey. I will listen. I will grieve with you. I will weep alongside you.”

Those who want to tell their stories can still do so by emailing roadtohealing@ios.doi.gov.

VIDEO GAME

Continued from Page 1

\$22,000 last summer. The video development at a basic level was a total of 2.2 million.

Once the game was demoed, a language revitalization committee wanted to see it at its highest level utilizing multiple players, virtual reality components, online connectivity, mobile applications, and available on all platforms.

The distribution of the video game is yet to be decided. “If it were up to me when we’re talking about saving our language, every citizen would have it,” Randall said.

Randall believes this technique

will be highly engaging among a large age group starting as young as eight to 50.

“I am not much of a gamer myself,” Randall said, but he claims he knows plenty of gamers of all ages.

The latest National Council Full Session postponed legislation funding needed for the full-scale development at 3.7 million using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) fiscal year recovery funds. Bill sponsor Representative Galen Cloud made the motion, and with no discussion, the council voted to postpone 14-0.

Mvskoke Media will continue to follow the story as it develops.

THE MVSKOKENEWS

- Angel Ellis, Director | aellis@mvskokemedia.com
- Braden Harper, Managing Editor | bharper@mvskokemedia.com
- Jerrad Moore, Assignment Editor | jmoore@mvskokemedia.com
- Morgan Taylor, Multimedia Producer | mtaylor@mvskokemedia.com
- Kaylea Berry, Reporter | kberry@mvskokemedia.com
- Gary Fife, Contributor | gfife@mvskokemedia.com
- Chelsie Rich, Mvskoke Market | crich@mvskokemedia.com
- Mark Hill, Layout & Design | mhill@mvskokemedia.com

**MVSKOKEMEDIA**

Like MM on Facebook:
[Facebook.com/MvskokeMedia](https://www.facebook.com/MvskokeMedia)

Follow MM on Twitter:
[@MvskokeMedia](https://twitter.com/MvskokeMedia)

Follow MM on Instagram:
[@MvskokeMedia](https://www.instagram.com/MvskokeMedia)

Visit MM online at:
[MvskokeMedia.com](https://www.mvskokemedia.com)

Find us on
 YouTube


Native American Journalist Association

Members of the Native American Journalists Association

The Mvskoke News is an editorially independent and constitutionally protected publication. Its purpose is to meet the needs of the tribe and its citizens through the dissemination of information. Reprint permission is granted with credit to The Mvskoke News unless other copyrights are shown.

Editorial statements appearing in The Mvskoke News, guest columns and readers’ letters reflect the opinion of the individual writer and not those of The Mvskoke News, its advisors or the tribal administration and are subject to editorial discretion. Editorials and letters must be signed by the individual writer and include a traceable address or phone number to be considered for publication. Please contact our office for deadline of submissions to be considered for inclusion.

The Mvskoke News reserves the right to edit all submissions for space, style and grammar. Receipt of submissions does not obligate The Mvskoke News in any regard. The Mvskoke News is mailed from Stigler, Oklahoma to all enrolled Muscogee (Creek) citizens’ households upon request. Inquiries should be directed to Mvskoke Media.

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



A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Quarterly Session meeting was held in person and via teleconference on Jan. 28 at the Mound Building. (MM File)

TRIBE TO IMPROVE ROADS IN EIGHT OKLAHOMA COUNTIES

THE MVSKOKE LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT FUNDING FOR VIDEO GAME POSTPONED

by **KAYLEA BERRY**
REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma – A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Quarterly Session meeting was held in person and via teleconference on Jan. 28 at the Mound Building.

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

TR 23-001 A MCN Tribal resolution supporting the addition of new routes, as identified in attachment “A” - MCN NTTFI 2023, to the Nation’s existing National Tribal Transportation Facility Inventory (NTTFI) and requesting the Bureau of Indian Affairs add these new routes to the Nation’s NTTFI. Representative Galen Cloud sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 14-0.

The MCN has existing routes on its NTTFI, and new routes have been identified within the Nation’s reservation. These new routes are eligible for inclusion in the NTTFI.

TR 23-002 A MCN Tribal resolution approving the update of the MCN Long Range Transportation Plan with the addition of the routes listed as attachment “A” - MCN NTTFI 2023. Rep. Cloud sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 14-0.

The MCN has completed and adopted a Long-Range Transportation Plan in accordance with 25 CFR Part 270 Regulations. New routes have been identified within the Nation’s reservation that the Nation intends to add to the Nation’s NTTFI. It is in the MCN’s best interests to utilize the Nation’s share of the Tribal Transportation Program (TTP) funds to assist the Nation with future road design, environmental, construction, maintenance, and planning costs.

TR 23-003 A MCN Tribal resolution authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a separate Memorandum of Understanding with eight Oklahoma counties for the maintenance of roadways and associated rights-of-way constructed or improved by the MN TTP. Rep. Cloud sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 14-0.

The Nation’s TTP has an inventory of proposed public roadways and associated rights-of-way located in Hughes, Wagoner, Okfuskee, McIntosh, Creek, Muskogee, Rogers, and Okmulgee counties.

The Nation and the above-listed counties in Oklahoma have memorialized their understanding that should the Nation construct TTP Routes in an aforementioned county, and each county agrees to maintain such routes and right-of-way. The Nation will enter into a separate Memorandum of Understanding with each county.

TR 23-004 A MCN Tribal resolution authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a separate Memorandum of Understanding with five Oklahoma Schools for the maintenance of parking lots and associated rights-of-way constructed or improved by the MCN TTP. Rep. Nelson Harjo Sr. sponsored the legislation adopted 14-0.

The Nation’s TTP has an inventory of proposed public parking lots and associated rights-of-way located at Paden, Okemah, Weleetka, Midway, and Wilson Schools.

The Nation and the above-mentioned Oklahoma schools have memorialized their understanding that should the Nation construct TTP Routes in a school as men-

tioned above, and each school agrees to maintain such routes and rights-of-way. The Nation will enter into a separate Memorandum of Understanding with each school.

TR 23-005 A MCN Tribal resolution authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a Memorandum of Understanding with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation for the maintenance of roadways and associated rights-of-way constructed or improved within Okfuskee County, Oklahoma, by the MN TTP. Rep. Charles McHenry sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 14-0.

The Nation’s TTP has funds available to improve various sections of roadways within Okfuskee County, Okla., that are owned and maintained by the ODOT. TTP has an inventory of proposed improvements to multiple areas of roadways within Okfuskee County that are owned and maintained by the ODOT and are an integral part of the road system serving tribal members.

The Nation and the ODOT, in the state of Oklahoma, have memorialized their understanding that should the Nation contribute to the improvement of a section of roadway within Okfuskee County, Okla., owned by ODOT, more specifically described as the improvement of a 1.5 mi. Department of Highway 48 and depicted on the attached map that the ownership and maintenance of the section of roadway shall continue to rest with the ODOT. The Nation will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding for the section of roadway depicted on the map.

TR 23-006 A MCN Tribal resolution authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a separate Memorandum of Understanding with four Oklahoma cities for the maintenance of roadways and associated rights-of-way constructed or improved by the MN TTP. Rep. McHenry sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 14-0.

The Nation’s TTP has an inventory of proposed public roadways and associated rights-of-way located in Okemah, Weleetka, Dewar, and Coweta cities.

The Nation and the above-listed cities have memorialized their understanding that should the Nation construct TTP Routes in the cities, each city agrees to maintain such routes and right-of-way. The Nation will enter into a separate Memorandum of Understanding with each city.

TR 23-007 A MCN Tribal resolution authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a separate Memorandum of Understanding with Okfuskee and Seminole counties for gravel road maintenance projects by the MN TTP. Rep. McHenry sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 14-0.

The Nation’s TTP has funds available to improve various public roadways designed as TTP Routes located in Okfuskee and Seminole counties in Okla.

The Nation’s TTP has an inventory of proposed public roadway projects in Okfuskee and Seminole counties.

The Nation and the above-listed counties have memorialized their understanding that the Nation should construct TTP Routes in the aforementioned county. Each county agrees to maintain such routes and right-of-way. The Nation will enter into a separate Memorandum of Understanding with each county.

TR 23-008 A MCN Tribal resolu-

tion amending TR 21-071 (A MCN Tribal resolution authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a Memorandum of Agreement between the Nation and the ODOT for a drainage improvement project located at U.S. Highway 75 and SH-56). Rep. McHenry sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 14-0.

There is a need to amend TR 21-071 to change the estimated project cost and funding source. The new estimated cost of the project is \$3,278,568 and will be paid by the ARPA funding approved by NCA 22-069.

TR 23-009 A MCN Tribal Resolution authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a provider participation agreement with United Healthcare insurance company to benefit the MCN Dept. of Health. Rep. Robert Huft sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 14-0.

United healthcare insurance company provides coverage for certain citizens who receive healthcare services at MCNDH facilities. The MCNDH is eligible to recover certain costs associated with health services to tribal citizens covered under a United healthcare insurance plan.

TR 23-010 A MCN Tribal resolution authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a Master Subscription Agreement and Data Processing Addendum with Brightly Software for the benefit of the MCN Department of Health. Rep. Huft sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 14-0.

The MCN desires this agreement to improve workflow and security.

TR 23-011 A MCN Tribal resolution authorizing the Principal Chief to execute an Order Form and Master Agreement with Maven Clinic Co. for the benefit of the MCN Department of Health. Rep. Mary Crawford sponsored the legislation, which was adopted substitute 14-0.

The agreement provides virtual option appointments for expecting mothers and supportive fathers.

TR 23-012 A MCN Tribal resolution approving the early in-person voting sites for the 2023 Election Cycle. Rep. Anna Marshall sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 14-0.

The Election Board has determined four locations to serve as early voting sites: Eufaula Indian Community Center, Okmulgee Indian Community, Okemah Indian Community Center, and Tulsa Indian Community Center.

TR 23-013 A MCN Tribal resolution confirming the nomination of Patricia Kilian as a controller and the secretary of the treasury for the MCN. Rep. Randall Hicks sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 11-3.

The Principal Chief has nominated Patricia Kilian to serve as the Controller and the Secretary of Treasurer for the MCN, with a term beginning upon confirmation and ending concurrent with a term of the current Principal Chief.

TR 23-014 A MCN Tribal resolution authorizing the Principal Chief to submit a small, rural, and tribal body-worn camera program grant application for the benefit of the MCN Lighthorse Police Department. Rep. Thomasene Yahola-Osborn sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 12-2.

The MCN seeks funding for a Body-worn Camera project to enhance safety and improve interactions between officers and the public within the Tribal reservation. LHPD wishes to apply for the Small, Rural, and Tribal Body-Worn Camera Program, which is a grant that requires 1:1 matching funds over one year.

TR 23-015 A MCN Tribal resolution authorizing the Principal Chief to submit a grant application to the United States Department of agriculture for the benefit of the LHPD. Rep. Randolph sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 12-2.

LHPD needs to purchase one max prisoner transport van to transport high-risk prisoners detained to and from MCN District Court hearings.

TR 23-016 A MCN Tribal resolution confirming the nomination of

Janet Maylen to serve on the Mvskoke Loan Fund Board. Rep. Randolph sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 14-0.

The MCN laws require confirmation of the National Council for an appointment to the Mvskoke Loan Fund Board.

TR 23-017 A MCN Tribal resolution authorizing the Muscogee Nation Gaming Enterprises, LLC (MNGE) to deposit additional funds in the MCN Casinos insurance reserve fund. Rep. Hicks sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 14-0.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the MC in casinos shut down for several months in 2020. Before the pandemic, River Spirit Casino resort suffered from the historic 2019 flood of the Arkansas River. The total cost of the damages was \$28.2 million, and insurance only covered \$13.6 million. The insurance companies denied total claims in both instances and have been subject to litigation due to the lack of payment of all the claims. The Corps of Engineers indicated the flow rate for the Keystone Dam would increase from the current 205 CFCs flow to 270 CFCs flow within the next ten years, and the likelihood of another flood event will occur.

Through TR 21-123, the National Council created the MCN Casinos Insurance Reserve Fund to be proactive and help mitigate natural disasters such as the past flood and pandemic in response to the above. MNGE I was already deposited an increment amount of funds to help reduce costs and wishes to find the Insurance Reserve Fund with an additional \$5 million and request National Council’s approval to do the same with gaming funds.

TR 23-018 A MCN Tribal resolution authorizing MNGE to deposit additional GSAMING funds in its Capital Expenditure Account for the Eufaula casino project. Rep. Hicks sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 14-0.

The MCN Casino – Eufaula is in the vicinity of six other competing casinos within a 1-hour drive. A gaming feasibility study shows the market analysis for a new casino and hotel in Eufaula would provide both superior visibility and access compared to the existing casino and boost current profits.

The Eufaula casino project was initially estimated to be \$48-\$49 million, of which the MNGE will ask the National Council to approve a withdrawal of \$40 million at a future date when the legal documents are negotiated and in final form from the revolving line of credit from the BOK secured credit facilities approved by TR 18–117.

TR 23-019 A MCN Tribal resolution authorizing the Principal Chief to submit a Dept. of Energy, Office of Indian Energy Policy and programs clean energy technology deployment on Tribal lands grant application for the benefit of the MCN Tribal Utility Authority. Rep. Crawford sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 14-0.

MCN seeks funding for installing a solar array at the Okemah Community Hospital. The grant aims to deploy clean energy-generating systems and energy-efficient measures for Tribal buildings.

NCA 23-001 A MCN law authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for the benefit of the Geospatial Department. Rep. Cloud sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 14-0.

The bipartisan infrastructure law funding under the CERCLA Grant was awarded to the Geospatial Department to continue to review projects that address climate change and tribal environmental codes. The Geospatial Department was awarded the CERCLA section 128(a) State and Tribal Response Program Infrastructure Grant for \$93,620. It was also awarded to contract with vendors to review Current and existing tribal environmental codes to assist in maintaining the framework for the MCN Brownfields Program.

Authorization from the National Council is required to expend grant funds necessary to administer the CERCLA Grant.

This act aims to authorize the

expenditure of grant funds awarded from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to benefit the Geospatial Department.

NCA 23-002 Authorizing the expenditure of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) fiscal year recovery funds for purchasing and creating a Mvskoke language video game. Rep. Galen Cloud sponsored, and Rep. Leonard Gouge and Huft co-sponsored the legislation, which was postponed 14-0.

ARPA funds of \$3,700,000 are being mobilized for the Mvskoke Language Department to utilize in the language revitalization to create a video game if the whole Council approves.

NCA 23-003 Authorizing the expenditure of third-party funds to the MCN Department of Health for the operations, goods, and supplies for the council oak hotel Sponsor. Rep. Crawford sponsored the act, which was adopted 14-0.

The MCNDOH is receiving third-party funds with the NC approval needed to expend the funds of \$518,980.

NCA 23-004 Authorizing the expenditure of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security FY 2021 Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities Grant for the benefit of the Emergency Management Department. Rep. Crawford sponsored the act, which was adopted 14-0.

The funds of \$58,128.32 will benefit the Storm Shelter Program.

NCA 23-005 Authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the National Indian Health Board for the benefit of the Eufaula dormitory. Rep. Crawford sponsored the act, which was adopted 14-0.

The \$11,468 will be used to purchase supplies for two isolation rooms and for COVID information posters to be distributed throughout the dormitory.

NCA 23-006 Authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the United States Department of Agriculture to benefit the Food Distribution Program. Rep. Crawford sponsored the act, which was adopted 14-0.

The grant funds of \$4,375.00 will be used to create and disseminate culturally relevant nutrition education resources that can encourage American Indian/Alaskan Natives to learn essential nutrition, food safety, meal planning, and healthy living.

NCA 23-007 A MCN Law authorizing the expenditure of the Borealis Philanthropy Racial Equity in Journalism fund grant for the benefit of Mvskoke Media. Rep. Randolph sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 14-0.

The grant funds will be used for staff to attend training conferences, purchase nine iMacs, four iMac Studios, two iMac Studio Plus, a corner rounder, a high-capacity air assist jogger, a 24 TB Raid System, to enter into a contractual agreement with two producers to produce 12 religious and cultural episodes, and to enter into a contractual agreement with Hoot-Suite Social Management to oversee Mvskoke Media’s social accounts.

NCA 23-008 A MCN law repealing NCA 21-084 (A MCN law repealing MCNCA Title 16 Chapter 4 and creating new law in a new Title 50, entitled “Lighthorse Police,” and authorizing an appropriation for the Lighthorse commission) as amended by NCA 21-135. Rep. Yahola-Osborn sponsored the legislation, which failed 5-9.

NCA 23-009 A MCN law authorizing the expenditure of the American Rescue Plan (“ARPA”) funds to the MCNDH for the purchase of various services, land acquisition, and construction. Rep. Crawford sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 14-0.

The MCNDH is requesting a \$10,300,000 expenditure for the various services, goods, and supplies to be used, among other things, for land acquisition and preparation for new construction.

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



A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Emergency Sessions was held on Jan. 23 at the Mound Building in Okmulgee. (MM File)

LEGISLATION PASSED TO APPROVE \$35M OPIOID CASE SETTLEMENT

ANNUAL SUM TO BE ALLOCATED OVER THE NEXT DECADE TO OPIOID TRUSTEES

by **BRADEN HARPER**
MANAGING EDITOR

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma – A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council emergency session meeting was held in person and via teleconference on Jan. 23 at the Mound Building.

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

TR 23-020 Authorizing the Principal Chief or his designee to execute all documents necessary to achieve a settlement with all manufacturers, distributors,

and pharmacies involved in the National Prescription Opiate Litigation and further authorizing the use of electronic transfer and deposit of funds from the opioid settlement trustees to the nation. Speaker William Lowe sponsored the bill, which passed unanimously 13-0.

The settlement terms provide for payment aggregating over \$35,000,000 to be paid in varying annual sums for the opioid litigation trustees to be paid over ten years.

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



Fry bread is one of the foods that will be served at the community dinner social stomp dance hosted by Sapulpa High School on Feb. 25. The dinner will be hosted by Sapulpa High School's Native American Student Association. All proceeds will go toward benefiting the students for an end-of-the-year trip. (Braden Harper/Managing Editor)

SAPULPA HIGH SCHOOL SET TO HOST COMMUNITY DINNER AND SOCIAL STOMP DANCE

STUDENTS WILL PARTNER WITH DUCK CREEK CEREMONIAL GROUND TO HOST THE ANNUAL FUNDRAISER

by **BRADEN HARPER**
MANAGING EDITOR

SAPULPA, Oklahoma – Sapulpa High School students are set to host their annual social Stomp Dance and community dinner fundraiser on Feb. 25. The event is a collaboration between the Duck Creek Ceremonial Ground and the Sapulpa High School Native American Student Association. All proceeds will benefit the NASA students for an end-of-the-year trip.

Kayla Chupco (Choctaw) is the director of Indian Education for Sapulpa Public Schools and one of the NASA sponsors. She oversees all Native American students, a third of which are Muscogee (Creek), according to Chupco. Regarding authentic Native cultural education, Sapulpa's students are in good hands.

“The thing that we work on with students generally is mentoring culture and tutoring,” Chupco said. “We work with the students, teachers, and parents to identify kids who need the services.”

Chupco also helps connect students with the services of their respective tribes, including the Muscogee (Creek) Nation.

Indian Education at Sapulpa Public goes beyond the classroom and offers extracurriculars.

“At the high school, we have after-school cultural activities,” Chupco said. “This month, we are working on ribbon skirts and vests for students who want to learn.”

Chupco further explained that past activities have included making moccasins, beadwork, and playing stickball.

In addition to her role as

director, Chupco also teaches classes. She works closely with the Muscogee Challenge Bowl to make sure education on Muscogee culture and neighboring tribes is factual and correct.

“In my American Indian studies class, I touch on the five civilized tribes,” Chupco said. “I primarily do Muscogee because we’re located in the Muscogee jurisdiction, and so many of our students are Muscogee.”

Although the event is an excellent opportunity to expose students to Muscogee culture up close, it is also an opportunity for fellowship with others. Chupco particularly loves seeing her students’ connections with the larger Muscogee (Creek) community.

“It’s exciting to see the community get together,” Chupco said. “We have several students involved with the ceremonial grounds and their culture.”

While it has yet to be determined where NASA’s end-of-the-year trip will be, it depends on how much money they can fundraise throughout the year. Past trips have involved Frontier City and the First Americans museum.

The fundraiser is set to feature cake raffles, grocery raffles, and concessions. Donations are accepted as well.

The dinner is provided for free on a first-come, first-serve basis. Frybread, corn soup, and beans will be served.

The event welcomes vendors, and the registration fee is \$20, along with a donated item. If you want to set up a vendor booth, contact Michelle Benning at (918) 224-9322 to reserve a spot.

The dinner will be held in the Sapulpa High School commons from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. The social stomp dance will be held from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. in the old Sapulpa High School gym, 3 S. Mission St., Sapulpa, OK.

MVSKOKEMARKET.COM

Color the Cravings Away

OKhelpline.com/Color-Away-Cravings

Get creative to shake the tobacco cravings!

Thinking about quitting? Know someone who might be? We’re here to help every step of the way! Sign up for **FREE** services today at **OKhelpline.com** or call **1-800-QUIT NOW**.

Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline

1 800 QUIT NOW

1-800-784-8669 OKhelpline.com

A Program of

TSET

ADVERTISEMENT



Protect yourself and your community. Report scams to the Federal Trade Commission.

No matter who we are, where we live, or what we do, we've all been exposed to scams. But there are ways to avoid scams if you know how to spot them.



Here's how to spot **three common scams**.



- Someone calls and says they're **from the IRS** — but they tell you to pay by gift card. **That's a scammer.** The real IRS doesn't work that way.



- You meet a **love interest online** — but they ask you to send them money for some reason that sounds legit. But **that's what scammers do**, and then vanish with your money.



- Something you **bought online** never showed up — and now the seller won't email or call you back. That **seller may be a scammer**.

Report scams to the Federal Trade Commission at
ReportFraud.ftc.gov

Each report helps the Federal Trade Commission find scammers and spread the word about the scam — so the people you care about can avoid it, too.

Learn how to spot and avoid
scams at **ftc.gov/scams**



FEDERAL TRADE
COMMISSION



A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Health, Education, & Welfare/Land, Natural Resources & Culture Preservation Committee was held on Jan. 24 via teleconference. (MM File)

MCN DEPT. OF HEALTH TO SPEND \$10.3 MILLION ON SERVICES, LAND ACQUISITION, AND CONSTRUCTION

GRANT FOR CLEAN ENERGY PASSED TO FULL COUNCIL

by KAYLEA BERRY
REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma – A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Counciljoint HEW and LNC committee meeting was held on Jan. 24 via teleconference. The National Council addressed the following legislation, the interpretation of which is attributed to language in the bills:

TR 23-019 A MCN Tribal resolution authorizing the Principal Chief to submit a Dept. of Energy, Office of Indian Energy policy and programs clean energy technology deployment on Tribal lands grant application for the benefit of the MCN Tribal Utility Authority. Representative Mary Crawford sponsored the legislation, which

passed 7-0. MCN seeks funding for installing a solar array at the Okemah Community Hospital. The grant aims to deploy clean energy-generating systems and energy-efficient measures for Tribal buildings.

NCA 23-009 A MCN law authorizing the expenditure of the American Rescue Plan (“ARPA”) funds to the MCNDH for the purchase of various services, land acquisition, and construction. Rep. Crawford sponsored the legislation, which passed 8-0.

The MCNDH is requesting a \$10,300,000 expenditure for the various services, goods, and supplies to be used, among other things, for land acquisition and preparation for new construction.

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

IN MEMORIAM



SHIRLEY MARIE MCGIRT

Shirley Marie McGirt passed away Saturday, January 21st, 2023 at her residence in Wewoka, Oklahoma at the age of 65.

Shirley was born May 11, 1957 in Holdenville, Oklahoma to Jimmie McGirt and Mary Frances (Wood) Jim. She attended Jones Academy of Hartshorne, Oklahoma. Shirley was a member of Middle Creek Baptist Church #2 and was baptized May 13, 2012. She loved her grandchildren, children, and cooking. Shirley enjoyed word searches, social media, oldies music and loved spending time with her family and friends.

Shirley is preceded in death by her parents, grandparents, who raised her, Jack Harjo & Winey Powell, siblings; Lewis Moppin, Winey West, Geneva Harjo, Jessica Moppin, Gada Moppin, Lonnie Moppin, Louann McGirt and Melinda McGirt. She is survived by her sons; Patrick Wyrick and wife Jessica of Calvin, David Wyrick and wife Breanna of Holdenville, 10 grandchildren, siblings; Leo Moppin, Minnie Cerda, Frank Moppin, Jessie Moppin,

Kennith McGirt, Roland McGirt, Paul McGirt, Wynette Wildcat, Shirley Tiger, Randy McGirt, Sally McGirt, Reggie McGirt and Anthony McGirt. Shirley is survived by numerous other family and friends.

Pallbearers were Toby Hulbutta, Dee Hulbutta, Joshua Hulbutta, Jr. Cerda, Jr. Moppin, Ryan Moppin and Jemo Moppin.

Interment followed at Powell Cemetery north of Holdenville.

Services were under the direction of Hudson-Phillips Funeral Home, Holdenville, Oklahoma.

WANDA JO AULTMAN

Wanda Jo Aultman, 81, died January 20, 2023 in Oklahoma City. She was born September 9, 1941 in Holdenville, Oklahoma to Joe and Christie (Long) Hance. She worked for Western Electric, and AT&T. Wanda was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Jimmy David Aultman; son, David Joe Aultman; and grandson, Travis Aultman. Survivors include her sons, Randy Aultman and wife Laura of OKC, Chris Aultman and wife Sarah of Holdenville, OK, and Gregory Aultman of OKC; 5 grandchildren, Rachel and husband Myles, Allyson, Chris, Cassie, and Christie Jo; and 6 great-grandchildren, Aspyn, Greyson, Ryan, Aubrey, Jadey, and Evalynn. Graveside services were held in Long Cemetery, Hughes County, OK at a later date. The family wishes to thank Elara Hospice for their loving care of Wanda. To share a memory or condolence, visit www.mercer-adams.com

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

FEB 17, Aunties Acting Up @ Vanguard 222 N Main Tulsa OK www.thevanguardtulsa.com

FEB 18, 1st Annual Eufaula Native American Cultural Club 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament @ Eufaula Dorms, , for more info call 918-618-7751

FEB 18, 11 AM to 3 PM, Indian Taco Fundraiser and Arts and Crafts Show, Tulsa Indian Community Center, for info call 918-752-5864

FEB 18, 11 AM to 3 PM, Haikey Chapel Chili Cook Off, 8815 E 101st in between Mingo and Memorial in Tulsa, OK

FEB 25, Wild Onion Dinner, 11AM to 3PM, Indian Fellowship Baptist Church, 6130 S. 58th W. Ave, Oakhurst, Ok

MARCH 4, 11 AM to 2PM, Wild Onion Dinner, Holdenville Creek Indian Community Center, for info call 918-752-7959

MARCH 10, App. Deadline for Native Americans into Medicine undergrad opportunity. Contact: caimh@d.umn.edu


MARCH 10-12, INDIGIPOP, First Americans Museum, OKC, for tickets visit www.idigepopx.com

MARCH 11, Stompdance 7 PM MC: Chebon Kernell Mekusukey Mission Gym 12566 NS 3540 Seminole OK Contact: Gina Lankford 405-471-3038

MARCH 13-17, Muscogee Nation Lighthorse Tribal Police Department is hosting a youth police academy during spring break , 2023 with an awards ceremony, March 18th. This is for youth ages 11-15, contact Melissa Beaver @ 918-732-7813


MARCH 1-3, Butler Creek Baptist Church is hosting their Spring Revival at 7:00 p.m. for each night. For info call Rev. Norm Daniel, 918-441-8779.

ADVERTISEMENT









How to avoid spinning your wheels when shopping for a used car

Used cars have gotten more expensive during the pandemic. It pays to do some work up front, so you'll feel better driving out. In fact, start by researching the price of cars you're interested in. Then, before you shop for the car, shop for financing. Check with banks, credit unions, and finance companies — you don't have to finance a car through the dealer.



When you think you've found the car you want:

- **■ Call the dealer.** Make sure the car is really on the lot and get the out-the-door price in writing, before you head to the dealership.
- **■ Get a vehicle history report and check the Buyer's Guide.** The report will tell you that car's history, and the Guide will tell you if it has a warranty or is being sold "as is."
- **■ Discuss the out-the-door price first if you want to talk financing with the dealer.** That means the total price, before financing, including taxes and fees.
- **■ It's ok to say no to add-ons, or at least ask the price.** Add-ons are extra things dealers offer along with the car, like extended warranties and service contracts. Make sure you know what they are, how much they cost, and how they'll change your monthly payment.
- **■ Review the terms before you sign for the purchase and financing.** Make sure everything you agreed to is in writing. Spoken promises are hard to enforce.

**FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION**

To learn more, visit ftc.gov/usedcars. If you spot a scam, report it to the Federal Trade Commission at ReportFraud.ftc.gov.



CALL OR TEXT

MENTAL HEALTH LIFELINE

988

988

SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

CRISIS TEXT LINE |



Text **CREEK** to 741-741

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

