



# MVSKOKE NEWS

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## COUNCIL OAK TREE DAY CELEBRATES MVSKOKE RESILIENCE

MCN GATHERS WITH CEREMONIAL LEADERS TO HONOR THE SACRED TREE

by **MORGAN TAYLOR**  
MULTIMEDIA PRODUCER

TVLSE, Okla. — Nov. 4 marked another annual celebration for the Council Oak Tree at the Creek Nation Council Oak Park in downtown Tulsa. For years, leaders from the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and the ceremonial grounds have met at the park to pay tribute to the old oak tree. Saturday’s ceremony was emceed by National Council Representative Galen Cloud. Repre-

sentatives from each ceremonial ground were also in attendance. MCN Principal Chief David Hill signed a proclamation declaring Nov. 4 the Council Oak Tree Ceremony Day. Cultural Preservation GIS Specialist Gano Perez took to the podium to read the proclamation. “I love you all,” Perez said. “I am so happy to share this day with you.” The Council Oak Tree signifies the first site where the Mvskoke people of Locvpoka made their

first arrival in 1836 after surviving removal. Cloud named each ground as their representative stood up and waved to the crowd. “There’s a lot of things that go on at these ceremonies,” Rep. Cloud said. “Things these men were taught when they were boys, when they were chosen for these roles.” He opened the microphone up to the ceremony leaders as well, giving them a chance to speak. Many mvto and introductions were shared over the open microphone as many expressed the importance, memories, and stories of the Council Oak Tree. Hickory Ground Mekko George Thompson spoke in Mvskoke, then English, thanking God for the beautiful day to hold the ceremony. Thompson reminded everyone of the significance of the tree and what it means to the Mvskoke people. “Even if you aren’t a ground member, you have a tribal town,” Thompson said to the crowd. Once Thompson took his seat, Cloud took back the microphone



Tribal leadership stand with ceremonial ground representatives in front of the Council Oak Tree on Nov. 4 in Tulsa, Okla. (Morgan Taylor/MM)



MCN National Council Representative Galen Cloud recognizes leaders from the various ceremonial grounds. (Morgan Taylor/MM)

and spoke on the importance of the ceremonial grounds. “If you are invited to the grounds, it is an honor,” Cloud said. “I urge all of you to visit, see where you are from and where your family is from.” At one point, the tree provided the locale of ceremonies and business for the Mvskoke people. It now lies inside a fenced off area in downtown Tulsa surrounded by streets, apartments, and homes. A neighborhood local, Chris McGee along with MCN Culture and Humanities Secretary Rae-Lynn Butler have initiated a small neighborhood group to help preserve and maintain the old oak tree. “As people who live in the shadows of the tree, we want to help preserve it as long as it shall live,” McGee said. For more information on the Council Oak Tree, visit the Creek Nation Council Oak Tree Park Facebook page.

## OHP TICKETING SOME TRIBAL TAGS

CHANGE IN POLICY IS CURRENTLY BEING REVIEWED BY OK STATE AG



The Oklahoma Highway Patrol was accused of issuing a traffic ticket to a tribal citizen who lived outside of their tribe’s jurisdiction. There have not yet been any reports of at-large Muscogee (Creek) citizens being ticketed by OHP for driving a motor vehicle with a tribal tag. (Jerrad Moore/MM)

by **JERRAD MOORE**  
ASSIGNMENT EDITOR

GARFIELD COUNTY, Okla. - Otoe-Missouria tribal citizen Crystal Deroin was written a ticket by Oklahoma Highway Patrol for operating a “vehicle on which all taxes due to the state have not been paid”. Deroin had been pulled over for speeding. According to OHP, since her home address was outside of her tribe’s tribal jurisdiction, state taxes were owed on her vehicle. OHP and Oklahoma state officials stated that if a vehicle is registered and primarily used by a tribal citizen who resides within their tribe’s jurisdiction, the owner will not be ticketed. Chickasaw, Choctaw and Cherokee citizens will not be ticketed because those tribes have a tag compact with Oklahoma. Oklahoma Attorney General Gentner Drummond stated that he was not consulted on the change in policy

and is reviewing what guidance OHP was given, and who gave it. Muscogee (Creek) Nation Principal Chief David Hill issued a statement on the situation on Nov. 10, “Today, the Executive and Legislative Branches discussed allegations that have come to our attention about tribal vehicle tags with registered addresses outside the Reservation possibly being ticketed as illegal. We met and discussed the facts in front of us and the verifiable information that we have gathered on this matter. As we continue to seek out more clarification and resolution on this issue, we are in constant communication with our legal team for counsel and determining any action that may be necessary. We will keep citizens updated with further communication on this matter as it continues to develop. Mvto.” Mvskoke Media will have ongoing coverage of this developing story.

## BARTON WILLIAMS 1 VS. 9 MEN’S ALL NDN TOURNAMENT HONORS LATE MVSKOKE VETERAN

EVENT BRINGS TOGETHER THE COMMUNITY WITH COMPETITION, FELLOWSHIP AND PRIZES



First place winners hold up their prizes next to Rita Williams. (Shayln Proctor/MM)

by **SHAYLN PROCTOR**  
REPORTER

HENRYETTA, Okla. - The Barton Williams 1 vs. 9 Men’s All NDN Basketball Tournament was held at the Wilson High School gymnasium. Concessions were available for sale, along with t-shirts. Teams that placed in first, second and third place received prizes. The all-day tournament was hosted Nov. 11, and was held in memory of Mvskoke Army veteran and Lighthorse Officer Barton Williams. Riley Berry (Mvskoke) and his family hosted the Barton Williams memorial tournament. The family had discussed hosting a tournament for some time after Williams had passed away. However, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic those plans were pushed back. This year marked the first time the tournament could finally go into effect. Mehenwa Williams, Rita Wil-

liams, Nichole Green and Berry organized the tournament among other family member volunteers. The tournament was an all-Native men’s basketball tournament. Native Americans were eligible to compete regardless of tribal affiliation. The event oversaw an eight man roster, double elimination, and nine teams in all competing. Teams came from all over Oklahoma including El Reno, Oklahoma City, Muskogee, Shawnee and Tulsa. The rules were the same as a regular basketball tournament. Each team in the winner’s bracket played two 18 minute halves, the loser’s bracket played two 16 minute halves. Each team was allotted four timeouts, each half time lasted two minutes. Prizes were awarded to high ranking teams. This included the Barton Williams Award, which went to the individual who scored the most points. That person would receive a “Dogtown Version” Wilson Evolution basketball. The most valuable player received a Grinch-themed backpack. First place received hoodies, second place received long sleeve t-shirts and third place received shorts. The prizes featured designs made in memory of Barton. Berry, Mehenwa and Rita Williams and Green helped create the design’s logo. Barton Williams was an Army veteran. His logo featured an eagle along with a basketball. Inside the logo was a banner with nine feathers. The logo read “Barton 1 vs. 9 Williams”. The tournament’s name came from Barton William’s mindset toward the sport. “So 1 vs. 9, he would always tell me and tell everyone ‘when I played ball, when I got the rebound it wasn’t just 1 against 5.

**BASKETBALL**  
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BASKETBALL

Continued from Page 1

I'm against my teammates too so it was 1 against 9, so if I get the rebound I'm going to go score and if I steal I'm going to go score," Berry said.

According to Berry, Barton Williams enjoyed playing basketball and would tell family members of how well he played games in years past. "He always bragged about playing and scoring 51 or 53 points," Berry said.

Berry's entire family played all sorts of sports, basketball being one of them. He wanted this specific tourney to be held in memory of his great uncle in order to carry on the beloved family member's legacy. Barton Williams lived in Wilson and was part of the Wilson community. Barton enjoyed watching community basketball games as well.

"Wilson's community, they have a plaque seat for him in their gymnasium and that's how much he meant to the community. It makes me feel good that I get to

let everybody know about him and what he did in his life, how he impacted us," Berry said.

Berry has played in basketball tournaments across the country. This helped him learn how to run a tournament from the perspective of a player. He gathered information from playing in these tournaments, including rules, and general prizes given out. This gave him a general template of how the memorial tournament could be structured.

"This is our first year so we're just trying to have it as a memorial and in memory of him. To have a good time playing basketball and just have a good time in the community. We are not here to make money but whatever proceeds we do make we are going to put it towards a veteran program," Berry said.

**Tournament Results:**

First place: Wolf Creek  
Second place: Prospects  
Third place: GMB



Berry hands second place winners their long sleeve t-shirts. (Shayln Proctor/MM)

VETERANS DAY CELEBRATES MVSKOKE VETERANS

MCN VASO HONORED OVER 400 VETERANS

by MORGAN TAYLOR  
MULTIMEDIA PRODUCER

OKMULGEE, Okla. — Muscogee (Creek) Nation Veterans Affairs Services recognized over 400 Mvskoke veterans around the reservation.

According to MCN VASO Office Operations Officer Rachel Riddle, approximately 433 signs were distributed to six different locations. Each sign honored an individual veteran.

Signs were spotted along Highway 75 in front of the MCN Tribal Complex and the Claude Cox Omniplex along with the College of Muscogee Nation in Okmulgee. Other locations included the clinics in Sapulpa, Coweta, Okemah, Eufaula, and the Council Oak Comprehensive Center in Tulsa.

Volunteers helped distribute signs on Wednesday Nov. 8 and picked them up the following Monday.

The signs are purchased and stored by the MCN VASO by request. Individuals can purchase their own sign for \$10 to keep.



Members from the Women's Honor Guard, Este Cate Hoktvke Suletawv marched in the Tulsa Veterans Day Parade Nov. 10 (Courtesy: Kaylea Berry)

On Thursday Nov. 9, the department hosted their monthly coffee and donuts from 9 a.m to noon.

The Mvskoke Nation Men's Honor Guard held an annual Veterans Ceremony at the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Tribal Complex Veterans Memorial on Nov. 10 in Okmulgee.

During the short ceremony, the honor guard saluted the flag

and presented a gun salute in memory of fallen soldiers. It also honored veterans and active duty service members.

"It's an honor to honor our veterans today," MCN VASO Director Grover Wind said. "We ought to be honoring our veterans every day."

Wind said he is glad to see the crowd size increase over the years and hopes to see an even bigger increase in years to come.

Second Chief Del Beaver expressed gratitude to those who served and to those who are willing to serve.

"That's what serving is about," Second Chief Beaver said. "Thank you to those who are willing to lay down their life for the freedoms we all enjoy."

The Este Cate Hoktvke Suletawv (Mvskoke Womens Honor Guard) represented the Nation at the Tulsa Veterans Day Parade on Nov. 10.

For more information on veterans services provided by the nation, visit creekva.org.



Signs honoring the names of Mvskoke veterans were placed in areas of Okmulgee along Hwy 75. (Morgan Taylor/MM)

OFFICIAL MCN 2023 GENERAL ELECTION RESULTS RELEASED

INCUMBENTS LOSE TO CHALLENGERS



Challengers Robyn Whitecloud from Okmulgee District and Dode Barnett from Creek District both won their respective races in the 2023 General Election. Whitecloud previously worked as a finance officer for the nation and Barnett previously served five years on the council. (Jerrad Moore/MM)

by JERRAD MOORE  
ASSIGNMENT EDITOR

OKMULGEE, Okla. - The 2023 Muscogee Creek Nation General Election was held on Nov. 4, and the official results are now in.

The MCN National Council Creek District Seat A race saw challenger Dode Barnett defeat incumbent Joseph Hicks, 1,690 votes to 1,601 votes.

Challenger Robyn Whitecloud defeated incumbent William Lowe in the MCNNC Okmulgee Dis-

trict Seat A race, 1,729 votes to 1,580 votes.

There were no challenges to the previously reported primary election results, which became official on Sept. 22.

Darrell Proctor retained his McIntosh district Seat A with 58.73 percent of the vote. Judith Pickering received 41.27 percent of the vote.

**Principal and Second Chief**

MCN Principal Chief David Hill has won a second four year term with 58.37 percent of the vote. Tim Good Voice came in second with 25.36 percent, he was followed by Lahoma Schultz with 14.08 percent and Joseph Rogers with 2.19 percent.

Second Chief Del Beaver also won a second term with 67.02 percent of the vote. Current Representative and challenger Sandra Golden received 32.98 percent of the vote.

An inauguration date for the chiefs and council representatives has not been announced yet.

MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION FILES SUIT AGAINST THE CITY OF TULSA



MCN has recently filed a lawsuit involving jurisdiction rights. (Courtesy: MCN)

The following is a press release from the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Executive Branch.

OKMULGEE, Okla. - The Muscogee (Creek) Nation filed suit against the City of Tulsa in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Oklahoma.

The Nation's suit alleges that Tulsa is deliberately and unlawfully prosecuting tribal citizens for conduct occurring within the Nation's Reservation boundaries despite the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in *McGirt v. Oklahoma*, which affirmed that the Nation's treaty-defined reservation boundaries remain intact, and that states and their political subdivisions accordingly have no criminal jurisdiction over Indians within

those boundaries absent congressional authorization.

Tulsa's ongoing prosecutions therefore violate federal law, infringe on the rights of tribal citizens within the Nation's jurisdiction, and interfere with the Nation's federally-protected right to self-government, including the functioning of its own comprehensive and robust criminal justice system.

The Mayor of Tulsa has recently stated that litigation is not the preferable means to resolve Indian Country jurisdictional issues, and the Nation fully agrees. However, Tulsa is presently asserting criminal jurisdiction over individual Indians in the state and municipal courts, and aggressively so, notwithstanding clear and binding precedent against its practices.

Tulsa cannot reasonably expect the Nation to stay on the sidelines while Tulsa attacks its sovereignty within the Nation's reservation in cases to which the Nation is not even a party.

Principal Chief David Hill stated: "Our Nation has always been a leader in the fight to defend tribal sovereignty. We continue to welcome government-to-government cooperation with the City of Tulsa. But we will not stand by and watch the City disregard our sovereignty and our own laws by requiring Muscogee and other tribal citizens to respond to citations in Tulsa city court because of the city's make-believe legal theories."

Geri Wisner, the Nation's Attorney General, further explained: "We filed this suit today because the City of Tulsa is willingly and knowingly violating federal law. There is no legal basis for current city policies dealing with citizens of tribal nations and we are asking the court to require the city to follow the law."

The's suit embodies these convictions, and the Nation looks forward to defending its sovereignty in federal court.

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# TRAFFIC TICKETS, TRIBUTES, TRIBAL LEADER DOLL

CONFLICT CONTINUES WITH STATE, NUMBERS OF NATIVES, ICON’S HERITAGE CHALLENGED AND NEW TRIBUTES

by **GARY FIFE**  
CONTRIBUTER

OKMULGEE, Okla. - Well, it seems that tribal and state governments will be squaring off in another legal arena. This time, it’s over traffic tickets.

Let’s see...an Oklahoma Highway Patrol officer ticketed an Otoe-Missouria woman for speeding and for not paying state motor vehicle taxes. The woman did have a tribal license plate, but according to the state she did not pay the state vehicle taxes because she did not live on her tribe’s reservation land. Here is where it gets tricky. Apparently, it all depends on whether or not she lived on a reservation. And so, the battle continues.

November was quite the month for observances of Native American people; Native veterans and Native American Heritage Month. It seems that a lot more folks are paying attention to the heritage month, including local news agencies.

Honoring veterans is something everyone is doing, and it’s a delight to see tribal Honor Guards playing an important part.

Speaking of the recently observed Native “holiday”, here’s what the U.S. Census Bureau says, “The first American Indian Day was celebrated in May 1916 in New York. The event culminated an effort by Red Fox James, a member of the Blackfeet Nation, who rode across the nation on horseback seeking approval from 24 state governments to have a day to honor American Indians. In 1990, more than seven decades later, then-President George H.W. Bush signed a joint congressional resolution designating the month of November ‘National American Indian Heritage Month.’”



Similar proclamations have been issued every year since 1994 to recognize what is now called “American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month.” This Facts for Features presents statistics for the American Indian and Alaska Native population, one of the six major race categories defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

Did you ever wonder what the latest count of Native Americans is within the U.S. population? According to the U.S. Census Bureau, “The current total population of Native Americans in the United States is 6.79 million which is about 2.09% of the entire population. There are about 574 federally recognized Native American tribes in the U.S.”

The following are the 10 largest Indian tribes; Navajo Nation (399,567), Cherokee Nation (292,555), Choctaw Nation (255,677), Chippewa (214,026), Sioux (207,684), Blackfeet (159,394), White Mountain Apache (15,791), Muscogee

(Creek) Nation (108,368), Haudenosaunee Nations (114,568), and the Blackfeet Nation (17,321).

Buffy Sainte-Marie, the world-renown Canadian Indigenous performer and folk singer is the latest Indigenous personality whose ancestry has come under scrutiny. Her birth certificate lists her as Beverley Jean Santamaria, according to a documentary produced by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC). A story by Indianz.com says the documentary, titled, “Making An Icon” is available on YouTube.

Sainte-Maries’ response has been: “Later in my life, as an adult, she [Winifred Sainte-Marie, her adoptive mother] told me some things I have never shared out of respect for her that I hate sharing now, that I may have been born on ‘the wrong side of the blanket.’ This was her story to tell, not mine.”

Whatever the final determination in this matter, Saint-Marie will remain a “icon” to me for her strength and dedication to

Native and Indigenous people. I’ve met and interviewed her and she will always be a part of the international Indigenous family. Quite the lady.

Remember a couple of years back when members of California tribes pulled down a statue of Junípero Serra, an 18th century priest who played a major part in the destruction of tribal people and culture? That statue has been replaced by a figure of Miwok leader William J. Franklin Sr. on the state capitol grounds. According to one of the tribal leaders, “Today’s unveiling signifies the start of a new era here in California at our state capitol one where we stop uplifting a false narrative and start honoring the original stewards of this land,” (Remember that genocide paid for the ‘Gold Rush’ by the way, Serra was made a saint.)

Speaking of new tributes to Natives, here’s one that just came out: A Barbie doll of the first female Cherokee Principal Chief, Wilma Mankiller. It’s part of toy-

maker Mattel’s “Inspiring Women” collection. The doll is dressed in a Cherokee ribbon dress. Mankiller’s husband, Charlie Soap said of the toy figure, “The Wilma Mankiller Barbie doll is an incredible tribute to Wilma that will share her legacy with even more people.”

There are other Native women dolls in Mattels’ collection. Yes, the doll is supposed to have Barbies’ famous figure, but you can’t really tell under the dress. Osiyo!

With the holiday season upon us, there are lots of opportunities to be generous to our families, friends and neighbors who might not have much of a holiday to celebrate. Remember to think of others and share what you can.

Afvcke nettv cakko rakko! Hvtvm!

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

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EXHIBIT IN ATLANTA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT FOCUSES ON SOUTHEASTERN INDIGENOUS IDENTITY

"THIS LAND CALLS US HOME" HIGHLIGHTS RELATIONSHIP TO HOMELANDS



"The Influence of Ancestors" by Tony A. Tiger. (Sac and Fox/Seminole/Mvskoke) (Courtesy: UM Global Ministries)

by MEREDITH JOHNSON  
REPORTER

ATLANTA, GA. - Those traveling through one of the busiest airports in the world will be able to view over 60 artworks from Southeastern Indigenous artists. The exhibit "This Land Calls Us Home: Indigenous Relationships with Southeastern Homelands," opened Nov. 6 in the Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport in the gallery space in the T North concourse.

The exhibit is a collaboration between the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church and their Native American Comprehensive Plan with the ATL Airport Art Program. The project lead for the exhibit is Rev. Chebon Kernell (Seminole/Mvskoke). It features 26 Indigenous Southeastern artists working in painting, sculpture, textile, and photography.

The initial spark of inspiration for the exhibit came from a reaction Kernell had to an exhibit on the history of Atlanta at the airport. He felt that it minimized the history of Indigenous people who called the surrounding area home, including the Mvskoke. He stated,

"It burst from my reaction to some of the exhibits that were

already in the Atlanta airport... To give you the exact example, in the bottom of the airport is a history exhibit called "A Walk Through the History of the City of Atlanta." And on one panel they included Native American people, which I was actually excited about, 'Hey, you actually included Native people within this exhibit.' But when I looked closer, they put 13,000 years of history in one panel while the rest of the exhibit was 240 years of history and it didn't even compare to our history. It didn't sit well with me."

Kernell began to process his reaction with those around him. When a colleague brought up having a meeting with the airport director, Kernell agreed that was a place to start. He explained, "During that conversation, they talked about putting in a proposal to have a more in-depth exhibit that talks about our contemporary presence as Indigenous people and even our relationship with our homelands. And so, fast forward five years and that's when we have the exhibit, 'This Land Calls Us Home.'"

Kernell, who works as the Executive Director of the Native American Compressive Plan at the United Methodist Church, formed partnerships with museum professionals and American Indian

scholars to develop the concept. With the help of exhibit content developer, Jeff Donaldson, the resulting exhibit seeks to convey not only the deep history of Native people in the southeast, but also their continuing presence.

Kernell explained how the exhibit materialized once a team was established. He wanted to assert that Native Americans, specifically Mvskokvlke are still alive and well today.

"I shared with our curators what my hopes were in the story that the exhibit would tell. And one of those was, number one, we are a contemporary people, present today. And number two, we do have hopes and desires for a renewed kindling of the relationship with our homeland between us and the local community" Kernell said.

Identity, Community and Ancestors

Tony A. Tiger (Sac and Fox/Mvskoke/Seminole), an Oklahoma-based artist, curator, and teacher has been featured in several shows across the Southeastern homelands. His piece titled, "The Influence of Ancestors" weaves themes of identity, community, and ancestral connections. The mixed media on paper highlights three separate images of men placed among a backdrop of inverted triangles. "It's about identity, about knowing who you are and how important it is that ancestors play a role in who you are now...what's at the heart of Indigenous culture is our Native communities and taking care of them," Tiger stated.

Tiger explained the alternating triangle pattern is commonly used among Southeastern people. He first saw the design on a bandolier bag dating from the mid 1850s. To him it represents men and women in the community. He stated, "... men and women shoulder to shoulder in community holding

it together. So that's what that represents. And I just kind of took it and utilized it, thinking that this is what it reminds me of, or what it instilled in my own creative thought, this design that kind of represented men and women to me."

Dustin Illetewahke Mater (Chickasaw/Choctaw/Mvskoke) also utilizes Southeastern design and iconography in his work. Mater, who has previously exhibited works in the homelands through the traveling exhibit, "Visual Voices" recalled how the places and spaces of the homelands became part of his artistic work. He shared, "Growing up, I had all these amazing stories that I got from my grandmother, all different relatives, but I had no visuals, they could never provide a visual context of what was ours or what was really Southeastern... When I was in school in Los Angeles, that's when I saw those designs for the first time. And it's like, it's scratched an itch that was just that it's building up my whole life. And, you know, almost like the seed that my grandmother planted in my mind, they just started blooming... stories of where these are from, that creative well that I drink from, that other Southeastern artists drink from, is just so vast and wide, there's room for all of us."

Evoking pop culture and Indigenous futurism, his sculpture "Cosmic Warrior VII" fuses traditional Southeastern design and science fiction. Mater explained, "Just kind of putting traditional accoutrement, tattoos, markings, and beads and putting a sci-fi twist on it. But kind of placing it how a warrior's headdress would have looked so it's kind of a riff on those effigy pots that they find in the homeland. It's a little tongue-in-cheek of that."

Southeastern Cultural Reach

The ATL Airport Art program

has been around since 1996 when public art installations were commissioned for the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games. Due to the popularity and success of the installations at the airport, the Airport Art program was created to maintain the works and expand their presence.

The program's main goal is to combine art with the everyday commute for airport passengers and employees. It commissions, produces, curates, and manages the exhibits and programming. The ATL Airport is one of the largest and busiest airports in the world, which means the ATL Airport Art program is one of the largest public art sites not just within the Southeast, but globally as well.

Asked about knowing that his work will have such a large reach, Mater said, "I hope that when people come up, that they see the depth and they break any preconceived notions of what Native or Southeastern art is, and that they appreciate that they're standing on the precipice of a giant, vast body of water of work, and they're willing to stick their toes in, they're gonna just be floored with amazing items...I want them to grow in their perception of what Southeastern art is. The more we can share our culture and the more we can make people aware and how alive that it is, we make the ancestors alive and they see what we're doing."

Mvskoke artists also featured in the show include Brittny Cuevas, Johnnie Lee Diacon, Jimmie Carole Fife, Phyllis Fife, Madison Hye Long, Robin Fife Jenkins, Shelley Patrick, Melinda Schwakhofe, Maya Stewart, Tony A. Tiger, and Sandy Fife Wilson. "This Land Calls Us Home," can be seen at the ATL International Airport T North concourse until Nov 2024. Not flying through Atlanta? View the full collection at <https://umcmmission-org-preprod.go-vip.net/thisland/>.

"KILLERS OF THE FLOWER MOON" RECOUNTS THE OSAGE REIGN OF TERROR

WHEN WILL TULSA'S LOST MVSKOKE ALLOTMENT HISTORY BE TOLD?

by BRADEN HARPER  
MANAGING EDITOR

TVLSE, Okla. - The locally-shot Hollywood film, "Killers of the Flower Moon" was finally unveiled to audiences two years after it wrapped production in Oklahoma. The story details a dark chapter in Osage history known as the Reign of Terror. During that time, Osage families were murdered and turned up missing, all in an effort to steal allotments and the rich oil minerals that resided within them.

Production on the film began in 2021 after delays from the Covid-19 Pandemic. Based on the book of the same name, the film details the horrific events of the Reign of Terror. During this dark chapter of history, Osage citizens were killed or went missing under mysterious circumstances. This would lead to an investigation, and ultimately the creation of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The investigation would uncover that the Osage victims were murdered for their royalties, or headrights from the Osage Oil Boom.

Notably, the film's script underwent a major rewrite that shifted the story's perspective toward the Osage people, rather than the birth of the FBI. Although the film was directed by non-Indigenous filmmaker Martin Scorsese, many view the story as a genuine effort to capture the brutality and injustices of the crimes committed against the Osage people.

Now that the Osage Reign of Terror story has been told on the big screen, it opens up the possibility of more allotment crime stories to be uncovered, researched, and shared. Particularly, allotment history found in neighboring Muscogee (Creek) Nation. While it is well known that Tulsa began as a Mvskoke settlement that marked the end of their journey on the Trail of Tears, what is

not well known is how the modern city's infrastructure was built on Mvskoke allotments.

The Stealing Tvlse Series

Among those researching and seeking to spread awareness of the Mvskoke allotment history in Tulsa are Tatianna Duncan (Mvskoke) and Brittany Harlow. Both have been vocal in their fight to tell the suppressed history of Tulsa, and the allotment grid it was initially comprised of.

Harlow is the founder and director of Verified News Network (VNN), an Indigenous-owned media outlet dedicated to community-minded journalism. In partnership with the nonprofit Lucinda Hickory Research Institute (LHRI), they have partnered together to tell the story of Mvskoke allotment era in Tulsa through the Stealing Tvlse series.

Duncan is the founder and director of the LHRI. The nonprofit's purpose is to research the accounts of Mvskoke individuals and families who lost their allotments to outside legal guardians. Although it is not common knowledge that Tulsa was developed on Mvskoke allotments, VNN and LHRI are fighting to change that.

Seeing history come to life on the big screen, "Killers of the Flower Moon" left an impact on Duncan and Harlow as allotment researchers. Although the film was not told from a Native perspective, Duncan still believes there is value in the picture.

"It was not a Native point of view, but it was still important," Duncan said. "I want to make it clear that it was historically still very important and I would encourage people to see it."

The film alluded to the legal guardians assigned to Native families who would often steal their allotment through legal probate. However Duncan wished the film

had explored that historical aspect in further depth, given how the guardianship system allowed outsiders to take allotments with few legal obstacles.

Another way outsiders would get their hands on headrights as seen in the film was through marriage. This approach was not exclusively used on the Osage people.

"We see that in our Mvskoke history, where a non Native will marry one of our Indian ancestors, and we find them dead not long after that," Duncan said. "It just leaves us with a lot of questions."

"Killers of the Flower Moon" does mention its ties to Tulsa, particularly in a direct reference to another dark historical event that occurred there: the 1921 Race Massacre. However, the film does not reference the allotment history that took place there. History that as Harlow argues, set the stage for the murders in Osage Nation.

"It was really clear that what happened in Tulsa from 1900-1920 really laid the groundwork for the Reign of Terror," Harlow said. "That's the consensus that these crimes and injustice happened in the two decades before the Reign of Terror."

According to Harlow, there is much work to be done on uncovering the full scope of allotment crimes in Tulsa, as well as why it has taken so long to bring public attention to it.

Colbert on Emvpanayv

Mvskoke Author J.D. Colbert appeared on Mvskoke Media's podcast, Emvpanayv to discuss his novel, "Between Two Fires" and its relation to the story of the Reign of Terror. Published in November of 2022, the book details a fictional Creek character who sees first hand the murders and disappearances of Mvskoke families in Tulsa and Glenpool during the



A total of 28 members from the Wetumka Creek Indian Community gathered together to see the "Killers of the Flower Moon" film in Tulsa. (Courtesy: Wetumka Creek Indian Community)

allotment era.

While the book features similarities to "Killers of the Flower Moon", it has notable differences. Although "Between Two Fires" focuses on two characters who fall in love, it is a fictional story that was written to be told from a Native perspective.

"What I endeavored to do was tell a Creek story from a Creek perspective, and a Creek history," Colbert said. "Rather than what we've seen for far too long; the treatment of Natives in the media. Particularly movies where Native stories are seemingly always told from a white point of view. Natives are just victims and collateral damage to the story."

Both stories explore themes of crime, love, and greed. Just like the Osage in "Killers of the Flower Moon", the book alludes to the Mvskoke peoples' own dark chapter of allotments stolen through guardianship, and legal probate. Colbert's inspiration for writing the book came from oral accounts he heard as a young man from original allottee owners.

Although "Between Two Fires" has been published for over a year now, it is not strictly a nonfiction account of history. However, Colbert claims that 90 percent of the characters and events in the book are real. Further research on the

Mvskoke allotment era has yet to be published.

The Future of Mvskoke Allotment History

When asked if Mvskoke allotment history will ever be properly taught in schools or to the general public, Duncan said her research is available to anyone who wants to use it.

"They're welcome to look at it, they're welcome to sit down and talk with me," Duncan said. "It's not about me telling the story, it's about people knowing it."

While there is still more progress yet to be made on spreading Mvskoke allotment history awareness, Harlow believes "Killers of the Flower Moon" was a step in the right direction.

"I hope that this attention will translate into more awareness about allotment crime and injustice about Creek people in Tulsa and Tulsa County," Harlow said.

A film or television adaptation of Mvskoke allotment history is not entirely out of the question. Colbert said that a copy of "Between Two Fires" has been passed along to Taylor Sheridan, the television producer well-

TULSA ALLOTMENTS

Continued on Page 8



**COMMITTEE PASSES \$6.75M ARPA FUND MATCH FOR CRITICAL WATER INFRASTRUCTURE**

AUTHORIZATION FOR EPA BROWNFIELDS GRANT APPROVED

by **MEREDITH JOHNSON**  
REPORTER

MVSKOKE RESERVATION- On Nov 1, the Land, Natural Resources, and Cultural Preservation Committee held an in-person meeting. Passed legislation will go on to a full council meeting, unless otherwise noted.

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

The council approved \$4,399 for Weleetka United Methodist Church from the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Emergency Assistance Grant.

The council approved \$2,500 for the Morning Star Evangelistic Center from the Muscogee (Creek) Traditional Church Summer Church Camp Grant.

The council approved \$2,500 for Covenant Harvest Ministries from the Muscogee (Creek) Traditional Church Summer Church Camp Grant.

**TR 23-115** A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a grant of permanent easement to establish a reinterment cemetery in the ancestral lands of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation passed with a vote of 4-0. It was sponsored by Representative Galen Cloud.

A landowner in the ancestral lands of Alabama has agreed to grant the MCN a permanent easement on land to be used as a reinterment site for remains and associated and nonassociated funerary items. The Grant of Permanent Easement contains limited waivers of sovereign immunity and must be passed by council vote.



COUNCIL COVERAGE

**LNC**

LAND, NATURAL RESOURCES & CULTURAL PRESERVATION

The Land, Natural Resources and Cultural Preservation Committee held an in person meeting on Nov 1. (MM File)

The Department of Culture and Humanities will exercise oversight of the reinterment cemetery.

**TR 23-116** A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a Muscogee (Creek) Nation Department of Housing contract with Jeffrey and Ramona Gormly passed with a vote of 4-0. It was sponsored by Representative Nelson Harjo Sr.

The MCN Department of Housing is requesting approval for a MCN Housing Contract of Sale of Real Estate with Jeffrey and Ramona Gormly to purchase a five bedroom house in Glenpool in the amount of \$270,000 from NAHASDA Funds.

**TR 23-117** A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a contract accepting a donation of land located in Hughes County, Oklahoma passed with a vote of 4-0. It was sponsored by Rep. Cloud.

The MCN has been asked to accept a donation of land in Wetumka, Oklahoma. The land contains three lots, and approximately 10,500 square feet of land at 220 E. Benson Ave. Wetumka, OK 74883.

**TR 23-118** A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a contract accepting a donation of land located in Hughes County, Oklahoma passed with a vote of 4-0. It was sponsored by Rep. Cloud.

The MCN has been asked to accept a donation of land in Wetumka, Oklahoma. The land

contains one lot, and approximately 7,000 square feet of land at Lot 5, Block 7 in the Mingo addition in Wetumka, OK. An address was not provided in the bill.

**TR 23-119** A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a real estate contract for the purchase of property in Okmulgee, Oklahoma passed with a vote of 4-0. It was sponsored by Rep. Harjo Sr. It corresponds with NCA 23-140.

The legal description of the property is Lot 4 of Section 2, Township 15 North, Range 12 East, Okmulgee County, Oklahoma, Indian Base Meridian, containing 38.5 acres more or less. It is located in the Duck Creek Community.

**NCA 23-136** A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the expenditure of grant funds in the amount of \$418,031 awarded from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for the benefit of the Geospatial Department passed with a vote of 4-0. It was sponsored by Representative Joseph Hicks.

The Geospatial Department was awarded an EPA CERCLA Section 128(a) State and Tribal Response Program and Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act Grant. This program funding deals with EPA Brownfields and Land Revitalization Programs. The CERCLA section 128(a) program provides funding for states and tribes to establish or enhance their environmental response programs, develop brownfield response clean ups and oversee the assessment. The grant will hire two additional staff, archive documents, and develop a framework for traditional ecological knowledge for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Brownfields program. It will also support site cleanup.

**NCA 23-137** A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the expenditure of grant funds in the amount of \$90,000 awarded

from the EPA for the benefit of the Geospatial Department passed with a vote of 4-0. It was sponsored by Rep. Cloud.

The Geospatial Department received EPA CERCLA funds to continue to review projects that address climate change and tribal environmental codes and to contract with vendors to review current and existing tribal environmental codes. This assists in maintaining the framework for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Brownfields program.

**NCA 23-138** A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation appropriating funds in the amount of \$40,000 to be used for transactional costs related to accepting donated real property located in Hughes County, Oklahoma passed with a vote of 4-0. It will go on to the Business, Finance, and Justice Committee. It was sponsored by Rep Cloud.

This law corresponds to bill TR 23-117 and the property at 220 E. Benson Ave. Wetumka, OK 74883, which the MCN has been asked to accept in donation.

**NCA 23-139** A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation appropriating funds in the amount of \$40,000 to be used for transactional costs related to accepting donated real property located in Hughes County, Oklahoma passed with a vote of 4-0. It goes on to the Business, Finance, and Justice Committee. It was sponsored by Rep. Cloud.

This law corresponds to TR 23-139 and property in Wetumka, OK. The land contains one lot, and approximately 7,000 square feet of land located at Lot 5, Block 7 in the Mingo addition in Wetumka, Oklahoma. An address was not provided in the bill.

**NCA 23-140** A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the expenditure of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds received in the amount of \$1,720,000 from the United States Department of the Treasury for

the purchase of property located in Okmulgee County, Oklahoma passed with a vote of 4-0. It was sponsored by Rep Harjo Sr.

This legislation corresponds with TR 23-119. It utilizes the Final Rule, which according to the U.S. Treasury provides state and local governments increased flexibility to pursue a wider range of uses and increased simplicity to aid in governments’ focus on responding to their communities and maximizing the impact of their funds. Recipients can use the funds for capital expenditures that support eligible public health or economic response. It requires written justification for expenditures over \$1 million.

This law would enable the MCN to expend ARPA funds to cover the purchase price and costs of incidental expenses related to the purchase. According to the bill, the MCN wishes to utilize the property to further its land use.

**NCA 23-141** A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the expenditure of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) fiscal relief funding received in the amount of \$6,750,000 from the United States Department of the Treasury for matching funds in collaboration with the state of Oklahoma for the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Tribal Cooperation Grant Program passed with a vote of 4-0. It was sponsored by Rep Joseph Hicks.

This law corresponds to TR 23-029. The Final Rule for ARPA funding outlines uses in response to the public health emergency, including making necessary investments to improve access to clean drinking water, to support vital wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure. This law appropriates APRA funds to meet the matching funds in collaboration with the State of Oklahoma for the APRA Tribal Cooperation Grant Program.

To view the full agenda, visit: mcnncn.com.

**TRIBE SEEKS EXTRA SECURITY ON COMPLEX**

LPD GRANTS APPROVED FOR BODY CAMERA EQUIPMENT



COUNCIL COVERAGE

**BFJ**

BUSINESS, FINANCE & JUSTICE

A Business, Finance and Justice Committee meeting was held at the Mound Building on Nov. 2 in Okmulgee, Okla. (MM File)

by **MORGAN TAYLOR**  
MULTIMEDIA PRODUCER

OKMULGEE, Okla. - The Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council held the monthly Business, Finance and Justice Committee session at the Mound Building on Nov. 2.

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

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

**TR 23-120** Authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a Terms, Conditions, And Warranty Information Agreement with Transcend Robotics for the Lighthorse Police Department. Representative Randall Hicks sponsored the legislation, which passed 3-1. Representative Sandra Golden voted against the bill.

Muscogee (Creek) Nation Lighthorse Police Chief Phillips claims this will allow law enforcement to use a robot for entering homes and other barriers during a crisis situation.

**TR 23-130** Amending MCNCA Title 26, Chapter 2, 2-201. E, Entitled “Compensation”. Representative Thomasene Yahola

Osborn sponsored the legislation, which tied 2-2, then failed with the chair vote. Rep. Osborn-Yahola, Rep. Golden, and Representative Mark Randolph voted against the bill.

The Council is seeking to compensate the district court judges for the increase in work, there is a need to raise the compensation of the district court chief judge and each district trial court judge.

**NCA 23-142** Authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the United States Department of the Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs Office of Justice Services Fiscal Year 2024 Indian Highway Safety Program Grant Award for the benefit of the LPD. Rep. Yahola Osborn sponsored the legislation, which passed 4-0.

Funds of \$373,070 will be used to hire two officers and one data clerk. It will purchase two pursuit vehicles, three radars, rent billboards to support national mobilizations and Indian Holiday mobilizations. It will allow LPD officers to attend mandatory BIA Highway Safety Program management training.

**NCA 23-143** Authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs 2023 Patrick Leahy Bulletproof Vest Partnership grant for the benefit of the LPD. Rep. Randolph sponsored the legislation, which passed 4-0.

ment of Justice Office of Justice Programs 2023 Patrick Leahy Bulletproof Vest Partnership grant for the benefit of the LPD. Rep. Randolph sponsored the legislation, which passed 4-0.

The grant was awarded based on a fifty percent match of \$478.42 from the appropriated budget. The funds will be used to purchase a bulletproof vest.

**NCA 23-144** Authorizing the expenditure of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Fiscal Relief funding from the U.S. Department of Treasury for the benefit of security on the tribal complex. Rep. Yahola Osborn sponsored the legislation, which was postponed until the next BFJ, 4-0.

According to the bill, the MCN Executive Office and its governmental agencies requested ARPA Revenue Replacement funding for the purposes of capital and asset security. This is a result of increased governmental jurisdiction, responsibility, and public engagement. It has resulted in a need for increased security to

ensure the safety and security of tribal and federal resources and funds.

**NCA 23-145** Amending MCNCA Title 50, 1-107 Entitled “Commission Composition”. Rep. Golden sponsored the legislation, which was postponed until the next BFJ, 4-0.

The amendment outlines the vacancy on commission.

**NCA 23-146** Authorizing the expenditure of funds for the benefit of the LPD, for the U.S. D.O.J., Bureau of Justice Assistance, Justice, and Security Strategies, INC. supporting small, rural, and tribal law enforcement agency body-worn camera policy and implementation program grants. Rep. Randall Hicks sponsored the legislation, which passed 4-0.

Funds of \$29,494.97 will be used to purchase 28 body-worn cameras.

**NCA 23-147** Appropriating funds for the 2024 Inauguration Ceremonies. Rep. Randall Hicks sponsored the legislation, which passed 3-1. Rep. Golden voted

against the bill.

According to the bill, there is a need to appropriate \$100,000 to conduct the 2024 inauguration ceremonies for newly elected tribal officials.

**Referred Legislation:**

**NCA 23-138** Appropriating funds to be used for transactional costs related to accepting real donated property in Hughes, CO. This purchase will cost \$40,000.

**NCA 23-139** Appropriating funds to be used for transactional costs related to accepting real donated property in Hughes, CO. This purchase will cost \$40,000.

The funding source for both referred pieces of legislation was identified from the Land Acquisition fund, and passed 4-0.

Executive session was called for other businesses that included Muscogee Nation Gaming Enterprises and OneFire Holding Company.

For a full list of the agenda, visit: mcnnc.com.



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MCN LIGHTHORSE CREATES EASTERN DIVISION  
OF THE NATION’S JUSTICE SERVICE



The Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council recently held a Land, Natural Resources, and Cultural Preservation Committee meeting. (MM File)

by SHAYLN PROCTOR  
REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Okla. - The Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council held a regular session in person on Nov. 7.

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

**TR 23-113** A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation (MCN) authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a project of agreement between The Board of Trustees of Western Michigan University and the MCN. Representative Mary Crawford sponsored this bill, which was adopted 14-0.

Western Michigan University created a service that will be cost-effective for the MCN WIC Program. This will provide the federal nutrition education requirement, according to the bill.

**TR 23-114** A tribal resolution of the MCN authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a license purchase master customer agreement with HealthChoice for the benefit of the MCN Department of Health. Rep. Crawford sponsored this bill, which was adopted 14-0.

MCN Department of Health is held responsible for the medical care for Muscogee (Creek) Nation citizens. MCNDH wants to hold a contract with HealthChoice. HealthChoice is a health care program that provides health and dental benefits toward Oklahoma state employees and former employees.

**TR 23-115** A tribal resolution of the MCN authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a grant of permanent easement to establish a reinterment cemetery in the ancestral lands of the MCN. Representative Galen Cloud sponsored this bill, which was adopted 14-0.

An owner of one of the ancestral homeland sites in Alabama has agreed to grant the Nation permission to establish a reinterment cemetery. The Nation has to execute a Grant of Permanent Easement with the landowner. This will allow human remains as well as associated and unassociated funerary objects from MCN and other tribes to be interned. The MCN Department of Cultural and Humanities will take full responsibility for the remains and objects, according to the bill.

**TR 23-116** A tribal resolution of the MCN authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a MCN Department of Housing contract with Jeffrey and Ramona Gormly. Representative Nelson Harjo Sr. sponsored this bill, which was adopted 14-0.

Jeffrey and Ramona Gormly are purchasing a five bedroom home. The MCN Department of Housing has requested a contract of \$270,000 from the NAHASDA funds.

**TR 23-117** A tribal resolution

of the MCN authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a contract of accepting a donation of land located in Hughes county, Oklahoma. Rep. Cloud sponsored this bill, which was adopted 14-0.

MCN received a donation of land located in Wetumka. This has three lots with approximately 10,500 square feet. This will help expand the community’s functions.

**TR 23-118** A tribal resolution of the MCN authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a contract accepting a donation of land located in Hughes county, Oklahoma. Rep. Cloud sponsored this bill, which was adopted 14-0.

MCN received a donation of land located in Wetumka. It is lot five, block seven in the Mingo Addition, according to the recorded plat thereof. This will provide community functions in the future.

**TR 23-119** A tribal resolution of the MCN authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a real estate contract for the purchase of property in Okmulgee, Oklahoma. Rep. Harjo sponsored this bill, which was adopted 14-0.

The Nation received an opportunity to purchase a property in Okmulgee, which is off of Highway 75.

**TR 23-120** A tribal resolution of the MCN authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a terms, conditions and warranty information agreement with transcend robotics for the Lighthorse Police Department. Representative Randall Hicks sponsored this bill, which was adopted 14-0.

A grant was awarded to the MCN Lighthorse Police Department to finalize the purchase of the robot. MCN must have the “Terms, Conditions and Warranty Information Agreement with Transcend Robotics” to receive the product, according to the bill.

**TR 23-121** A tribal resolution of the MCN authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a real estate contract for the purchase of property in Muskogee, Oklahoma. Rep. Cloud sponsored this bill, which was adopted 15-0.

MCN received an opportunity to purchase a property in Muskogee County. It will serve as a new MCN Lighthorse Police Department office.

**TR 23-122** A tribal resolution of the MCN amending TR 23-112 (a tribal resolution of the MCN supporting the nomination of Sandra Golden to serve as the recording Secretary of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Administrative Board). Speaker William Lowe sponsored this bill, which was adopted 15-0.

The MCN is giving their support for Representative Sandra Golden for the position of Recording Secretary and for MCN Principal Chief David Hill to serve as the First Vice President of the

National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Administrative Board.

**NCA 23-133** A law of the MCN authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from The Department of Health and Human Services Administration for children and families for the benefit of the MCN Office of Child Care. Representative Leonard Gouge sponsored this bill, which was adopted 15-0.

MCN Office of Child Care received funds in the amount of \$1,435,103, this grant will help with the administrative costs for their daily activities and direct services to childcare providers and families.

**NCA 23-134** A law of the MCN authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from The Department of Health and Human Services Administration for children and families for the benefit of the children and family services administration. Rep. Crawford sponsored this bill, which was adopted 15-0.

Funds in the amount of \$250,000 was awarded to the Children and Family Services Administration from FY 2024. This will help protect and promote the well-being of children from any neglect, abuse or exploitation.

**NCA 23-135** A law of the MCN authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families for the benefit of the children and family services administration. Rep. Crawford sponsored this bill, which was adopted 15-0.

This grant was based on a match from the Children and Family Services Administration Tribal Budget. This will help with family preservation services and families that are at risk or in crisis.

**NCA 23-136** A law of the MCN authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for the benefit of the Geospatial Department. Representative Joseph Hicks sponsored this bill, which was adopted 15-0.

The Geospatial Department was awarded \$418,031 from the grant funds. This will give the department the ability to hire two additional staff members.

**NCA 23-137** A law of the MCN authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for the benefit of the Geospatial Department. Rep. Cloud sponsored this bill, which was adopted 15-0.

The MCN Geospatial Department was awarded \$90,000 from the grant funds. This amount will help the department continue reviewing future or current projects within the environment and tribal environmental codes.

**NCA 23-138** A law of the MCN appropriating funds to be used for transactional costs related to accepting donated real property located in Hughes County, Oklahoma. Rep. Cloud sponsored this bill, which was adopted 15-0.

A property in Hughes County was donated to the MCN. The funds will cover the costs that are associated with this property. According to the bill it will cover the title insurance, title opinions, surveys, environmental studies and applicable taxes.

**NCA 23-139** A law of the MCN appropriating funds to be used for transactional costs related to accepting donated real property located in Hughes County, Oklahoma. Rep. Cloud sponsored this bill, which was adopted 14-0.

\$20,000 has been received from the Economic Development and

Land Acquisition Fund account, this will cover all of the costs that are needed within the property.

**NCA 23-140** A law of the MCN authorizing the expenditure of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds received from the United States Department of the Treasury for the purchase of property located in Okmulgee County, Oklahoma. Rep. Harjo sponsored this bill, which was adopted 14-1.

The owner of the property asked for \$1,700,000. ARPA funding will cover the expense.

**NCA 23-141** A law of the MCN authorizing the expenditure of ARPA Fiscal Relief Funding received from the United States Department of the Treasury for matching funds in the collaboration with the state of Oklahoma for the ARPA Tribal Cooperation Grant Program. Rep. Joseph Hicks sponsored this bill, which was adopted 15-0.

This grant expends \$6,750,000 of funds from the Tribal Cooperation Grant program. It will be used for response efforts. This includes public health emergencies or their negative economic impacts. This bill will match these funds in collaboration with the state of Oklahoma for the ARPA grant.

**NCA 23-142** A law of the MCN authorizing the expenditure of grants funds awarded from the United States Department of the Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs Office of Justice Services Fiscal Year 2024 Indian Highway Safety Program Grant Award for the benefit of the MCN’s Lighthorse Police Department. Representative Thomasene Yahola Osborn sponsored this bill, which was adopted 15-0.

The MCN Lighthorse Police Department received an award of \$373,070 from the Bureau of Indian Affairs Office of Justice Services FY 2024 Indian Highway Safety Program Grant. These funds will be disbursed for the hiring, vehicles, radars, training and renting a billboard, according to the bill.

**NCA 23-143** A law of the MCN authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs 2023 Patrick Leahy Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant for the benefit of the MCN Lighthorse Police Department. Representative Mark Randolph sponsored this bill, which was adopted 15-0.

This grant will provide funds in the amount of \$478.42. They will be used for one bulletproof vest.

**NCA 23-144** A law of the MCN authorizing the expenditure of ARPA fiscal relief funding from the United States Department of Treasury for the benefit of security on the tribal complex. Rep. Osborn sponsored this bill, which was adopted 14-1.

The MCN Executive Office and its governmental agencies

have requested ARPA Revenue Replacement funds be used for capital and asset security.

**NCA 23-146** A law of the MCN authorizing the expenditure of funds for the benefit of the MCN’s Lighthorse Police Department for the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, Justice & Security Strategies, Inc. supporting small, rural, and tribal law enforcement agency body-worn camera policy and Implementation Program Grant. Rep. Randall Hicks sponsored this bill, which was adopted 15-0.

The MCN Lighthorse Department received an award of \$29,494.97 from the grant, this will be authorized for the usage of the funds from the program grant.

**NCA 23-147** A law of the MCN appropriating funds for the 2024 inauguration ceremonies. Rep. Randall Hicks sponsored this bill, which was adopted 14-1.

The inauguration ceremonies will include swearing in the newly elected Principal Chief, Second Chief and the National Council Representatives of the Nation. The total amount of the appropriated funds will be \$100,000.

**NCA 23-149** A law of the MCN authorizing the expenditure of ARPA funds received from the United States Department of the Treasury for the purchase of property located in Muskogee County, Oklahoma. Rep. Cloud sponsored this bill, which was adopted 14-1.

According to the bill, the McGirt v. Oklahoma (2020) case has increased criminal jurisdiction and legal obligations. For this, the Nation is going to purchase a real property to add to the MCN Lighthorse Police footprint and create an eastern division of the Nation’s justice service.

**NCA 23-150** A law of the MCN authorizing the expenditure of the ARPA fiscal recovery fund for the benefit of the tribal utility authority to conduct energy resource planning and related activities. Rep. Randall Hicks sponsored this bill, which was adopted 14-1.

The MCN Economic Development and Land Acquisition Fund account will be given \$20,000 to accept a donation of property located in Hughes County, Oklahoma. These funds will go toward the costs of purchasing the land.

**NCA 23-151** A law of the MCN amending NCA 23-053 (A law of the MCN authorizing the expenditure of the ARPA fiscal recovery funding for the benefit of children and family services administration). Speaker Lowe sponsored this bill, which was adopted 14-1.

An incentive will be given to up to 400 foster care and kinship homes who are certified and accepted into placement of foster youth. This is provided by the U.S. Treasury for the Foster Care and Kinship Home Recruitment and Retention Program.

To view the full agenda, visit: [mcnnc.com](http://mcnnc.com).

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COUNCIL COVERAGE

BFJ/LNC

JOINT COMMITTEE SESSION

BUSINESS, FINANCE & JUSTICE/LAND, NATURAL RESOURCES & CULTURAL PRESERVATION

The MCNNC held a joint Business, Finance, and Justice/Land, Natural Resources, and Cultural Preservation committee meeting in-person. (MM file)

by MEREDITH JOHNSON  
REPORTER

MVSKOKE RESERVA-  
TION- On Nov 6, the Busi-  
ness, Finance, and Justice  
committee and the Land, Nat-  
ural Resources, and Cultural  
Resources committee held  
a joint meeting in person.  
Passed legislation will go on to  
the council, unless otherwise  
noted.

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

TR 23-121 A tribal resolu-  
tion of the Muscogee (Creek)  
Nation authorizing the Prin-  
cipal Chief to execute a real  
estate contract for the pur-  
chase of property in Muskogee,  
Oklahoma passed with a vote  
of 6-1. Representative Sandra  
Golden voted against the bill.  
It was sponsored by Represen-  
tative Galen Cloud. It corre-  
sponds with NCA 23-149.

The MCN has the oppor-  
tunity to purchase property  
located at 3201 W. Hancock  
St., Muskogee, OK, 74401. The  
property includes one office  
building, one warehouse build-  
ing, a pull-through covered  
parking, and a lumber shed.  
According to the bill, the MCN  
plans to use the property as  
a new location for the MCN  
Lighthorse Police Department.

NCA 23-149 A law of the  
Muscogee (Creek) Nation  
authorizing the expenditure  
of American Rescue Plan Act  
(ARPA) funds received in the  
amount of \$870,000 from the  
United States Department of  
the Treasury for the purchase  
of property located in Musk-  
ogee County, Oklahoma passed  
with a vote of 6-1. Rep. Golden  
voted against the bill. It was  
sponsored by Rep. Cloud. It  
corresponds with TR 23-121.

This law utilizes the Final  
Rule in ARPA to fund the pur-  
chase of property in Muskogee

to be used as a new location for  
the LPD. In order to respond  
to the increased criminal juris-  
diction post McGirt, the MCN  
is seeking to establish an east-  
ern division of the MCN's jus-  
tice services.

NCA 23-150 A law of the  
Muscogee (Creek) Nation  
authorizing the expenditure of  
the American Rescue Plan Act  
(ARPA) fiscal recovery funds  
in the amount of \$600,000 for  
the benefit of the Tribal Utility  
Authority (TUA) to conduct  
energy resource planning and  
related activities passed 7-0. It  
was sponsored by Representa-  
tive Randall Hicks.

The MCN TUA is request-  
ing funds to conduct and par-  
ticipate in energy resource  
planning and financial analysis  
for future construction activi-  
ties. Additionally, the TUA is  
in need of a vehicle to support  
these activities.

To view the full agenda,  
visit: mcnnnc.com.

# NATIONAL COUNCIL REP. SEEKS POSITION WITH NCAI

MCN TRIBAL COMPLEX SECURITY TO RECEIVE \$922K IN ARPA FUNDS

by MORGAN TAYLOR  
MULTIMEDIA PRODUCER

OKMULGEE, Okla. - The  
Muscogee (Creek) Nation  
National Council held the  
monthly Business, Finance  
and Justice Committee session  
at the Mound Building on Nov.  
7.

Passed legislation is sub-  
ject to Full Council approval  
during the Regular Session.

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

TR 23-112 Supporting the  
nomination of Sandra Golden  
as the Recording Secretary  
of the National Congress of  
American Indians Executive  
Committee. Speaker William  
Lowe sponsored the legisla-  
tion, which passed 3-0-1. Rep.  
Golden abstained from voting.

The MCN believes Rep.  
Golden is qualified to serve on  
the NCAI Executive Commit-  
tee.

NCA 23-144 Authoriz-  
ing the expenditure of Amer-  
ican Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)  
Fiscal Relief funding from  
the U.S. Department of Trea-  
sury for the benefit of security  
on the tribal complex. Repre-  
sentative Thomasene Yahola  
Osborn sponsored the legisla-  
tion, which passed 4-0. This  
bill was initially postponed  
from the Nov. 2 BFJ committee  
meeting.

According to the bill, the  
authorization of \$922,410 will  
be expended for the MCN  
Executive Office and its gov-  
ernmental agencies. The exec-  
utive branch requested ARPA  
Revenue Replacement fund-  
ing for the purposes of capi-  
tal and asset security. This is a  
result of increased governmen-  
tal jurisdiction, responsibility,  
and public engagement. It has  
resulted in a need for increased  
security to ensure the safety  
and security of tribal and fed-  
eral resources and funds.

For more information visit  
www.mcnnnc.com.



COUNCIL COVERAGE

BFJ

BUSINESS, FINANCE & JUSTICE

A Business, Finance and Justice Committee meeting was held at the Mound Building on Nov. 7 in Okmulgee, Okla. (MM File)

NATIVE  
AMERICANS ARE  
3X MORE LIKELY  
TO DEVELOP  
CHRONIC PAIN.

You can help.

We are looking for  
healthy, pain-free Native  
Americans to participate.  
Compensation up to \$425  
available. Pending  
distance, travel & lodging  
reimbursement possible.



ARTWORK CREATED BY TIM NEVAQUAYA



University of Tulsa  
Psychophysiology Lab  
utulsa.plan.edu  
utulsa.plan@gmail.com  
918-631-3565

STUDY IRB APPROVED BY CHEROKEE NATION, INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE - OKLAHOMA CITY AREA OFFICE, AND THE UNIVERSITY OF TULSA. PI - JAMIE RHUDY, PHD



TULSA ALLOTMENTS

Continued from Page 4

known for the television series, “Yellowstone”. Whether or not an adaptation is in the works has yet to be announced.

Colbert says his next book will focus on the guardianship system that allowed outsiders to control the lives of Native allotment owners, and their head-

rights. Duncan is also in the process of writing a book detailing her research into Mvskoke allotment history. Harlow continues to share research coverage with local communities in articles published as part of the Stealing Tvlse series.

“Killers of the Flower Moon” is currently playing in theaters, and can be viewed on the Apple TV+ streaming service.

OBITUARIES

CHRISTOPHER CHECOTE MORIARTY



Christopher Checote Moriarty, age 35 passed away on Wednesday, September 13, 2023 in San Antonio, Texas. Chrostopher was born in San Antonio on September 15, 1987 to parents, Doretta Checote and Kevin C Moriarty. He was the youngest of four, and a big brother to a step-brother that came into his life when he was a teenager. During his early teen years, Christopher was a writer, football player, and good cook. He was driven, kind and had a great sense of humor. He enjoyed hiking in Big Bend, sailing on Canyon Lake, and listening to a variety of music. We fondly remember that he loved chocolate mint ice cream and his favorite word for anything good was “Awesome”. He loved and treasured all the members of

his family.

For more than half of his life he lived with schizophrenia and ultimately died from its effects. His life was not without purpose. Those of us that knew and loved Christopher have borne witness to the devastation of mental illness and it has changed us forever. Christopher challenged us to be sympathetic and patient in the face of a disease that robbed him of a life that allowed him to go to school, hold a job or find love. Due to his illness, he lived in a world powered by delusions. Many could be grandiose, but more often than not they were images that made him fearful. Christopher’s journey through life was made lighter through a large network of family, friends, and healthcare professionals.

Christopher is survived by his parents Kevin, step mother, Jennifer Moriarty, mother, Doretta, step father, Charles Moldenhauer, his sister, Kendra Moriarty, brothers, Kevin Checote Moriarty and Kenneth Moriarty, and step brother Reid Martens. He also leaves behind many extended family members and friends.

If you would like to acknowledge his life, please make a donation to SAMMinistries, San Antonio Clubhouse, Haven for Hope,

SUBMISSIONS

TCIC ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

The Tulsa Creek Indian Community Annual Christmas Bazaar will be held December 9th, 2023 from 8 a.m. - 2 p.m. It will include free admission. Concessions will also be available. The Tulsa Creek Indian Community is located at 8611 S. Union Ave. Tulsa, OK 74132. They can be contacted at 918-298-2464.

HELP FOR THE HOLIDAYS

With the holidays coming up, it’s best to check on your loved ones and friends. The holidays can be a hard time for any of us, but those that are grieving or don’t have much family left in this world are going to need that extra support from all of us. It doesn’t take

much effort to simply reach out to someone and lend a listening ear for a short time. Remember, that we never know what someone else is going through. A simple check-in could make someone feel better, just to know that someone out there was thinking of them. I would like to challenge every person reading this letter to reach out to one person outside of your immediate family and just chat for a few minutes.

To those who are hurting, grieving, and just feeling down; do not feel afraid to reach out to anyone. There is the help-line which you can call, or text 988 and someone will always answer. There are also grief support groups that offer in-person and online services throughout the reservation and the state. If you need help finding one there is a website, griefshare.org. That is a

really great resource. Together we can create a more wholesome and caring community; we definitely need that in today’s times.

A couple of other ways that you can help check in on people throughout the holiday season are volunteering and donating. Volunteer at the local shelter or community center, there are usually lots of community dinners around this time of year and volunteers are always needed and greatly appreciated. Donations are always greatly appreciated and it’s the next best thing if you can’t volunteer. The donations don’t have to be huge, but any little thing can help!

MVTO!  
Alexis McHenry

Mental Health Advocate

# MVSKOKECREATIVE

## DIGITAL PRINTING & DESIGN

### Whats on the Menu

SERVING THE GENERAL PUBLIC

BANNERS	BUSINESS CARDS	POST CARDS	BROCHURES
ENVELOPES	INVITATIONS	TABLE TENTS	MAGNETS
MEMORIAL FOLDERS	POSTERS	LETTERHEAD	PROGRAMS
RACK CARDS	LOGOS	DECALS	FLYERS

To place an Order: 918-732-7720 or [CREATIVE@MVSKOKEMEDIA.COM](mailto:CREATIVE@MVSKOKEMEDIA.COM)

LEGALS

AD 2021-0012

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

DISTRICT COURT  
FILED

IN THE MATTER OF THE ADOPTION OF: )  
HUNTER PHOENIX LOPEZ, )  
DOB 03/03/2019, )  
and )  
EDEN DAWN LOPEZ, )  
DOB 06/16/2020, )  
Minor Children. )

Case No. AD-2021-0012 P 12 58  
Judge Alexandra N. Masters  
COURT CLERK

NOTICE OF HEARING ON BEST INTEREST AND FINAL DECREE OF ADOPTION

THE MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION

TO: JOHN HUNTER LOPEZ  
Biological Father

NOW on this 2 day of November, 2023, the Petitioners, Tracy Vernon Drain and Angelica Drain, by and through their attorneys, Catherine Z. Welsh and Jim C. McGough, Welsh & McGough, PLLC, having filed their Application for Setting of Best Interest Hearing and Final Decree of Adoption herein, the Court FINDS that the Application should be granted and that the same should be set for hearing on Best Interest and entry of a Final Decree.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED by the Court that this matter be, and it is hereby, set for issuance of a Best Interest and Final Decree of Adoption on the 18 day of January 2024, at 10:00 o'clock, 10 a.m. in the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Tribal Courtroom, 2501 Lvmhvlke, Okmulgee, Oklahoma 74447, and that notice thereof be given to all interested parties.

YOU ARE, THEREFORE, NOTIFIED THAT THE COURT WILL HEAR EVIDENCE IN SUPPORT OF AND IN OPPOSITION TO THE GRANTING OF THE APPLICATION AT THE TIME AND PLACE SHOWN ABOVE WHERE YOU WILL HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE PRESENT AND HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE HEARD. YOUR FAILURE TO APPEAR AT SAID HEARING SHALL CONSTITUTE A DENIAL OF YOUR INTEREST IN THE

1

CHILDREN, WHICH DENIAL MAY RESULT, WITHOUT FURTHER NOTICE OF THIS PROCEEDING OR ANY SUBSEQUENT PROCEEDINGS, IN THE ADOPTION OF THE CHILDREN WITHOUT YOUR CONSENT. ALL IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAWS OF THE MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION.

Signed and dated this 2 day of November, 2023.

HONORABLE ALEXANDRA MASTERS  
JUDGE OF THE DISTRICT COURT

Prepared by:  
Catherine Z. Welsh, MCN #358  
Jim C. McGough, MCN #914  
Welsh & McGough, PLLC  
Midway Building  
2727 E. 21st St., Ste. 600  
Tulsa, OK 74114  
(918) 585-8600 – telephone  
cathy@tulsaflm.com  
jim@tulsaflm.com  
Attorneys for Petitioners

AD 2021-0012

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

DISTRICT COURT  
FILED

IN THE MATTER OF THE ADOPTION OF: )  
HUNTER PHOENIX LOPEZ, )  
DOB 03/03/2019, )  
and )  
EDEN DAWN LOPEZ, )  
DOB 06/16/2020, )  
Minor Children. )

Case No. AD-2021-0012 P 12 58  
Judge Alexandra N. Masters  
COURT CLERK

NOTICE OF HEARING ON BEST INTEREST AND FINAL DECREE OF ADOPTION

THE MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION

TO: CANDICE MARIE BAILEY  
Biological Mother

NOW on this 2 day of November, 2023, the Petitioners, Tracy Vernon Drain and Angelica Drain, by and through their attorneys, Catherine Z. Welsh and Jim C. McGough, Welsh & McGough, PLLC, having filed their Application for Setting of Best Interest Hearing and Final Decree of Adoption herein, the Court FINDS that the Application should be granted and that the same should be set for hearing on Best Interest and entry of a Final Decree.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED by the Court that this matter be, and it is hereby, set for issuance of a Best Interest and Final Decree of Adoption on the 18 day of January 2024, at 10:00 o'clock, 10 a.m. in the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Tribal Courtroom, 2501 Lvmhvlke, Okmulgee, Oklahoma 74447, and that notice thereof be given to all interested parties.

YOU ARE, THEREFORE, NOTIFIED THAT THE COURT WILL HEAR EVIDENCE IN SUPPORT OF AND IN OPPOSITION TO THE GRANTING OF THE APPLICATION AT THE TIME AND PLACE SHOWN ABOVE WHERE YOU WILL HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE PRESENT AND HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE HEARD. YOUR FAILURE TO APPEAR AT SAID HEARING SHALL CONSTITUTE A DENIAL OF YOUR INTEREST IN THE

1

CHILDREN, WHICH DENIAL MAY RESULT, WITHOUT FURTHER NOTICE OF THIS PROCEEDING OR ANY SUBSEQUENT PROCEEDINGS, IN THE ADOPTION OF THE CHILDREN WITHOUT YOUR CONSENT. ALL IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAWS OF THE MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION.

Signed and dated this 2 day of November, 2023.

HONORABLE ALEXANDRA MASTERS  
JUDGE OF THE DISTRICT COURT

Prepared by:  
Catherine Z. Welsh, MCN #358  
Jim C. McGough, MCN #914  
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Attorneys for Petitioners

AD 2023-17

IN THE DISTRICT COURT IN AND FOR MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION  
OKMULGEE DISTRICT

DISTRICT COURT  
FILED

In the Matter of the Adoption of )  
G.W.C., )  
a minor child. )

Case No. AD-2023-17 P 1 A 9 16  
COURT CLERK

NOTICE BY PUBLICATION

THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA TO: Curtis Earl Calhoun, Natural Father of G.W.C.

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT Janet Lea Wickliffe and Kelsey Glenn Wickliffe have filed their Petition for Adoption in the District Court of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, State of Oklahoma, for the adoption of G.W.C., of which you are alleged to be the biological father. G.W.C. was born on January 2, 2013.

Your failure to appear shall constitute a denial of interest in the minor child which denial may result, without further notice of this proceeding or any subsequent proceeding, in the termination of your parental rights and the transfer of the care, custody, guardianship or adoption of G.W.C., minor child. Your duty to support the minor child until a final decree of adoption is entered shall not terminate.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that this Court will hear the evidence in support of and in opposition to the granting of the Petition for Adoption on the 9th day of January 2024, at the hour of 9:00 o'clock, 9 a.m. in Room 1 of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation District Court in Okmulgee, Okmulgee County, Oklahoma.

If you have any cause to show why the above mentioned Petition for Adoption should not be granted by the Court, you should appear and present the same at the above stated time and place.

Page 1

WITNESS my hand and seal of said Court this 7th day of November, 2023.

JUDGE OF THE DISTRICT COURT

HILTON LAW OFFICE  
Ashra A. Drybread, OBA #31983, MCNBA #1198  
512 West Rogers Blvd.  
Skintook, OK 74070  
(918) 396-4400  
ATTORNEY FOR PETITIONERS

F:\Dist\Adoption\OPEN\Calhoun, Curtis\Notice by Publication.doc

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