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MVSKOKENEWS

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Muscogee (Creek) Nation Principal Chief David Hill shakes City of Tulsa Mayor Monroe Nichols' hand after signing a settlement agreement in Muscogee (Creek) Nation v. City of Tulsa. (Courtesy: MCN Communications)

MCN AND TULSA REACH SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT IN SOVEREIGNTY LAWSUIT

TRIBAL NATION LEADERS, CITY OFFICIALS AND STATE LEADERS REACT

BY **BRADEN HARPER**
MANAGING EDITOR

TULSA – The Muscogee (Creek) Nation reached a settlement agreement in Muscogee (Creek) Nation v. City of Tulsa. The settlement's terms were announced on June 25 in a press conference held at Council Oak Park. The lawsuit emerged from jurisdictional issues regarding the MCN's sovereign authority to prosecute Tribal citizens that

commit crimes on the Mvskoke Reservation. The settlement secures that MCN can prosecute Native American citizens of federally-recognized tribes who commit crimes in areas of the City of Tulsa that are on the Mvskoke Reservation.

According to a release from the City of Tulsa, key agreements from the settlement ensure Tribal sovereignty and ensure that violent crimes are passed to the U.S. Attorney's Office. It allows Tulsa Police to enforce local laws, including traf-

fic stops, regardless of Tribal citizenship status. This means that although citizens of Tribal Nations can be pulled over by City of Tulsa police officers, their case will be sent to the MCN District Court for prosecution if the crime occurred on the Mvskoke Reservation.

According to the settlement, Tribal citizens do not follow a different set of rules. It explicitly acknowledges that the MCN's boundaries were never disestablished, per the 2020 McGirt v. Oklahoma decision.

The settlement further acknowledges that the city will make a good faith effort to determine the Tribal citizenship status of all suspects they are seeking to exercise criminal jurisdiction over. Moving forward, all future charges and tickets issued to Tribal citizens in the City of Tulsa on the Mvskoke Reservation will also be referred to the MCN. The City of Tulsa will not seek to prosecute future crimes committed by Tribal citizens on the Mvskoke Reservation. State and federal cases are not included as part of the settlement agreement.

The suit was originally filed on October 28, 2023 in response to Hooper v. Tulsa and O'Brien v. Tulsa. Both lawsuits involved Tribal citizens who committed misdemeanor crimes on the Mvskoke Reservation but were prosecuted

in Tulsa County District Court. In a unanimous vote at the June 30 Regular Session meeting, the MCN National Council approved the terms of the settlement agreement with the adoption of Tribal Resolution 25-052.

Tribal Nation Leaders, Oklahoma State Leaders and City Leaders React

MCN Principal Chief David Hill applauded the settlement agreement and remarked that he is proud of the partnership the tribe has built with the city over the past year. Chief Hill's statement reads:

As we get closer to next month's five-year anniversary of the Supreme Court's monumental McGirt decision, I am reminded and find myself very proud of the significant strides the Nation has made to increase its law enforcement and judicial capabilities to meet the demands necessary for responsible governance of our Reservation. These efforts by the Nation to provide robust public safety priorities in our communities are enhanced when we are able to work closely in cooperation with state and local agency partners. Today, a clear

example of this partnership has been realized by the settlement reached between the Nation and the City of Tulsa regarding the exercise of criminal jurisdiction within city limits on the Reservation. I applaud and appreciate the vision of Mayor Nichols in advocating a policy for reaching solutions with Tribes--rather than litigating--on these issues of mutual importance for citizens and visitors in Tulsa, both Indian and non-Indian alike. While the Nation and Tulsa have reached a settlement today, I know that the real work for implementing the terms of this collaboration is just beginning. However, I look forward to working with Mayor Nichols and his team as we show the rest of the state what responsible and respectful co-governance on the Reservation can look like.

City of Tulsa Mayor Monroe Nichols also praised the settlement agreement and the partnership formed with the MCN. His statement reads:

First, I want to thank Principal Chief David Hill and the

SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

Continued on Page 2



OKLAHOMA SUPREME COURT ISSUES STROBLE TAX DECISION

STROBLE DENIED STATE INCOME TAX EXEMPTION

BY **JERRAD MOORE**
ASSIGNMENT EDITOR

OKLAHOMA CITY – The Oklahoma Supreme Court has issued its decision in the Stroble Tax case. As previously reported, the Oklahoma Supreme Court heard oral arguments in Stroble v. Oklahoma Tax Commission in January, 2024.

The court ruled in a 7-3 decision that Stroble is not entitled to a state income tax exemption. According to the ruling:

The issue presented is whether the State has jurisdiction to impose income taxes on a tribal member who resides and works for the tribe within the boundaries of the tribe's reservation as recognized in McGirt. McGirt declared the reservation status of the land at issue. See id. at 913, 937. The United States Supreme Court determined that because the land was reservation land, it constituted "Indian country"

for purposes of the Major Crimes Act, 18 U.S.C. §§ 1151, 1153. Therefore, the State was without jurisdiction to prosecute certain crimes committed by an Indian on the reservation. Stroble is asking this Court to extend McGirt to civil and regulatory law-to find the State is without jurisdiction to tax the income of a tribal member living and working on the tribe's reservation. This we cannot do.

Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt issued a statement on the decision:

This is a big win for the future of Oklahoma. From day one, I've fought to make sure every Oklahoman is treated equally.

Tribal governments, liberal groups, and some elected officials have pushed for special tax exemptions

STROBLE TAX DECISION

Continued on Page 2

FIVE INDUCTED AS LIVING LEGENDS FOR THEIR SERVICE AND COMMITMENT

TWO HONORED WITH CHIEF'S CHOICE AWARDS



Living Legends and Chief's Choice Awards recipients at the June 26 ceremony at River Spirit Casino. (Photo Courtesy: MCN Communications)

BY **THOMAS JACKSON**
REPORTER

TULSA – The Living Legends Ceremony took place on Thursday, June 26 at River Spirit Casino to honor citizens of the Mvskoke Nation who have made an extraordinary impact on the lives of others in their community.

This year's Living Legends inductees are Mvskoke Language teacher Gracine Hicks, former MCN Representative James Jennings, artist and author Mike Pahsetopah, language translator Steve Randall, and Traditional Cultural Advisor Robin "Chubs" Soweka. Poet Joy Harjo and Raymond Lee Washburn were honored with the Chief's Choice honor.

The event was attended by tribal leadership, such as Principal Chief David Hill, Second Chief Del Beaver, National Council Speaker Randall Hicks, and Former Principal Chief A.D. Ellis. Previous Living Legends inductees, such as Henry Monroe Beaver and Mona Lowe, were also in attendance.

Hicks has been a Mvhayv with the Muscogee Language Depart-

ment for 18 years and has taught more than a thousand students across numerous schools the Mvskoke language. Hicks shared the importance of living and speaking the Mvskoke.

"This language is important. When we talk the language and share the language you're sharing the language that your ancestors brought all the way over here from the Trail of Tears. They wanted us to hold this up."

Jennings, who has served as a National Council member and is a member of the College of Muscogee Nation's Board of Regents, took time to thank members of the tribe who currently or previously served in the military.

Pahsetopah, a public speaker, musician, and Fancy Dancer, gave a performance on his flute. He also took time to dedicate his induction to the audience and to the Nation.

"I've got trophies and awards at home, but this one means the most to me, because it represents all of you," Pahsetopah said. "This journey is not over yet just because I received this. I'm going to keep going, because that's the way I was

taught."

Randall has become known for his work in translating and printing the Bible into the Mvskoke language, as well as preserving and sharing Mvskoke hymns through the Mvskoke Hymnal.

"Several years ago, my name was put in for this honor, but I withdrew, because my church elders had told me 'Whatever you do for the Lord, don't broadcast it, don't put no light on yourself, stay humble. ... But this time, when I was asked, I felt pretty good...' Randall said in his speech.

Soweka has served as medicine maker at Hickory Ground and has worked to clean, fence, and protect more than a hundred Mvskoke cemeteries across the Mvskoke Reservation. Newly retired after 18 years with the MCN, he stressed how the language was the most important part of Muscogee culture, and that we must not lose it.

World-renowned Mvskoke poet, performer, and writer Harjo was honored with the Chief's Choice Award. In her remarks, Harjo

LIVING LEGENDS

Continued on Page 2



SIXTH ANNUAL HONOR WALK BRINGS AWARENESS TO HICKORY GROUND

MCN OBSERVES NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER TO PROTECT NATIVE AMERICAN SACRED PLACES

by SHAYLN PROCTOR
REPORTER

OKMULGEE - The Muscogee (Creek) Nation held its sixth Annual Honor Walk to Protect Sacred Places at the Omniplex Pavillion on Friday, June 20 with over 200 people joining the walk. The Summer Solstice event was organized to bring awareness for the protection of sacred sites and land in observance of the National Day of Prayer to Protect Native American Sacred Places. The walk was sponsored by MCN Department of Culture and Humanities, MCN Historic and Cultural Preservation Department, and Oce Vpofv Etlwlv (Hickory Ground).

This speakers this year were chosen by Mekko George Thompson and Hickory Ground, and included MCN Chief David Hill, MCN Representative Galen Cloud, MCN Speaker Randall Hicks, Mekko George Thompson, Ceremonial Ground Chiefs, and Head Attorney for Hickory Ground Mary Kathryn Nagle among others.

MCN Secretary of Cultural

and Humanities RaeLynn Butler (Mvskoke) explained the day is a time of remembrance, recognition and observance for MCN. “Every Summer Solstice there are tribes who are coming together sometimes at sunrise, and other observances throughout the day, to honor, to reflect, to highlight lands that are in peril or lands that are at risk, different lands that tribes are working to protect,” Butler said.

Six years ago when Butler was working for the MCN Historic and Culture Preservation Department, the staff wanted to participate in the national day and do their own observance to bring awareness and recognition of the history and desecration that has happened at Hickory Ground.

According to Butler, knowing the root-cause and damages that the Poarch Band of Creek Indians has done to the site motivated the department to work hard and continue to fight for sacred lands’ protection throughout the Mvskoke Homelands and also in the Reservation.

“We have our Historic and Cul-

ture Preservation Department, Tribal Historic Preservation Office has staff dedicated to responding to requests for new construction that could potentially harm sacred places or sites,” Butler said.

“We do that consultation with Federal Agencies, we do that consultation under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) and help to repatriate and rebury our ancestral remains and funerary objects of the belonging that they were buried with that are at different institutions, museums and universities located all throughout the United States.”

For Butler, the Honor Walk is a day of coming together and re-motivation. It’s also an educational opportunity for people to join the fight and an update for citizens. “This event is really used to honor Hickory Ground, highlight our ongoing fight and the Journey for Justice, but also reflect on all sacred land that needs protecting,” Butler said.

MCN has been supporting Hickory Ground for over two decades, and the struggle has ramped up in



Citizens walking at the sixth Annual Honor Walk on June 20. (Shayln Proctor/MM)

the past year, according to Butler. During last year’s Honor Walk, they were focused on and preparing for the September 2024 oral arguments at the Court of Appeals in Atlanta.

Two Hickory Ground members spoke about what the Poarch band had done and after the 2024 oral argument, here is their story, members of Oce Vpofv. Another story that Mvskoke Media had done for more information about the case filed a third amendment complaint.

The Journey for Justice and support for Hickory Ground also extended throughout the MCN Festival events, with a float in the Saturday, June 28 parade in hopes to connect more people to the Journey for Justice and to bring awareness to the issues.

Butler explained that it is import-

ant to hold those accountable, and one aspect of that is spreading awareness. “I think that the biggest way to show support is to learn more and to follow along, help share and spread the word about our journey,” Butler said.

“To share our truth about what happened. A lot of people don’t really know what Poarch did or they’ve done a lot to try to cover it up and so for us, we just want to tell the truth about what happened there and the injustice that it caused our people.”

A redesign to honor Chub

This year’s t-shirt design has Hickory Ground Mekko George

HONOR WALK

Continued on Page 3

SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

Continued from Page 1

Muscogee Nation for entrusting us with the work ahead and for the good faith efforts in creating a path forward that has not been accomplished in more than five years. The collaboration and communication between our governments has been tremendous, and I look forward to our next step in this process. As mayor, I pledged to make Tulsa the safest big city in the country and to co-govern with our tribal partners. Today, with this agreement, we are establishing systems to ensure that we move forward on both of those pledges with a solid framework. Our city can only benefit if we collaborate and approach our work together rather than individually. We are stronger together, and we can show the nation how municipalities and tribal governments can work together to create better outcomes for all our residents.

Nichols was elected to office in December 2024 while the city was in litigation with the Nation. During his campaign, one of Nich-

ols’ main goals has been collaboration with Tribal partners.

Tulsa District Attorney Steve Kunzweiler believes the settlement undermines the city’s authority to prosecute anyone who commits a crime in Tulsa County. His statement reads:

Why would the Tulsa mayor’s office choose to undermine a right it fought so hard to establish for the citizens of Tulsa following the O’Brien decision? The idea that the City of Tulsa would abdicate its public safety charter and not allow the State to prosecute dangerous criminals solely based on their identity as an Indian is ludicrous. The State’s efforts to protect all citizens of Tulsa in no way infringes upon a tribe’s ability to do the same – whether they choose to do so or not. Kneecapping the Tulsa Police Department – one of the best in the country – from performing its public safety function puts all Tulsans in danger. Additionally, the City of Tulsa would stand out like a sore thumb in Tulsa County as every other law enforcement agency continues to refer dangerous criminals to prosecu-

tors. It is my hope that wisdom prevails within the City of Tulsa. Heaven help the City of Tulsa if this proposed settlement is implemented.

Kunzweiler is presently a named defendant in Muscogee (Creek) Nation v. Tulsa County, Oklahoma et. This litigation involves the Tulsa County Board of Commissioners, Tulsa County Sheriff Vic Regalado, and Kunzweiler regarding criminal jurisdiction on the Reservation and Tulsa County’s attempts to prosecute Native American defendants.

The settlement agreement drew sharp criticisms from Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt. In a statement released two days prior to public announcement of the settlement agreement, Stitt claimed it would create an unsafe environment where tribal citizens are given special treatment.

Tulsa is essentially making itself a sanctuary city for tribal members engaged in criminal activity. As elected leaders, it is our job to represent our constituents regardless of race, heritage, or political affiliation. This proposed move by Mayor Nichols sets a concerning precedent and will make it impossible for elected officials

and Oklahoma law enforcement to protect their communities. I will take every action to reverse course and ensure the rule of law is the same for everyone.

Stitt’s criticisms of the settlement agreement were shared by Oklahoma Public Safety Secretary Tricia Everist, Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation Director Greg Mashburn and Bureau of Narcotics Director Donnie Anderson.

Cherokee Nation Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr. expressed support for the settlement agreement, as well as his criticism of Stitt’s comments. Part of the City of Tulsa is located on the Cherokee Nation Reservation. The settlement agreement will affect Cherokee Nation’s ability to prosecute tribal citizens that commit crimes within Tulsa city limits within their jurisdiction. Chief Hoskin’s statement reads:

I applaud the City of Tulsa and Muscogee Nation for reaching a resolution that protects tribal sovereignty and enhances public safety for all. Mayor Monroe Nichols and Chief David Hill have demonstrated thoughtful leadership in reaching this agreement. Far on the other end of the spectrum is

Governor Kevin Stitt, whose ignorance of the fundamentals of tribal sovereignty and cooperative governance within tribal reservations is astounding. Governor Stitt remains hopelessly on the wrong side of history while the rest of us chart a course for co-governing alongside tribes in the 21st century.

Over the next month, a working group will be created which will streamline processes like public safety procedures for municipal cases. The working group will include officials from the City of Tulsa and the MCN. It will produce public reports on booking procedures, detention facilities, mental health services, lab testing, extradition, and lab testing. Although it does not specifically mention the Cherokee or Osage Nations by name, both have jurisdictions in parts of Tulsa. According to the City of Tulsa’s press release, Mayor Nichols intends to work with other tribal partners to create a similar framework in turning over tickets and charges for tribal citizens that commit crimes within city limits.

Mvskoke Media will have ongoing coverage of this developing story.

STROBLE TAX DECISION

Continued from Page 1

that would create a two-tiered system — one set of rules for tribal citizens and another for everyone else. That’s wrong. It would divide our state and weaken the public services every family relies on.

This ruling makes it clear that attempts to expand McGirt into civil and tax matters have no basis in the law. We are one Oklahoma. And as long as I’m Governor, we aren’t going backwards.

Muscogee Creek Nation Principal Chief David Hill also issued a statement:

The Muscogee Nation is disappointed in the Oklahoma Supreme Court’s ruling today in Stroble v. Oklahoma Tax Commission departing from well-settled law originally recognized by the United States Supreme Court over 50 years ago and that is inconsistent with the State’s own administrative tax rules. Ever since the McGirt ruling, we have seen Oklahoma state courts go through legal gymnastics to come up with results that are not in compliance with federal law and that

do not even follow pre-McGirt state court precedent on the limits of state authority in Indian country. The Stroble ruling is another sad example of those antics. We know that this ruling could have broad implications for Indian Country, so we are carefully reviewing the decision with our legal team and preparing for the next steps. While it is important to remember that the Muscogee Nation cannot provide legal advice on individual tax cases to citizens, the Nation will remain diligent in coordination and communication of what our response will be.

LIVING LEGENDS

Continued from Page 1

expressed the love she was brought up in. “I’m not up here alone. I have so much help. I appreciate this honor and being a part of the story of our people,” she said.

“Our people - that’s why I do what I do, because of the love that was planted in me by my father and his people, my mother, and my relatives, and all of those that I meet. It’s a love that all of us carry, and all have a responsibility to share it.”

The second Chief’s Choice Award was its first ever posthumous award and was presented to the family of Raymond Lee Washburn, who passed away in 2022.

Washburn, who lost his sight as a child, was a large part of the blind community, previously serving as a president of Randolph-Sheppard Vendors of America, the Oklahoma Council of the Blind, and the Oklahoma League of the Blind Credit Union.

Washburn became known for his heroism while working in the snack bar he owned on the 4th floor of the Murrah Building when it was bombed on April 19, 1995. He would lead four customers and one employee to safety, and his story would become known in the animated short film “Walk In The Light”, which was released on June 18, 2025.



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Fest' Meet and Greet at the Mvskoke Dome (Frances Herrod/MM)



Principal Chief David Hill and his wife Monica (Frances Herrod/MM)

CHIEF AND SECOND CHIEF COOL DOWN WITH COMMUNITY AT THE MVSKOKE DOME

PRINCIPAL CHIEF DAVID HILL AND SECOND CHIEF DEL BEAVER CELEBRATE THE PEOPLE WHILE LOOKING TOWARDS A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR THE MUSCOGEE NATION FESTIVAL

BY **FRANCES HERROD**
REPORTER

OKMULGEE – The Mvskoke Dome was the coolest place to be on Saturday, June 28, as Principal Chief David Hill and Second Chief Del Beaver held a meet and greet for Muscogee Nation Festival goers.

As the DJ spun funk, disco, and a bit of classic rock, Chief Hill and Second Chief Beaver made the rounds, welcoming everyone with a meal of pork steak with all the fixins and a stage full of giveaways.

When asked his favorite part of the festival, Chief Hill replied that it's the citizens.

"Actually, just walking around meeting everyone. Just like the Meet and Greet here. I met people from North Carolina, South Carolina, Oregon, Washington. And

some of them it's their first time coming, and that's what amazes me. They just want to talk and they enjoy it," Chief Hill said.

Chief Beaver echoed the sentiment of fellowship. "I get to see people that I haven't seen in a long time. That's the main thing. I just saw one of my friends that I see once a year, and it's usually at this Festival. So, to me, that's what I like most about it," Chief Beaver said.

"That's what makes it special is just the people. It's not about the events. It's about the people you know, it's about us. As long as we're here, eating right, having fun. That's what it's about, and everything else is just icing on the cake, you know?"

Chief Hill mentioned the various Native Nations and citizens that came out to celebrate with MCN.

"It takes all (the tribes) to work together. We're only stronger if we work together. That's what I'm looking forward to. It's been great."

Even as they enjoyed the moment Chief and Second Chief looked to the future.

"I just can't wait till next year," said Chief Hill. "Next year will be our 50th anniversary, so I'm looking forward to working on ways to make it bigger, you know?"

It's a feeling Second Chief shares.

"I'm really looking forward to next year, to the 50th anniversary. You know, we're gonna do it right next year. Like I said, as long as we're still together, as long as we're safe, as long as we have some food on the table. We're doing good. We're doing a lot better than most."

ELDER GATHERING: A DAY OF FELLOWSHIP AND CONNECTION

ELDERS ENJOYED GAMES, CONTESTS, AND COMMUNITY

BY **SHAYLN PROCTOR**
REPORTER

OKMULGEE – The 2025 Elder Gathering focused on fellowship and community while still giving attendees plenty of activities, games, and contests. The Friday, June 20 gathering offered golf pong, ring toss, basketball free throw, and woodwork and sofke contests in the Mvskoke Dome. Attendees were able to enjoy a meal together and

visit.

For MCN citizens Brant Beaver (55) and Jean Froman (81) this year was their first to join in the gathering and both came to Okmulgee from Tulsa for the event.

"I heard about how much fun it was and that's why I wanted to come see for myself, just to see how much fun it was and the activities that were taking place. I think that it's a huge event that our elders are recognized," Froman said.

While neither participated in activities, they were able to mingle and meet friends old and new. Beaver shared that he was able to see a lot of friends that he hadn't seen in awhile.

Froman is proud that MCN offers this event for the elders. "I think that it's wonderful for the fellowship of our elderly citizens and to see them having so much and enjoying each other and the activities that they can participate in. I think it's great!" Froman said.



A group photo of citizens that came to watch or play at the 2025 Elder Gathering on June 20. (Shayln Proctor/MM)

ACES, AIRMAILS, AND BLOCKERS!

2025 CORNHOLE TOURNAMENT AT THE DOME

BY **SHAYLN PROCTOR**
REPORTER

OKMULGEE – The 2025 Muscogee Nation Festival held a cornhole tournament on Sunday, June 22 at the Mvskoke Dome. This year the doubles tournament consisted of four divisions: elite/advanced, competitive, intermediate, and backyard. Prize money was guaranteed for placing teams, with prizes ranging from \$1,200 for the elite/competitive first place winners to \$60 for the backyard third place winners.

Hillary Martin (Mvskoke) had been playing cornhole between 5-6 years and competitively has been playing for about 4 years.

For this year's MCN cornhole tournament, Martin and her teammate Kelly Fields (Mvskoke) played with the team name Spiral Squad in the competitive division. Martin started playing in her back-



A citizen was about to throw at the MCN cornhole tournament on June 22 during the MCN festival. (Shayln Proctor/MM)

yard, then later she began playing in the leagues in Henryetta, which led her to tournament play. Martin shared that she had met a lot of people playing and competing.

"We love it, we love the environment, the competition and everybody that comes out, it's really fun," Martin said.

FEST' BRINGS TRADITIONAL GAMES TO CMN

GAMES RETURN THIS YEAR TO THE COLLEGE WITH MORE ACTIVITIES



Young citizens smiling and hanging out during the traditional games. (Shayln Proctor/MM)

BY **SHAYLN PROCTOR**
REPORTER

OKMULGEE – The 2025 Muscogee Nation Festival Traditional Games were held for the second year at the College of the Muscogee Nation on Saturday, June 21. This year offered turtle racing, bow shooting, sofke making, and more on the college complex. Prizes, including People's Choice Awards, were awarded to contestants and participants.

The Traditional Games and Event Coordinator Maleah Dowling (Mvskoke) spoke to Mvskoke Media about this year's activities and hosting the games.

"Last year we had some kinks to work out, but this year we had more collaborative efforts with the different departments on what we can bring to the festival as far as traditional games and events," Dowling said.

Since everybody enjoyed turtle racing, Dowling was sure to bring it back this year- she also thought it was super cute. MCN Cultural Preservation was also there to help with one of the newer activities to be held at CMN, the bow shoot.

With all the different activities, Dowling hopes this event can grow every year. "We've added more activities and contests to it,



A citizen participating in the bow shooting on June 21 during MCN festival. (Shayln Proctor/MM)

we can add more things next year and switch them out to see how it goes," Dowling said. "I hope that we could just build and grow from this, and have more people involved in the community."

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HONOR WALK
Continued from Page 2

Thompson and Hickory Ground member Robin "Chub" Soweka on the front of the shirt and on the back it has Chitto Harjo.

"We've used Chitto Harjo on shirts in previous years, because he's from Hickory Ground and because of the type of leader that he was, who stood his ground. He fought for tradition and culture in the way of Mvskoke people and that's very similar to the spirit of what we're doing to continue to fight for sacred lands, to help bring justice to what happened at Hickory Ground," Butler said.

With the retirement of Soweka, the 2025 Living Legend and now former Cultural Advisor for the department, they also wanted to honor the man who had always designed the annual Honor Walk t-shirt.

Along the Coosa River on the way to the oral arguments in Atlanta, an AP journalist captured an image of Soweka with his stick-ball sticks and Mekko Thompson by his side. The department loved the photo and wanted to incorporate it into the design while following previous themes of other Journey for Justice shirts.

"We also felt that the design helped explain or highlight that Hickory Ground is more than just a piece of land or ceremonial ground. It's about living people, and that is an important connection to bring forth," Butler said.

"We've learned in the last several months that non-natives or people who are just now learning about what happened at Hickory Ground, they don't really understand what a tribal town is or what that means to be born into it. To be born into a

clan and how that's a critical part of your identity as a Mvskoke person, and how Hickory Ground Tribal Town is still carrying on the traditional governance and religion of our people and how the people from Hickory Ground are tied to that," Butler said.

"So a lot of those elements get overlooked when people think 'Oh, it's just a piece of land that you've got left, after removal' it's more than that, so really trying to bring the human element into the focus on the T-shirts"

Butler encourages anyone interested in the issue to visit Justiceforhickoryground.com. The site contains documents and timelines of what has happened over the years. Updates and information can also be found on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram under Justice for Hickory Ground.



YOUTH 5-ON-5 BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT LIGHTS UP THE COURT AT FESTIVAL

PARENTS DISCUSS WHAT THE TOURNAMENT MEANS TO THEIR FAMILIES AND SHARE FOND MEMORIES OF TOURNAMENTS PAST



Youth basketball players start off their game with tip off. (Braden Harper/MM)

By **BRADEN HARPER**
MANAGING EDITOR

OKMULGEE – Sneakers squeaked and basketballs pounded the court at the Mvskoke Dome during the Youth 5-on-5 Basketball Tournament in Okmulgee on Friday, June 20 through Saturday, June 21. The tournament saw teams compete in the 5th/6th Boys Division, the 5th/6th Girls Division, the 7th/8th Boys Division, and the 7th/8th Girls Division.

Ronnie Duncan is the coach for team One Tribe. He also had two grandchildren play in the tournament, Zylin and Talin. Coaching basketball has been Duncan’s job for the past 25 years and basketball has been his passion his whole life.

When basketball season during the school year ends, that is when Duncan begins to assem-

ble his MCN Festival tournament team. Training typically lasts a month.

Although these tournaments appear low stakes on the surface, Duncan knows they can have personal high stakes because they are a constructive activity for his athletes.

“These tournaments, it’s a good way to keep these kids out of trouble,” Duncan said. “Some of them might go to the NBA, or college, which I hope they do. Some of them might not get that far. But when they’re little kids up to high school my plan is to keep them out of trouble.”

Marcina Harjo (Mvskoke) enjoys coming out to the Youth 5-on-5 Basketball Tournament. Although she did not have any kids in the tournament herself, she had friends whose kids competed.

Her family’s basketball game days are behind them, but Harjo still enjoys watching kids play in the tournament.

“I’m cheering for everybody,” Harjo said. “Basketball was mainly our thing, my husband coached my daughter and our older boys growing up.”

Harjo’s kids also grew up playing volleyball and softball, both sports they still enjoy playing periodically. When asked about this year’s softball tournament location change, Harjo said she misses the old location.

“I wish it was here. I feel like there are not a lot of (softball) teams this year as there would usually be if it was here (at the Claude Cox Omnplex),” Harjo said. “I wish it were done so it would be here.”

Tierra Dobson came out to watch her son, Benton play in the tournament on the Hustle Tribe team. Dobson’s older sons played in the tournament in past years.

“They grew up with it, they’ve had many, many games here,” Dobson said. “They’re super competitive and they’re very athletic.”

This weekend’s tournament also happened to coincide with another major basketball game, Game 7 of the NBA finals where the Oklahoma City Thunder defeated the Indiana Pacers 103-91 in a historic professional league title win, the first for the state.

For Duncan, basketball is more than just a game. It’s a way to pass down what he has learned and provides life lessons along the way.

“I’m trying to teach these boys how to play,” Duncan said. “I try to teach them stuff about life. Life ain’t fair. You’re going to get calls, you’re going to not get calls. I tell them keep hustling, keep playing.”



Players from OK Hype high-five each other during the women’s slow pitch tournament on June 21 (Thomas Jackson/MM)

SLOW PITCH TOURNAMENTS BRING FIERCE COMPETITION TO PRESTON

THE CHANGE OF LOCATIONS DID LITTLE TO LESSEN THE COMPETITIVENESS OF THE TEAMS THIS YEAR

By **THOMAS JACKSON & FRANCES HERROD**
REPORTERS

OKMULGEE – The 2025 Muscogee Festival Slow Pitch Softball Tournaments kicked off on Saturday, June 21. The events ran through Sunday and were held at the Jim Waller Sports Complex in Preston this year.

Due to unfinished construction at the softball fields at the Claude Cox Omnplex in Okmulgee, the tournaments were moved to the Preston venue. However, the change in location did nothing to slow down the fierce competition between the various teams.

In total, seven teams competed in the men’s slow pitch tournament, eight teams competed in the women’s tourna-

ment, and eighteen teams competed in the Coed tournament.

Organizer David Pascale, Program Development Supervisor at MCN Recreation, enjoyed the competition and was excited with the turnout this year. “Yeah, it’s a good turnout. They’re knocking a lot of home runs and there’s been some pretty competitive games in that aspect. ... Everyone’s really positive about the move out here just for this year,” says Pascale.

With next year’s festival a celebration of the 50th annual gathering, Pascale hopes the new fields and anniversary will draw record crowds. “Next year, it’ll be bigger, our fields will be ready to go for next year, and so the 50th anniversary will probably bring in record crowds. It’ll be huge.”

MVSKOKE FOODWAYS OFFERED TASTE OF TRADITION

INAUGURAL CONTEST HIGHLIGHTS INDIGENOUS ART AND FOOD



Seth Harjo, Sutv Harjo, and Carol Tiger after receiving awards. (Photo Courtesy: Seth Harjo)

By **SHAYLN PROCTOR**
REPORTER

OKMULGEE – This year’s new event for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Festival was the Mvskoke Foodways Contest. It took place at the College of the Muscogee Nation STEM building on Friday, June 27 and Saturday, June 28. The showcase and awards reception was on June 27 and the exhibition of entrees and winners was held on June 28. The inaugural event saw over 50 submissions that were entered in nine different categories.

On Friday, the People’s Choice Award food tasting gave citizens a chance to vote for their favorite dish overall, and the reception also included a charcuterie table made by Austin Forrest and desserts by Laura Mason. After the tasting and judging, an award ceremony for all of the categories took place. CMN Extension Coordinator

Chris Azbell (Mvskoke) shared his experience coordinating this inaugural event. “We had an unbelievable time and hopefully this event will continue to grow in the years to come,” he said.

Gina Powell (Mvskoke), an attendee who decided to come and enjoy the food categories that were entered. “I came to this event because I wanted to try the new foods. To me they were new, but they were traditional,” Powell said.

She enjoyed the taklik-kvmokse (sour cornbread) which she said she had eaten since she was a kid, however she was hesitant to try it out this year’s contest but ended up liking it. She also tried out the pvrko afke (grape dumplings).

Powell mentioned it was good to get out from the heat and to stay cool inside while enjoying the foods that were entered. “It’s really good, I’m glad they had it. Just to be able to get out of the heat for

a little bit. I felt it was really awesome and also to just come try out all the food, it was really good, I got full,” Powell said.

Seth Harjo (Mvskoke) was a participant who entered in an art competition and placed third. His grandmother Carol Tiger and sister Sutv Harjo also entered and placed this year as well.

His entry was titled “Grandma Sour Cornbread Spoon,” and merges his grandmother’s wooden spoon with his own beadwork. The piece took him ten hours to complete. Harjo shared that he could have finished sooner but wasn’t satisfied, so he started over a few times. “I put in some native style beadwork. Going with a three drop peyote stitch, I chose the spoon because my grandmother is well known for cooking and I’m trying to get known for beading. But it puts a twist of both our work on display,” Harjo said.

Harjo spoke about his family competing this year and said that his family lives for competition. This was his first time putting his art out there and it was a thrill for Harjo to compete in the Mvskoke Foodways Contest.

“It was great seeing the culture through different perspectives. How one dish/art is made in its own way but coming out similar,” Harjo said. “It would be nice to have and see the best our Nation

has to have, to have them come out, get the word out for next year and years to come. I want to see the best art, I want to see and taste the best food. Who wouldn’t come out, come compete, and get the blood flowing.”

Harjo is self taught and has been beading for about a year and half.

“I started beading because as a Marine Veteran I was always told when in leadership position ‘What’s more dangerous than our Marines?’ and the answer was ‘Always a bored Marine,’” Harjo laughed. “So now I’m never bored. There’s always work to do and it kinda keeps me going.”



Seth Harjo’s prize winning piece. (Photo Courtesy: Seth Harjo)



Rowdy Poole and one of his humans, Lanaya, placed in the Fest’ 5K (Photo Courtesy: Vicki George)

FESTIVAL RESULTS

Elder Games

- Basketball free throw
- Women’s 70 & up
- 1st place: Pat Factor
- 2nd place: Sonya Davis
- 3rd place: Mary Walters

Basketball free throw Women’s 59:69

- 1st place: Mary Narcomey
- 2nd place: Addie Hicks
- 3rd place: Janice Birdcreek

Basketball free throw Men’s 70 & up

- 1st place: William Fixico
- 2nd place: Mitchell Barnett
- 3rd place: Billy Harley

Basketball free throw Men’s 59:69

- 1st place: Floyd Bales
- 2nd place: James Bender
- 3rd place: Gary Warrior

FESTIVAL RESULTS

Continued on Page 6

SOFTBALL REUNION IS A HOME RUN

ELDERS AND THEIR FAMILIES MET AT MCN SAFE SPACE TO SHARE FOOD AND MEMORIES

By **FRANCES HERROD**
REPORTER

OKMULGEE – As the heat continued to bear down on visitors at the 2025 Muscogee Nation Festival, the Legends Softball Reunion offered a moment to reminisce and relax. The event held at the MCN Safe Space on Saturday, June 28 honored players both past and present.

The celebration included remarks by current and former MCN leadership including Principal Chief David Hill, Second Chief Del Beaver, and former MCN Representative and Living Legend inductee James Jennings. Former Principal Chief Tiger acted as emcee.

The event was also attended by families of players. This included former Chief Tiger’s family including his wife Frances Tiger

(Mvskoke), and their daughter and granddaughter.

For Frances Tiger, softball is a family affair. She played for Bristow Kwickset, named for a local company that made door locks, around 1980. Her daughter Kendra Root-Samples played for the Okmulgee Phillies, and her granddaughter Kenslie Samples currently plays for the Native Athletics out of Claremore.

“As a first time catcher, at first I was shocked at how fast and hard the pitchers could throw the ball. My hand was red and really hurt, next game I was more prepared and put more stuffing in my glove. It was always a great time to play softball with my team,” Tiger said.



Mvskoke elders and their families gathered for fun, food, and relaxation to wrap up the MCN Festival on June 28. (Thomas Jackson/MM)

Squeegee played second base and was also a utility player for the Country Warriors team, he shared, “I’m from Seminole. We played a lot of tournaments in

Mekusukey every weekend.”

“This reunion is pretty good, ‘cause you see old friends and stuff like that. It’s a good thing to bring people back.”



A participant takes a brief moment to practice before his matches in the tennis tournament on June 21. (Thomas Jackson/MM)

TENNIS TOURNAMENT SERVES UP COMPETITION

THE EVENT WAS WELL-ATTENDED DESPITE THE MORNING HEAT

BY THOMAS JACKSON
REPORTER

OKMULGEE – The 2025 Muscogee Festival Tennis Tournament was held on Saturday, June 21. Despite the heat, people came to Hawthorn Park in Okmulgee to watch and play tennis.

Principal Chief David Hill welcomed all of the competitors and spectators to start the matches and made a point to ask where each of the competitors were from.

“I’m so glad all of y’all showed up today. I was telling the folks here that next year is going to be our 50th anniversary, so I’m already looking forward to what we’re going to do to make it

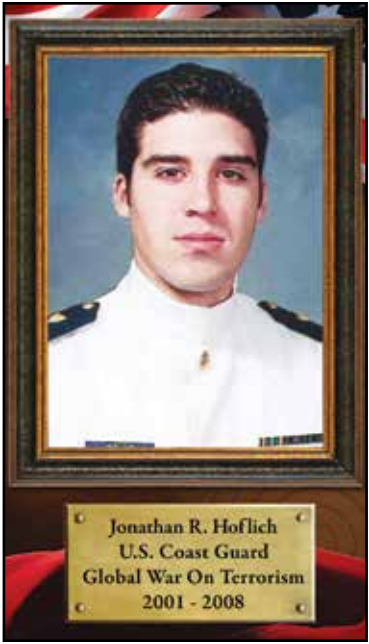
better for everyone,” Chief Hill said. Citizens of all ages competed in the tournament. Attendee Floyd Bales was pleased with the age range of those watching and participating in the tournament.

“I think it’s going very well. We have a decent number of people, and it’s a good turnout. We’ve got a lot of young people too, and that’s what we like to see, because they carry on the tradition,” Bales said.

Bales is also looking forward to next year, when the MCN will be sponsoring the North American Indian Tennis Association’s tournament.

“I hope a lot of Muscogee come out and play, and have a good time, and get plenty of exercise.”

VETERANS SPOTLIGHT



(Image Courtesy: VASO)

JONATHAN R. HOFLICH

The Muscogee Nation Veterans Services Office is proud to honor Tribal veteran Jonathan R. Hoflich for his dedicated service to the U.S. Coast Guard, the United States, and the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. Jonathan honorably served for over seven years from 2001 to 2008 and is a

recipient of the Meritorious Service Medal, Coast Guard Commendation Medal w/Gold Star, D.O.T. 9-11 Medal, Coast Guard Achievement Medal, Commandants Letter of Commendation Ribbon, Coast Guard Presidential Unit Citation with Hurricane Device, Coast Guard Unit Commendation Ribbon w/ Gold Star, Navy Unit Commendation Ribbon, Coast Guard Meritorious Unit Commendation w/3 Gold Stars, National Defense Service Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Coast Guard Special Operations Service Ribbon, Coast Guard Sea Service Ribbon w/1 Bronze Star, Coast Guard Expert Rifle Ribbon, Coast Guard Expert Pistol Shot Ribbon. Mvto Mr. Hoflich for your selfless service to your country and your community.

MVTO FOR YOUR
SELFLESS SERVICE!

FESTIVAL RESULTS

Continued from Page 5

Golf Pong Men’s Team

- 1st place: Richard Isham and Richard Beaver
2nd place: Robert Wildcat and Justin Barnett
3rd place: Billy Hill and Charlie Proctor

Golf Pong Women’s Team

- 1st place: Kim Stout and Lahoma Schultz
2nd place: Jeanie Carpenter and Susanne Sanders
3rd place: Janice Birdcreek and Thomasene Osburn

Dominoes Coed Team

- 1st place: David Harley and Saudra Harley
2nd place: JR Barnes and Penny Barjo
3rd place: Rosalee Fields and Sydney Duensing

Ring Toss Women’s 70 & up

- 1st place: Carol Hicks
2nd place: Sonya Davis
3rd place: Matilda King

Ring Toss Women’s 55:69

- 1st place: Judith Pickering
2nd place: Jeanie Carpenter
3rd place: Karen Layne

Ring Toss Men’s 70 & up

- 1st place: Turner Bear
2nd place: Robert Wildcat
3rd place: Robert Hicks

Ring Toss Men’s 55:69

- 1st place: Justin Barnett
2nd place: Joe Phillips
3rd place: Billy Harley

Apron Contest

- 1st place: Vickie Tiger
2nd place: Doris Thygesen
3rd place: Jean Marshall Shige

Artwork Contest

- 1st place: Leon Harley
2nd place: Richard Beaver
3rd place: Lahoma Schultz

Beaded Regalia Contest

- 1st place: Una Brown
2nd place: Barbara West
3rd place: Lahoma Schultz

Frybread Contest

- 1st place: Evelyn Dowling
2nd place: Pearl Thomas
3rd place: Judith Pickering

Sofke Contest

- 1st place: Louisa Crowfoot
2nd place: Pearl Thomas
3rd place: Anita Freeman

Quilt Contest

- 1st place: Sharon Butler
2nd place: Sonya Davis
3rd place: Sandy Denney

Wood Work Contest

- 1st place: Timothy Harley Jr.
2nd place: Richard Beaver

Results obtained from MCN Adult Protection Specialist April Harley

Cornhole

Elite/Advanced

- 1st place: Kaiden Cochran and Braxton Francis
2nd place: Fud Foreman and Jacob Forman
3rd place: Aaron Squirrell and Kaylee Ballou
4th place: Gage Foreman and TY Drywater

Competitive

- 1st place: Spencer Thao and Preston Thao
2nd place: Wesley Vue and Patrick Vue
3rd place: Ricky Jones and Buzzy S.
4th place: Lonnie C. and Guy Abbott

Intermediate

- 1st place: Gene Burkholder and CJ Doss
2nd place: Joe Pinkston Sr. and Kaylee Mckiddy
3rd place: Levi Foster and Brayden Black
4th place: Jake Walker and Devan Bruner

Backyard

- 1st place: April Fields and Clint Hicks

FESTIVAL RESULTS

Continued on Page 7

IN MEMORIAM



(Photo Courtesy: Schaudt’s Funeral Service)

ESTHER GRONA

Esther, a vibrant spirit, passed away peacefully in her beloved home of Okmulgee at the remarkable age of 92. Proudly Mvskoke, Cherokee, and Catawba, she

embraced her heritage with passion. Her educational journey led her to the Seneca, Chilocco, and Sequoyah Indian Boarding Schools. She continued with computer technology and grant writing at Green Country Technology Center.

A devoted genealogist, Esther was fascinated by her family’s history, meticulously keeping records of the Dawes Roll and allotments. One of her most cherished experiences was her adventure to Horseshoe Bend. She said, you can “find out who you really are.”

A fierce advocate, Esther taught the misconception of the Oklahoma Land Run, proclaiming, “It was not free land; it is Indian Land,

for which many lives have died for.” She was relentless in her pursuit of answers from the BIA. She wrote many letters to question the injustices of land theft.

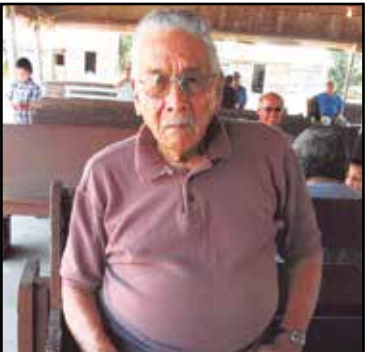
Esther had a natural talent for beading and moccasin-making. With dexterous hands, she could bring any design to life, adorning her moccasins with stunning beadwork. Throughout her life, Esther made significant contributions to the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and the Okmulgee Indian Community Center. Esther left a legacy of strength, pride, and creativity that will be cherished by all who knew her.

Esther is preceded in death by

her husband, Herman Grona; her brother, Robert Harley; her father, Yarkin Harley; her mother, Mary Lee Gorden; and her paternal grandparents, Sampson Harley and Jennie McGilbra. She is also preceded by her maternal grandparents, William Gorden and Willie Davis.

Honorary Pallbearers are Arthur Harley, Robert Harley, Timothy Harley Jr. and Leon Harley.

She is survived by her son Richard LeRoi Grona and dog Yang of Okmulgee, Jessica Harley of Okmulgee, April Harley of Okmulgee, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, a great host of cousins and friends.



(Photo Courtesy: Integrity Funeral Service)

EUGENE FRANKLIN HARJO

Eugene Franklin Harjo, 92, a resident of Henryetta passed peacefully at his home Tuesday June 17, 2025. Eugene was born November 6, 1932 in Seminole to Wisey (Morgan) Frank and Fousharjoché Harjo.

Eugene is preceded in death by his parents, sister Silby Walker, brothers Fred, Homer and John

Harjo, daughters Cassandra Harjo, Renita West, and son Victor.

Mr. Harjo leaves behind a legacy of serving others. At the age of 18, he joined the army, bravely serving his country for several years. He was baptized June 25,1955 in Sasakwa, Oklahoma. He began his ministry work March 3, 1979. Prior to his passing, he served as the Pastor of Hutchechuppa Indian Baptist Church.

Eugene is survived by his wife Mary Jane, of the home; two daughters Augustine Harjo of Shawnee, Oklahoma and Shannon Humphrey and husband Ryan of Holly Springs, Mississippi; three sons Darrell Harjo of Shawnee, Oklahoma; Carlos Harjo of Shawnee, Oklahoma; Benny Harjo of Arlington, Texas; and stepsister Nora Thompson of Henryetta, Oklahoma. He also leaves behind 8 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren as well as a host of family and friends.

Officiating: Rev. Charles West

and Rev. Jimmy Hicks

Those serving as Pallbearers: Benny Harjo, Carlos Harjo, Darrell Harjo, Rodney Harjo, Ryan Humphrey and Maddox Humphrey.

A devoted genealogist, Esther was fascinated by her family’s history, meticulously keeping records of the Dawes Roll and allotments. One of her most cherished experiences was her adventure to Horseshoe Bend. She said, you can “find out who you really are.”

A fierce advocate, Esther taught the misconception of the Oklahoma Land Run, proclaiming, “It was not free land; it is Indian Land, for which many lives have died for.” She was relentless in her pursuit of answers from the BIA. She wrote many letters to question the injustices of land theft.

Esther had a natural talent for beading and moccasin-making. With dexterous hands, she could bring any design to life, adorning her moccasins with stunning bead-

work. Throughout her life, Esther made significant contributions to the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and the Okmulgee Indian Community Center. Esther left a legacy of strength, pride, and creativity that will be cherished by all who knew her.

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She is survived by her son Richard LeRoi Grona and dog Yang of Okmulgee, Jessica Harley of Okmulgee, April Harley of Okmulgee, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, a great host of cousins and friends.



(Photo Courtesy: Smith Funeral Home)

CAROLYN EDITH WEST

Carolyn Edith (Wilson) West was born March 31, 1940 in Tahlequah, age 85. She was a 1958 Berryhill High School Graduate. She went to Heaven on May 29, 2025 surrounded by her family. She is preceded in death by her father, Alfred Wilson; mother, Mendie Ruth Wilson; and siblings Betty Wilson, William Wilson, James Wilson, Lewanna Tanner, Leona

Harcrow, Pansy Potts, Sue Anne Bible, Homer Wilson, Johnny Wilson, Kenneth Wilson, and a on-in-law, Michael Feathers.

She is survived by siblings Charles L. Wilson, Lawrence Alfred Wilson and wife Sandy, Jerry D. Wilson and wife Andrea, and her children, Austina (Tina) Feathers, Sand Springs; Sonya Rock, Morris; John D. West, Jr and Wife Susan, Broken Arrow; Rod West and Wife Melinda, Hot Springs, Ark. She is survived by 13 grandchildren and Great Grandchildren: Darren Rock, Madison Rock, Alexis Rock, Kael Rock, Cynthia Rock, Josalyn Rock, Niko Rock, Shane Rock, Rhylee Rock, Amy West, John D. West 3rd, Ashleigh West and husband, Randy George.

Carolyn was full of life, had a great sense of humor and wit, and was so kind, sweet, and generous. She loved attending church and

relying on her faith. She would always ASAP: Always Say A Prayer. She worked hard throughout her life and had many careers. She loved having lifetime friends from Berryhill and keeping up with Facebook posts. She loved Family gatherings. She would help organize, decorate, cook, and clean up. She loved to eat and, especially, the spring Wild Onion Dinners and NDN Tacos. She had many hobbies such as bowling, crocheting, playing Yahtzee, Killer Uno, Card games, and Bunko with the ‘The Old Bitties Bridge Club’ with Leona, Lewanna, Pansy, Betty, Linda, Dinah, Colleen, Teresa, Janet, Tonya and Tina. She would also visit family and friends at bingo and the casino. She would send out birthday wishes all year around, She was an OU Sooner fan, she even kept up with shorthand. She loved to travel and camp out. She was a Daughter,

Sister, Aunt and Mom. She will be missed by her dear friends and over 300+ Wilson’s, nieces, nephews and Great and Great Greats and many Bruner Cousins that she dearly loved.

Pall Bearers: Rod West, Coy Wilson, Darren Rock, John Doobie Wilson, Steve Walker, Clint Wilson, and Dan Wilson.

Honorary Pallbearers: Alfred Wilson, Jerry Wilson, Jason Walker, Charles Wilson, Billy Walker, Casey Reinhardt, Alan Harcrow, Mark Bible, Gee Tanner, Shane Rock, Otis Bible, Richard Tanner, Dillon Bible, and Josh Bible.

Flower Girls: Sandy Wilson, Andrea Wilson, Dinah Sue Tanner, Mindy Moheng, Yonna Creason, Susan Grodd, Janet Harcrow, Sarah Bagby, Rhonda Reinhardt, Kasey Wilson, Tonya Wagner, Kelley Walker and Tonia Killer.

COUNCIL AUTHORIZES
EXECUTION OF CITY
OF TULSA LAWSUIT
SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

HOUSING RECEIVES \$500K GRANT FOR MULTI-YEAR
HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

BY **BRADEN HARPER**
MANAGING EDITOR

OKMULGEE – The Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council held a regular session in person on June 21 at the Mound Building.

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

TR 25-035 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a master service agreement with Intertribal, LLC for the benefit of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Department of Education. Representative Thomasene Yahola Osborn sponsored the bill, which was adopted unanimously 15-0.

The agreement will allow the department of education to use Intertribal's software, services hardwares, and servers.

TR 25-037 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality Application for Oklahoma Targeted Brownfields Assessment. Representative Robyn Whitecloud sponsored the bill, which was adopted unanimously 15-0.

According to the bill, the Nation has recently acquired property considered to be a Brownfield. The ODEQ has the resources to conduct a Targeted Brownfields Assessment to determine the nature and extent of contaminants that may be present at, on or near the Brownfields. A Targeted Brownfields Assessment needs to be conducted to determine the scope of remedial actions needed before the property is used to serve citizens.

TR 25-038 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute the University of Georgia's NAGPRA Care and Trust Agreement for the maintenance of physical custody of certain ancestors, associated and unassociated funerary objects, sacred items, and/or other items of cultural patrimony. Representative Galen Cloud sponsored the bill, which was adopted unanimously 15-0.

The agreement will require the Nation to waive their sovereign rights.

TR 25-039 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a memorandum of understanding between the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, Alabama Quasarte Tribal Town, Kialegee Tribal Town, and Thlopthlocco Tribal Town for the method of allocation for the Nation's proportional share of funding for housing and urban development funds and the

FY-2026 Indian Housing Block Grant. Representative Mark Randolph sponsored the bill, which was adopted unanimously 15-0.

According to the bill, the Nation and Tribal Towns agree it is within their best interests for HUD to use enrollment for each party to receive their own proportional share of the Indian Housing Grant where the Tribal Towns receive funding based on double their enrollment. The Nation will receive the remaining portion.

TR 25-040 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Nation and the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management (DOE-FECM), Office of Resource Sustainability, for direct benefit of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. Rep. Whitecloud sponsored the bill, which was adopted unanimously 15-0.

The Nation is seeking to improve environmental health and safety within its jurisdiction by addressing the issue of orphan wells. The MOU outlines a collaborative framework for the Nation and DOE-FECM to identify the wells, share data, develop community awareness and support local capacity building.

TR 25-041 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a memorandum of agreement and to apply for federal funding through the Bureau of Indian Affairs Tribal Transportation Bridge Program to fund bridge constructions with Creek County for two (2) bridge replacement projects. Rep. Whitecloud sponsored the bill, which was adopted unanimously 15-0.

According to the bill, the Nation has identified two bridges in Creek County that are structurally deficient and a hazard to motorists. The two bridges listed are RT 1203-Bridge Number 01410 and RT 1292-Bridge Number 01406. The county will receive and tabulate all responsive bids for the project and will secure all necessary construction easements and utility relocations.

TR 25-042 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a lease agreement for grazing and cooperative land management between the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and the nature conservancy. Rep. Whitecloud sponsored the bill, which was unanimously adopted 15-0.

According to the bill, the Nation will lease 11,000 acres of the Pearl Jackson Crosstimbers Preserve for livestock and land management.



TR 25-043 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief or his designee to execute a contract for utility services with the City of Glenpool for the benefit of the Department of Housing. Representative Charles McHenry sponsored the bill, which was unanimously adopted 15-0.

According to the bill, the Nation is seeking to receive water utility services for a Nation-owned property at 15608 S. Broadway.

TR 25-044 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a real estate contract for the purchase of property in Elmore County, Alabama. Rep. McHenry sponsored the bill, which was unanimously adopted 15-0.

According to the bill, the Nation intends expand land use on the property, which is part of Tukabatchee Tribal Town.

TR 25-045 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to submit a grant application to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, safeguarding Tomorrow Revolving Loan Fund Program for the benefit of the Mvskoke Loan Fund. Representative Sandra Golden sponsored the bill, which was unanimously adopted 15-0.

According to the bill, the grant proposes \$900,000 in awards for hazard mitigation projects. The Nation will provide a \$900,000 match in funding if it is approved.

TR 25-046 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation confirming the nomination of Barry W. Brandon to serve on the public gaming commission. Representative Patrick Freeman sponsored the bill. It was cosponsored by Representative Dode Barnett. The bill was adopted unanimously 15-0.

Brandon's term will begin upon confirmation and will end on July 31, 2029.

TR 25-047 A tribal resolution of the National Council of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation approving and authorizing the Muscogee Nation Gaming Enterprises, LLC ("MNGE") Board of Directors to execute the third amendment to the Aristocrat Master Equipment Lease Agreement. Rep. Hufft sponsored the bill, which was unanimously adopted 15-0.

According to the bill, the agreement will not exceed three years.

TR 25-048 A tribal resolution of the National Council of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation approving and authorizing the Muscogee Nation Gaming Enterprises, LLC

("MNGE") Board of Directors to execute the Aristocrat Minimum Obligation Agreement. Rep. Hufft sponsored the bill, which was unanimously adopted 15-0.

According to the bill, the agreement will not exceed three years.

TR 25-049 A tribal resolution of the National Council of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation approving and authorizing the Muscogee Nation Gaming Enterprises, LLC ("MNGE") Board of Directors to execute the third amendment to the Aristocrat Master Gaming Device Purchase and Lease Agreement. The bill was sponsored by Rep. Hufft, which was adopted unanimously 15-0.

According to the bill, the agreement will not exceed three years.

TR 25-050 A tribal resolution of the National Council of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation approving and authorizing the Muscogee Nation Gaming Enterprises, LLC (MNGE) Board of Directors to transfer certain real property to the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. Rep. Hufft sponsored the legislation, which was adopted unanimously 15-0.

According to the bill, the MNGE Board of Directors acquired ownership of real property and has determined it is necessary to transfer it to the Nation.

TR 25-051 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation approving the Tribal Housing and Urban Development - Veteran's Affairs Supportive Housing ("HUD VASH") Renewal and Expansion Grants for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Department of Veterans' Affairs Services Office. Representative Robert Gouge sponsored the bill, which was unanimously adopted 15-0.

According to the bill, this program will address the veterans who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness and will provide them with rental subsidies.

TR 25-052 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation approving the terms of settlement and authorizing the Principal Chief to execute settlement agreement documents to resolve litigation claims against the City of Tulsa and Tulsa City Officials. Rep. Hufft sponsored the bill, which was adopted unanimously 15-0.

Legal action against the city was originally initiated by the National Council on October 28, 2023. It was in response to Tulsa Defendants being prohibited from exer-

REGULAR
SESSION

Continued on Page 8

FESTIVAL RESULTS

Continued from Page 6

2nd place: Alicia Sanders and Andrew Sanders
3rd place: John Quesenbury and David Lena
Results obtained from MCN Transit John Quesenbury.

5-on-5 Youth Basketball
5th/6th Boys Division
Champs: Dream Hoops
Runnerup: SouthEast Indians
MVP: Preston

5th/6th Girls Division
Champs: Lady Ironheads
Runner:Up: Lady Tvstvnke
MVP: Harper B

7th/8th Boys Division
Champs: Tribe
Runner: Up: Hustle Tribe
MVP: Preston Lewis

7th/8th Girls Division
Champs: LE JR'S
Runnerup: Native Ballers
MVP: Layla Shomo

Results provided by MCN Recreation

Slow-Pitch Tournament
Co-ed
Champions: 2NO
2nd Place: OKB
3rd Place: Espadas

Men's
Champions: 2NO
2nd Place: Above Average
3rd Place: All Kinds

Women's
Champions: Lady RezMondo
2nd Place: Lady MVP
3rd Place: Big Ol' Hitties
Results obtained from MCN Recreation

Tennis
Mixed Doubles
Champions: Debra Thomas & Robert Stevenson
Finalists: Kyle Bales & Wylie Bales

Mixed Doubles Consolation
Champions: Timberleigh McGee & Floyd Bales

Men's Open Doubles
Champions : Chris Whaley & Caleb Whaley
Finalists : John McCarthy & Robert Stevenson

Men's Open Doubles Consolation
Champions : Caden Williams & Sam Battiest

Men's 60+ Doubles
Champions:
Finalists: Floyd Bales & Jerry Bales

Men's Open Singles
Champion: Wyatt Phillips
Finalist: Caden Williams

Men's Open Singles Consolation
Champion: Robert Stevenson

Women's Open Singles Consolation
Champion: Timberleigh McGee

FESTIVAL RESULTS

Continued on Page 8

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REGULAR
SESSION

Continued from Page 7

cising unlawful jurisdiction over any Native American citizen of a federally recognized tribe for criminal offenses. The lawsuit was filed on November 15, 2023.

The litigation remains pending, however the terms of the settlement would include the Tulsa Defendants agreeing to dismiss all pending prosecution of Native American citizens of federally-recognized tribes and not to initiate future prosecutions. It will also include the referral of tickets and charges to the Nation for prosecution.

TR 25-053 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation amending TR 18-112 (A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation approving beer sales at the Checotah Creek Indian Community Smoke Shops) Rep. Cloud sponsored the bill. It was cosponsored by Representative Dar-

rell Proctor. The bill was adopted unanimously, 15-0.

The language in the code will be revised to add “and liquor” when referring to the sale of alcohol at Checotah Creek Indian Community Smoke Shops.

NCA 25-051 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the Federal Home Loan Bank of Topeka for the benefit of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Department of Housing. Representative Charles McHenry sponsored the bill, which was unanimously adopted 15-0.

The Nation was awarded a \$500,000 grant from the FHL-Bank’s Native American Housing Initiative Grants Program. It will be used to purchase land for multi-year housing development in Glenpool or Bixby.

NCA 25-053 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the Okla-

homa Native Assets Coalition for the benefit of the Office of the Secretary of the Nation. The bill was sponsored by Rep. Barnett and was adopted unanimously 15-0.

The Office of the Secretary of the Nation was awarded a \$10,000 VITA grant that will allow them to purchase server HDDs, memory expansion, and office supplies for the MCN Voluntary Income Tax Assistance Program.

NCA 25-054 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation amending Title 14, entitled “Crimes and Punishments”. The bill was sponsored by Rep. Barnett and was adopted unanimously 15-0.

A subsection M was added to section three to update the definition of “Tribal Justice Personnel”. A subsection C in section four was updated to define the crime of Assault of Tribal Justice Personnel. A subsection H was also updated to define the crime of aggravated battery. Section five updated the crime of obstruction of justice.

NCA 25-055 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation amending Title 14, § 2-344, entitled “Forfeitures”. Rep. Barnett sponsored the bill, which was unanimously adopted 15-0.

The bill revises code referring to forfeited property used in unlawful activity on the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Reservation. Title 14, § 2-344 A. specifically updates the word “chapter” to the laws of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation”. It also adds “terms of probation” in reference to the addition of time for crimes that result in a forfeiture of property. Section B. has been revised to replace “chapter” with “the laws of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation.”

NCA 25-056 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing a budget modification in excess of ten percent (10%) for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Realty/Trust Department for FY 2025 Budget. Rep. Cloud sponsored the bill, which was unanimously adopted

15-0.

According to the bill, the MCN Realty/Trust Department is making this budget modification request to reallocate certain funds for other necessary expenses for supplies, a survey, contractual fees, filing fees, abstracts and equipment maintenance and repair line items.

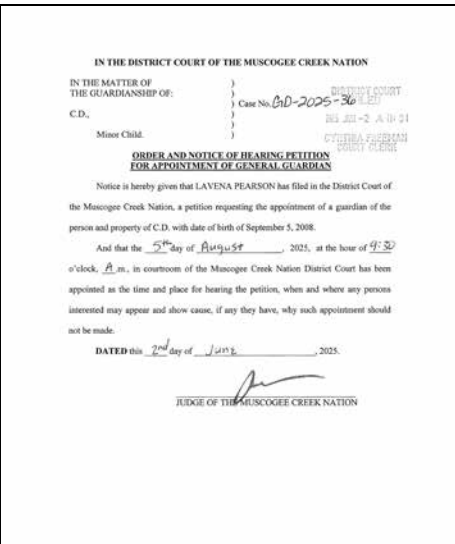
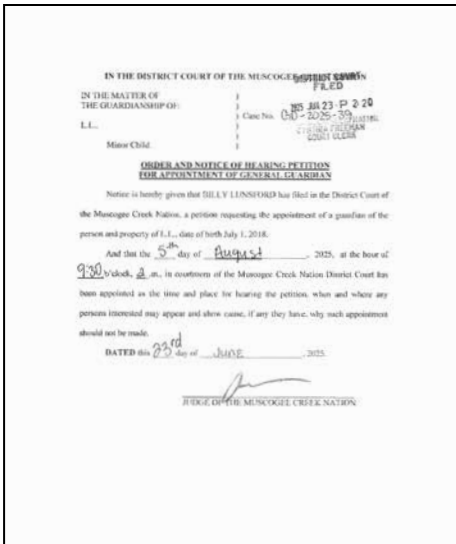






NCA 25-057 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation approving the FY 2026 Indian Housing Plan. Rep. Whitecloud sponsored the bill, which was unanimously adopted 15-0.




According to the bill, the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act Indian Housing Block Grant requires a tribal-approved Indian Housing Plan to be submitted to the Department of Housing and Urban Development for approval of compliance at least seventy five days prior to the end of the Nation’s fiscal year.

To view the full agenda, visit www.mcnn.com.

FESTIVAL RESULTS <i>Continued from Page 7</i> Junior’s 18 and Under Champion: Caden Williams Finalist: Sam Battiest <i>Results provided by MCN Recreation</i> 5K Men 1st place: Steven Baker 2nd place: CJ Morrison 3rd place: Brandon Payne Women 1st place: Carrington Hessen 2nd place: Callie Coon 3rd place: Storm Waquie <i>Results provided by cronotrack.com</i> Mvskoke Foodways People’s Choice: Carol Tiger: Chicken and dumplings, and frybread Traditional Dish & Recipe 1st place: Gano Perez	2nd place: Carol Tiger 3rd place: Claudia McHenry Art 1st place: Meske Wind 2nd place: Lahoma Schultz 3rd place: Seth Harjo Apron Making 1st place: Amy Park 2nd place: Pearl Thomas 3rd place: Amy Park Photography 1st place: Marissa Lewis 2nd place: Gano Perez 3rd place: Marissa Lewis O’safke 1st place: Abbie Larney 2nd place: Eastman Holloway 3rd place: Carol Tiger Taklik-kvmokse (sour cornbread) 1st place: Lisa Bear 2nd place: Carol Tiger 3rd place: Claudia McHenry	Cvto Hakv (blue bread) 1st place: Carol Tiger 2nd place: Abbie Larney Pvrko afke (grape dumplings) 1st place: Pearl Thomas 2nd place: Sutv Harjo 3rd place: Carol Tiger Plant (house/flower) 1st place: Marline Mattox 2nd place: Marline Mattox 3rd place: Amy Park Plant (food/crop) 1st place: Amy Park 2nd place: Arvcuken Noquisi 3rd place: Daniel Sanders Youth division 12-18 Photography 1st place: Kira Perez Youth division 12-18 Art 1st place: Kali Perez 2nd place: Kira Perez 3rd place: Lylee Bear <i>Results provided by Cassandra Thompson and Chris Azbell</i>	Traditional Games Ribbon Skirt/Vest Contest overall winner/ People’s Choice: Alexandra Oloizia Sofke Contest overall winner/ People’s Choice: Chris Powell Frybread contest overall winner/ People’s Choice: Pearl Thomas Mvskoke Youth Art Contest Winner Overall: Dani Dowling People’s Choice: Hopelynn Lowe <i>Results obtained from Traditional Games and Event Coordinator Maleah Dowling</i> 2025 Mvskoke Royalty Junior Miss MCN Contestants Winner: Mia Powell Runner-up: Kiahna Croy Miss MCN Contestants Winner: Aholoce Deere Runner-up: Amari Turner Grace Tiger Mercedes Dunn Sutv Harjo	Miss Congeniality: Mercedes Dunn Best Cultural Presentation Junior Miss: Mia Powell Miss: Amari Turner Best Stage Presence Junior Miss: Mia Powell Miss: Aholoce Deere Best Self Presentation Junior Miss: Mia Powell Miss: Sutv Harjo Best Written Word Junior Miss: Mia Powell Miss: Amari Turner Best Communication Junior Miss: Mia Powell Miss: Mercedes Dunn Impromptu Question Junior Miss: Mia Powell Miss: Aholoce Deere <i>Results provided by LuAnne Bear</i>
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LEGALS

GD-2025-36 	GD-2025-39 	GD-2025-40 	JV-2024-21 (BUD) 
JV-2024-21 (RACHEL) 	AD-2024-20 BRIAN MOSLEY, pg. 1 	AD-2024-20 BRIAN MOSLEY, pg. 2 	AD-2024-20 JUSTIN BALDRIDGE, pg. 1 

AD-2024-20 JUSTIN BALDRIDGE, pg. 2 	AD-2024-20 MISTI BAILEY, pg. 1 	AD-2024-20 MISTI BAILEY, pg. 2 
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