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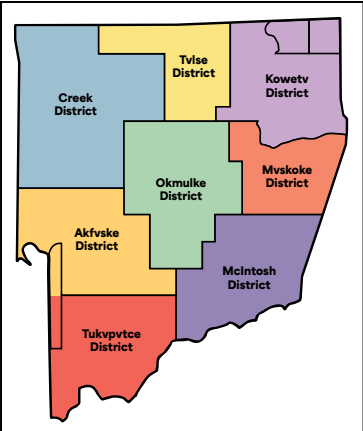
MVSKOKENEWS

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DISTRICT VOTING RETURNS TO THE MCN

OKMULKE AND TVLSE WILL SEE RUN-OFF ELECTIONS

By **THOMAS JACKSON**
REPORTER



MVSKOKE RESERVATION – The Muscogee (Creek) Nation 2025 General Election on Sept. 20 saw citizens vote for National Council Seat B Representatives and the reestablishment of district voting. All results are unofficial until certified on Friday, Sept. 26 at 5:00 PM.

The referendum, NCA 24-096, asked citizens to change the MCN Constitution, allowing for representatives to be elected only by residents of their district. The amendment overrules at-large voting, allowing for citizens to vote on all National Council members, regardless of what district they occupy.

The referendum passed with 2,538 people, or 67.63%, voting yes, and 1,215 people, or 32.37%, voting no. Of absentee ballots cast, 70.04% voted in favor of the change. Mvskoke citizens who live outside of the MCN Reservation will only be able to vote in the

“home district” that appears on the voter registration.

The Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Seat B races saw six winners: Sandra Jean Golden (I) with 51.97% for Akfvske District, Cody Randall Phillips with 64.57% for Creek District, James Lee Factor with 58.35% for Kowetv District, Galen Charles Cloud (I) with 51.25% for McIntosh District, Lora Ann Harjo-King with 52.95% for Mvskoke District, and Thomasene Ann Osborn (I) with 61.07% for Tukvptvce District.

Two districts will see run-off elections on Nov. 8 - Okmulke and Tvlse, as no candidate in these districts reached more than 50% of the vote. Leonard Ray Gouge (I) with 26.15% and Lucian Allen Tiger III with 36.59% are set for a run-off for the Tvlse District. Nelson Scott Harjo Sr. (I) with 32.6% and William Dean Lowe with 41.7% are set for a run-off for the Okmulke District.

KAILAS MACK TAKES THE FIELD IN ARGENTINA

THE MCN CITIZEN STAYS HUMBLE AND FULL OF GRATITUDE

By **SHAYLN PROCTOR**
REPORTER

LA PAMPA, Argentina – 21 year old Kailas Mack (Mvskoke/Seminole/Absentee Shawnee) competed in the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WSBC) 2025 under-23 Men's Pan American Championship for Team USA. The Mvskoke citizen was the only Indigenous player and only Oklahoman selected for the team. The tournament ran from Sept 13-20 in La Pampa, Argentina.

Mack has been playing softball competitively for nearly 8 years, having started when he was 14 years old. He remembers watching his family and friends compete in the Choctaw Labor Day Festival in Tuskahoma when they were short one player, Mack filled in.

Mack's position when playing softball tournaments is usually outfield, however he can play in any position besides pitcher.

“I enjoy the competition. Fastpitch has a great amount of good players from here locally, to all across the world. I enjoy playing here in Oklahoma and playing outside of the state. Meeting new people and traveling to new places is also other things about the game I enjoy. Playing with my family is another great thing I enjoy about the game,” Mack said.

Seven other teams competed in the continental event: Venezuela, Argentina, Canada, Mexico, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, and Peru. The tournament



An up close photo of Kailas Mack getting ready to hit the ball in one of his Fastpitch softball tournaments. (Photo Courtesy: Kailas Mack)

was a qualifier for the 2026 U-23 Softball World Cup in Columbia. Team USA placed 4th in the tournament with a standing of three wins and four losses. .

When Mack got picked to play he was very thankful and humble to get the opportunity to compete on the international level and “show the world that a small town stecate can compete,” Mack said.

He feels great being part of the team, representing his country and competing against other country's best players.

“It was great to hear that I made the team. I was pretty nervous the whole time after try-outs, but I never showed it. I was at my ground and I was pretty busy and not thinking about it. However, someone told me to check my phone and there the official roster announcement was so I was pretty happy to see that. It caught me off guard as well,” Mack said.

He feels grateful to be able to have the support and love from his family and friends knowing they are always there for him. The thought comforts him.

ARGENTINA
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THE 33RD ANNUAL OCMULGEE INDIGENOUS CELEBRATION



The 33rd Annual Ocmulgee Indigenous Celebration took place Sept. 13-14 at the Ocmulgee Mounds National Historic Park in Macon, Ga. The two-day festival included storytelling, cultural demonstrations, cultural crafts, and educational programs. Tribal leadership and community members represented the MCN at the festival. Ocmulgee Mounds is considered to be the ancestral homelands for Mvskoke people. **Above:** Second Chief Del Beaver and citizens sing hymns. Principal Chief David Hill joins the stomp dance in Macon. **Below:** Mekko Felix Brown Jr. of Duck Creek Ceremonial Grounds. (William D. Roberts/MM)



CULTURAL LUNCH AND LEARN CLASSES HELD MONTHLY

THE AUGUST DISCUSSION FOCUSED ON MVSKOKE MOUNDS, GROUNDS AND TRIBAL TOWNS.

by SHAYLN PROCTOR
REPORTER

OKMULGEE – On Aug. 29 a Cultural Lunch and Learn class was presented by the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Department of Education and Training in collaboration with the Historic and Cultural Preservation Department. Each month, the Native Youth Community Project (NYCP) Department plans topics discussing Mvskoke culture for citizens, educators, and MCN employees. The August class was held at the College of the Muscogee Nation (CMN) Lecture Hall with the topic “Mvskoke Mounds, Grounds, and Tribal Towns.”

Mvskoke artist Johnnie Diacon was the featured artist, and MCN Secretary of Culture and Humanities RaelLynn Butler (Mvskoke) presented the lecture.

NYCP Curriculum Specialist Cassandra Thompson spoke to Mvskoke Media about the monthly meetings, the topics that they choose and goal when organizing the class sessions.

For Thompson the lunch and

learn is all about enriching and engaging with history and community. “These classes aim to enhance cultural knowledge about the Mvskoke people and tribe. They provide cultural workshops and historical courses that enrich our understanding as we engage with our communities,” Thompson said.

“The Cultural Learning Classes originated from NYCP’s Future Mvskoke Educator’s Cohort (FMEC) and the meetings of our Cultural Education Resource Council (CERC). The FMEC provided valuable insights on what would support their educational journeys, while CERC offered suggestions for developing the Native Art curriculum supported by our grant. NYCP has successfully delivered three key outcomes,” Thompson said.

The two other outcomes focus on cultural knowledge that can be used in education. The Future Mvskoke Educators Grant includes reimbursement support of up to \$200 for teacher certification expenses, exams, and classroom supplies. It also offers support to MCN Cultural Educators teaching the Mvskoke language, culture, and

arts. The Future Mvskoke Educator Meetings give updates for educators, workshops on Native American cultural sensitivity, discussion panels with fellow educators, and opportunities for professional development.

Thompson hopes that NYCP can offer these sessions for the remainder of their current grant, which is two years. She also shared that classes are limited to the first 100, and they reach full capacity fast

The August class focused on the foundation of Mvskoke culture: mounds, grounds, and tribal towns. The presentation was developed by MCN DCH and was previously presented at the Mvskoke Art Market. According to Thompson, it was the perfect fit for launching the series. When choosing topics and choosing the speakers Thompson consults and discusses with the MCN DCH and Secretary Butler, Robin Soweka Jr. and Na-komas Alsover.

“This initiative represents a genuine collaboration, combining the department’s extensive expertise with our program’s desire to organize these types of workshops,” Thompson said.

Thompson wants to make sure to involve tradition and culture.

“For our program, I know that we not only enjoy that there is a demand for classes for educators, but also our adult citizens. Personally, I have worked with youth most of my life and created Native art camps and organized activities by bringing in our Mvskoke artists or people I know who take a cultural approach to things they do in life,” Thompson said. “Each time, a parent or adult would say, ‘I



Cassandra Thompson, RaelLynn Butler and Johnnie Diacon standing next to Diacon’s art piece at the Cultural Lunch and Learn class session on Aug. 29. (ShaylnProctor/MM)

wish we could do this.’ So now, we often hear ‘Thank you for putting this together.’ I love that our people are getting to take a moment and appreciate the knowledge that is being passed on.”

The community lunch and learn format came about through Thompson’s work in developing Native Art education. “When we initiated the Cultural Learning Classes last year, we produced videos featuring the speakers from those sessions. As the Curriculum Specialist, my goal was to develop lessons for the Native Art curriculum based on these videos, ensuring that our people and our stories are preserved,” Thompson said.

“Beyond the high school curriculum, we are exploring ways to make these lessons and videos available to our citizens. We are currently looking into platforms that will host our videos, as well as other educational opportunities through collaborations with programs within the Muscogee (Creek) Nation to expand the lessons and videos reach.”

“With this inaugural class, we have achieved a significant milestone: the College of Muscogee

Nation (CMN) has recognized this class and our future offerings as a microcredential under their Upskill Mvskoke initiative,” Thompson shared.

“This alignment with our goals represents a major achievement for our program.”

The next monthly session will be Sep. 19 and cover Mvskoke Hymns and Churches-Vnoeckvt Omeccien. The featured artist will be Dana Tiger and Thompson will present.

The date for the October session is yet to be announced, however the presentation will be given by the MCN Historic and Cultural Preservation Department. The topic is “Nene Estemerkv”- Road of Misery and the Council Oak Tree.” The November topic is “Sacred Places and Locations.”

For information about the monthly learning series and registration visit the MCN Department of Education and Training website and facebook page.

You can contact Cassandra Thompson to be added to the list when the class opens, at 918-549-2769 or 539-286-4599 and email at cthompson@muscogeenation.com.



The Native Youth Community Project provided a handbook, pens and a journal for the Cultural Lunch and Learn class session held on Aug. 29. (Shayln Proctor/MM)

IHS SERVICE PROVIDES CONSTRUCTION OF WATER AND SEWAGE SERVICES FOR AMERICAN INDIANS

THE SERVICE OPERATES IN 49 STATES AND INCLUDES INSTALLATION OF SAFE WATER SERVICES, WASTE WATER AND SOLID WASTE SERVICES

by THOMAS JACKSON
REPORTER

MVSKOKE RESERVATION – The Indian Health Service (IHS) has a water, sewage, and sanitation service that will be useful to citizens of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. According to the IHS, the service is part of the effort to “raise the health status of American Indian and Alaska Native people to the highest possible level.” The program provides safe water, waste water, and solid waste sewage services.

This service, which is under the control of the Division of Sanitation Facilities Construction, provides these services on both residential and communal property, and is available for all American Indian and Alaskan Native citizens.

The service of installing water and sewage facilities is only one of the services that DSFC provides. According to the DSFC’s website, their services also include main-

taining lists of what improvements need to be made to sanitation facilities in Indigenous communities, and providing Operations and Management (O&M) training to help those communities maintain their sanitation facilities.

DSFC also advocates for Indigenous people on environmental issues, and provides both technical assistance and financial assistance to Indigenous tribes during public health emergencies.

The DSFC runs construction projects in all 48 continental U.S. states, as well as Alaska, and projects are split into 12 zones in accordance with the Indian Health Service’s 12 offices, with various cities operating as the hubs for their respective regions.

Cities and their zones include:

- Oklahoma City, Okla. - covering Oklahoma, Kansas, and part of southwest Texas
- Tucson, Ariz. - covering



ASDFC worker watches as a septic tank is lowered into the ground to be installed. (Photo Courtesy: IHS Division of Sanitation Facilities Construction)

- Tucson, Nogales, and the surrounding area in southern Arizona
- St. Michaels, Ariz. - covering the Navajo Nation Reservation
 - Phoenix, Ariz. - covering Nevada and the remainder of Arizona and Utah
 - Albuquerque, N.M. - covering Colorado and the remainder of New Mexico
 - Portland, Ore. - covering Washington, Oregon, and Idaho
 - Billings, Mont.- covering Montana and Wyoming
 - Bemidji, Minn. - covering Minnesota, Wisconsin, and

- Michigan
- Sacramento, Calif. - covering all of California
 - Aberdeen, S.D.- covering North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Iowa
 - Anchorage, Ala. - covering all of Alaska
 - Nashville, Tenn. - covering the remainder of the continental U.S.

For more information on the DSFC and the services they provide, visit the DSFC’s hub website at <https://dsfc-ihs-gis.hub.arcgis.com/>, or visit the IHS’s website at <https://www.ihs.gov/dsfc/>.

ARGENTINA

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“That kind of support is very important to me, because without them, I wouldn’t be where I am today and who I am today,” Mack said.

Mack’s main motivator is his son. “He motivates me everyday when I wake up and tackle life. For softball, he motivates me to give everything my all and play hard,” Mack said. “I just want to show him that whatever path life puts you on, there is always greatness waiting, if you put in the work and keep striving”

Traveling to South America was a new experience for Mack, who has flown all over the United States but never out of the country. He’s excited to see where this journey goes, on and off the field.

“I would like to say thanks to every player and coach I’ve received advice from and helped me craft my game. Their advice really helps me out,” said Mack. “I also want to give thanks to my Mack family, from playing softball at our grandma Mack’s house to playing in the tournaments together, those times are also what help motivate me to play the game.”

“I’m very thankful for my loving and supporting partner Kayley for the long days being at the field and always having my back in everything.”

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FOUR-TIME PURPLE HEART VETERAN HONORED AS HOMETOWN HERO

NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN VETERANS, SOLDIER'S WISH AND THE TULSA DRILLERS RECOGNIZED MVSKOKE CITIZEN TIM PICKERING FOR HIS SERVICE IN THE ARMY DURING VIETNAM

BY **BRADEN HARPER**
MANAGING EDITOR

TULSA – Mvskoke veteran Timothy Pickering has fought many battles on and off the battlefield. The four-time purple heart recipient served two years in the Army during the Vietnam War. Pickering’s most recent battle was against stage four prostate cancer. After undergoing treatment Pickering became cancer free, another battle he fought hard to win. Pickering was honored as an Ascension St. John Hometown Hero at the Tulsa Driller’s Home Game against the Corpus Christi Hooks on Friday, Aug. 29. A Hometown Hero is a military service member, first responder, educator or community leader who has made a lasting impact in their community. Throughout the season, heroes are honored at fireworks shows at the Driller’s ONEOK Stadium.

Before the first pitch of the game was thrown, Pickering was honored for his service in a private ceremony hosted by Native American Indian Veteran Region Five Commander Micheal Coon (Mvskoke). There, Coon presented Pickering with a white “Tvlse” Driller’s jersey. Pickering was also presented a Soldier’s Wish shirt by Soldier’s Wish Executive Director Debra Wimpee, as well as a Quilt of Valor.

Both nonprofit organizations serve and honor veterans for their service. Soldier’s Wish provides assistance to veterans and their families by offering adaptive living aids, home modifications, educational support and recovery support. Quilt of Valor provides quilts for veterans, which presents a symbolic gesture of healing. When the game concluded, Pickering and his family were invited onto the diamond where he was honored by the Tulsa Drillers with a special Hometown Hero baseball bat.

For Pickering, receiving these honors was meaningful and gave him an indescribable feeling. “I’m not over it yet, I feel, I don’t know. I didn’t expect all of this. What happened for me here today, I feel blessed. It’s a privilege to be here with you people today.”

Aside from doctor’s appointments, Pickering likes to stay put, so the event gave him a chance to get out of the house. At home he can typically be seen watching television, playing with his dog,

or listening to music. He enjoys music so much he routinely wears out his headphones.

Pickering’s Service

Pickering grew up in Eufaula and enlisted for the Army on May 5, 1971 at the age of 18. When he was given the oral test required for new recruits, Pickering scored a perfect 100%. Asked when he wanted to leave for basic training, he eagerly answered “Today!” After quickly going home to say goodbye to his family, Pickering loaded up on a bus and was on his way to Oklahoma City.

“Back then you were obligated to enlist or get drafted. I didn’t want to get drafted, I wanted to leave. I wanted out, I was always getting into trouble for something. I went and I never did look back,” Pickering said.

The Vietnam War is considered to be the “first televised war” because of the advances in broadcasting communication technology at the time. This allowed news networks to send reporters into the conflict to take photos and footage on the frontlines. Culture had also changed, 93% of American households owned a television set. Essentially, most Americans had the ability to watch the war in their own living room. Images of deceased soldiers returning in caskets from Vietnam on the news inspired Pickering to enlist, rather than wait to be drafted.

“When I was 16 I saw on the news these guys that were killed, coming back from Vietnam in these planes,” Pickering said. “They were killed over there and they were bringing them back in these planes. When I saw that I told myself ‘I wanted to go over there’ and I got my wish. It about killed me. But would I do it again? Yeah, I’d do it again.”

Pickering served with a platoon of 30 soldiers. One of his responsibilities included guard duty at night. Soldiers had to endure hard sleeping conditions in the field and had to learn how to sleep on the ground, in the water and in trees. Most of the water in the area was undrinkable due to parasites. Missions could last up to 45 days at a time. For soldiers like Pickering, Christmas was hard because they longed to be home with their loved ones. Although he does not miss the missions he performed in Vietnam, Pickering reminisced about the quieter moments.

“The only time I miss was at night when everything got quiet, except for the bugs,” Pickering said. “I would think about home. One night I was on guard, I had guard duty every night. At night it was very lonesome. I was crying one night because I was looking at the moon and I thought, ‘Do they (Pickering’s family) see the same moon I’m looking at?’”

Pickering would sometimes stay awake for two to three days straight. The constant fear of being ambushed made it hard for him to sleep and kept him on guard at all times. He attributed surviving the war to the advice of fellow older, more experienced soldiers, as well as his fears.

One day, Pickering’s platoon walked down a cow trail that grew wider and wider. Pickering was in the back of the line, but made his way up to the front to tell his platoon leader he had a bad feeling about the widening path. That is when the platoon was ambushed, resulting in one of the deadliest missions Pickering was involved in. Of the 30 men in the platoon, Pickering was just one of five that survived.

“My job was to case any Charlies (Viet Cong). I heard some gunfire going off. I thought, ‘Oh shoot.’ What they did is they walked into an ambush,” Pickering said. “They shot from both sides in a crossfire. By the time I got up there most of the guys were already down. It got really scary because we were surrounded. I was hit three times, I didn’t know it at first because I was so scared that my friends were still alive.”

The ambush was particularly frightening for Pickering because he could see the enemy Viet Cong soldiers that were firing at him. One of the fallen included his platoon buddy, a man he only remembered by his first name, Ron, who was hit by shrapnel. Pickering said a call was made for medical evacuation, however it took approximately five hours before a Cobra helicopter could rescue the survivors. Although he can’t recall the full name of his fallen friend after so many years, he compared their relationship to that of a married couple — they were close and were always bickering with one another.

The publicity the Vietnam War received, being the first televised war, had its pros and cons. On the one hand, Americans had unprecedented access to news from the front like never before. Previously, news war footage had



Army Veteran Timothy Pickering stands next to representatives from the Native American Indian Veterans organization, and the Soldier’s Wish organization in a private ceremony held before the home game. Pickering was presented with a Quilt of Valor, a ribbon shirt, a Tulsa Drillers “Tvlse” jersey and a Soldier’s Wish shirt. (Braden Harper/MM)



Native American Indian Veteran Region Five Commander Micheal Coon presents Army veteran Timothy Pickering with a white “Tvlse” baseball jersey. (Braden Harper/MM)

been widely distributed through film reels at movie theatres, the coverage back then was censored and produced as propaganda. During the Vietnam era Americans saw the conflict’s wins and losses, souring their perception of the United State’s involvement in the 20-year war, which manifested itself into anger at the government that initiated the war, as well as the soldiers who served in it. When Pickering and his fellow soldiers returned home, they were advised to wear only civilian clothing, not their uniforms due to the negative public perception.

Pickering recalled early memories of returning home wearing civilian clothes with his government issued shoes, which gave away his service record. He remembered not making conversation with civilians because he didn’t know how to interact. He also remembered being called slurs by strangers and wanting to react but keeping quiet and moving on in the other direction.

“We didn’t know what was going on over here like protesters and stuff like that because they

didn’t tell us. They didn’t tell us that until we landed in Oakland,” Pickering said. “They said if you got any civilian clothing you need to put it on and not wear your uniform because there’s a lot of people out there that don’t like it.”

When Pickering returned home to Eufaula, his mother was there to pick him up. The first place they stopped at was a diner. Pickering had developed quite an appetite after serving abroad for two years. That day his homecoming meal included coffee, orange juice, eggs, sausage, pancakes, and toast.

“We sat down at a booth and the waitress gave us a menu. True story, I said ‘Give me everything on this one side (of the menu), everything’. She said ‘Everything?’ I said ‘Yeah!’ My mom looked at me like ‘What?’ I didn’t eat it all.”

Pickering was honorably discharged from military service on May 4, 1973. He went on to get married and have two children. He now has several grandchildren and recently celebrated his 72nd birthday.

CMN PRESIDENT NAMED 2025 ASCEND FELLOW

DR. MONTE RANDALL BECOMES ONE OF 20 SELECTED FOR THEIR SERVICE TO FAMILIES IN THE COMMUNITY



(Official Aspen Institute Logo)

BY **BRADEN HARPER**
MANAGING EDITOR

WASHINGTON D.C. - On Sept. 10 the Aspen Institute announced that College of Muscogee Nation President Monte Randall, Ed. D., was one of 20 selected for this year’s 2025 Ascend Fellows. The fellows were selected based on their “pursuit of prosperity and well-being for children and families.” Randall and the other recipients come from a range of fields including local and state government, post secondary institutes, and health-care. This year’s fellows represented 14 states and Washington D.C.

The Aspen Fellowship started in 2012 to bring together lead-

ers across all sectors that have made significant contributions to their communities. During the 18-month fellowships recipients will participate in four forums, create an action plan, and come together in monthly group peer leadership meetings.

Aspen Institute Founder and Executive Director Anne Mosle remarked that each selected fellow brings a unique set of leadership skills to the table. According to Mosle, this makes for a talented collective.

“Ascend is turning up the volume on a unified, unstoppable movement that ensures intergenerational family economic mobility and well-being is growing – not shrinking,” Mosle said. “These 20 leaders have bold ideas

that are ready for a quantum leap not just individually, but as a collective. Our country and communities are hungry for leaders like them, ones they can trust and who offer – and deliver – innovative solutions and a path forward.”

Randall is a veteran of the United States Navy and a graduate of Haskell Indian Nations University, the University of Oklahoma, and Oral Roberts University. His research has focused on Native American culture, leadership, and the impact of historical trauma on Native American students. Randall also volunteers with Glenpool Public Schools and the Glenpool Creek Indian Community.

The Aspen institute is a global nonprofit that was originally founded in 1949. The privately-funded organization has an international network of partners and drives change through “dialogue, leadership, and action to help solve society’s greatest challenges.”

Randall joins a prestigious list of 182 other Aspen Fellows that have made significant contributions to their community, including Blackfeet Community College President Dr. Brad Hall, Ed. D. The full list of 2025 Aspen Fellows was published on their website.



(Courtesy: College of Muscogee Nation Website)



Chris (standing), Troy with Chooge on his lap. Taken in the mid-1990s. (Photo Courtesy: Troy Littledeer)

BY TROY LITTLEDEER

UKB CITIZEN

STILWELL - For centuries, the Cherokee people were united not by a single central government but by kinship, clans, and shared values. Our ancestors built their lives on responsibility to one another, not bureaucracy. Towns governed themselves. What held us together was culture, language, and family bonds. Governments came later.

That balance broke when the United States forced our removal, imposed its laws, and betrayed the treaties it had sworn to honor. Federal policy split us into three governments: the Cherokee Nation, the United Keetoowah Band of Cher-

KINSHIP, NOT GOVERNMENTS, DEFINES THE CHEROKEE PEOPLE

THE CHEROKEE PEOPLE WERE ONCE UNITED BY KINSHIP, NOT GOVERNMENT. FEDERAL POLICIES FRACTURED THAT UNITY INTO THREE GOVERNMENTS, BUT THE TREATIES AND PROMISES WERE MADE TO ALL CHEROKEE PEOPLE. AS SOVEREIGNTY DEBATES CONTINUE, KINSHIP — NOT BUREAUCRACY — REMAINS THE ENDURING FOUNDATION OF CHEROKEE IDENTITY

okee Indians in Oklahoma (UKB), and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI). These divisions were drawn in Washington, not in Cherokee communities — though internal politics also played a role.

My own family shows the weight of this divide. My late brother, Chris, was a citizen of the EBCI. My younger brother, Travis, belongs to the Cherokee Nation. I am with the UKB. Our children are now growing up under three governments. Yet when we gather, there is no division. We share the same blood, the same stories, and the same kinship that has always defined the Cherokee people.

Today, however, the Cherokee Nation asserts that the treaties belong to its government alone, dismissing the broader promises they created for all Cherokees.

But history tells a different story.

In 1828, the United States promised a “perpetual outlet west.” In 1835, it pledged that lands would be held “forever.” In 1846, it secured territory “to the whole Cherokee people... for their common use and benefit.” And in 1866, it guaranteed full rights to Freedmen and their descendants. These promises were made to the people — families like mine — not to any one Government.

Courts and agencies have affirmed that truth. In 2017, a federal judge ruled that Freedmen descendants must be recognized as full citizens of the Cherokee Nation because of those treaty guarantees. And in January 2025, the Department of the Interior issued a solicitor’s opinion reaffirming the UKB’s federal status and clarifying consultation standards for its trust lands. The opinion remains under review,

but its reasoning reflects what history already shows: the Keetoowah Cherokee people

have carried cultural continuity long before Removal, holding an unbroken thread of identity across Generations.

The UKB, chartered in 1950 under the Oklahoma Indian Welfare Act, has long faced jurisdictional disputes with the Cherokee Nation. Those conflicts trace back to federal policies like the Curtis Act of 1898 and the Five Tribes Act of 1906, which dismantled Cherokee institutions and reshaped governance. These were decisions made in Washington — not by the people themselves. The deeper question remains: do treaty promises belong to governments, or to all Cherokee people? What does it say about kinship when governments fight in court while families strug-

gle to repair their homes? What does it mean when a child is told they belong to the “wrong” government to receive help, even though their ancestors share the same stories and land?

That is not sovereignty. That is kinship Denied.

Sovereignty is not a government building. It is the people in community, bound by kinship. Governments are meant to serve the people — not replace them. Our ancestors lived by kinship. If we are to honor their sacrifices, we must put kinship first again.

When my family gathers — Chris’s memory beside us, Chooge at my side, our children playing together — no government line divides us. That is the Cherokee truth: kinship endures. And if it can endure in my family, it can endure for our people.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION BILL HAS POTENTIAL FOR GROWING TRIBAL AGRIBUSINESS

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM ON INDIAN RESERVATIONS ACT COULD PROVIDE TRIBES WITH GREATER AUTONOMY IN DISTRIBUTING HEALTHY, LOCALLY-SOURCED, TRADITIONAL FOODS TO CITIZENS

BY BRADEN HARPER

MANAGING EDITOR

OKLAHOMA CITY – Soon Native American Tribes across the United States could have greater autonomy in the way their citizens are distributed food. House Bill 3956, or the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) Act of 2025, will amend the 2018 Farm Bill by authorizing the Secretary of Agriculture to enter into self-determination contracts with Tribes. The bill modifies a FDPIR pilot program which is currently being utilized by 16 tribes including the Cherokee Nation and the Chickasaw Nation. Its goal is to provide greater access to healthy foods for Tribal communities.

FDPIR currently provides food to eligible families living on reservations and serves as an alternative to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). According to the bill, Indian Entities, or Tribes and Tribal Organizations, can negotiate and enter into self-determination contracts or self-governance agreements. Tribes can purchase agricultural commodities under the food distribution program for their reservation and administer programs, functions, services or activities related to their food distribution operations.

Tribes will be able to select the foods received in food packages, including domestically-sourced foods and will be able to establish direct contracts with the vendors that produce them. Data on

how the Cherokee Nation and the Chickasaw Nation have benefited from the program has been published online.

According to the USDA’s website, Tribally-procured foods the Cherokee Nation has distributed includes beef chuck roast and ground beef chubs. These were distributed for a total of 36 months and were purchased through the 1839 Cherokee Meat Company.

The Chickasaw Nation’s tribally-procured foods includes ground beef, roast beef, dry hominy, stew meat, and pecans. Their USDA supplanted foods also includes wild rice, canned beef, and peanuts. These were distributed over the course of 24-33 months. The

“That’s how you’re going to grow the agribusiness economy. You’re using federal money basically locally. We can buy from our own citizens who can mass produce food. Eventually it just builds on itself.” - Chris Azbell

foods were purchased through Rolland Ranch Beef, Guderian Foods, and the Bryant Pecan Company.

Although the Muscogee (Creek) Nation is not currently part of the pilot program, College of Muscogee Nation Extension Coordinator Chris Azbell believes the bill would be beneficial to the Nation’s food distribution network. Currently MCN does not source locally, that is done through the USDA. According to Azbell, if food distribution were to become locally sourced, it would need a diverse selection of

producers.

“We can start sourcing food locally, we can start growing out our agribusiness system,” Azbell said. “We can identify producers that sign these contracts and we don’t have to go all the way in. We can continue to utilize USDA in some of their distribution points to provide us food, however over time we can start transitioning that to local food access.”

Bill Sponsors and Pilot Testimonies

The bill is cosponsored by Oklahoma Third District U.S. Representative Frank Lucas and Kansas Third District Representative Sharice Davids (Ho-Chunk). According to Rep. Lucas, the pilot program that is already cur-

rently in effect has yielded positive results.

“I am very pleased to join my colleague from Kansas to introduce legislation that will ensure we honor our trust and treaty obligations,” Lucas said. “Tribes should be able to self-contract to administer quality, domestically produced food. Through the USDA’s FDPIR Demonstration Project, the tribes have proven that they are willing and able to successfully administer this program – now it is time to expand access to all tribes.”

Rep. Davids believes that the bill will be effective in meeting



Healthier foods could be more easily accessible for families that rely on Tribal food distribution services. (Shutterstock)

the unique needs of tribal citizens living on reservations. Particularly for those who live in food deserts, or low-income communities that lack nearby access to stores that offer affordable, healthy foods.

“For many Native families, accessing healthy, affordable food isn’t as simple as driving to the nearest grocery store,” Davids said. “Tribal communities face unique barriers, including long distances to grocery stores and supply chain disruptions that delay or cancel food deliveries. This bipartisan bill helps break down those barriers by ensuring tribal governments can better serve their communities and ensure families don’t go hungry.”

Both Chickasaw Nation Governor Bill Anoatubby and Cherokee Nation Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr. spoke highly of the pilot program at a House Committee on Natural Resources Oversight Field Hearing on April 4. According to Governor Anoatubby, the Chickasaw Nation has distributed USDA foods to its citizens for the past 40 years. The pilot program enhances those services by providing the tribe with greater autonomy.

“The program is excellent,” Governor Anoatubby said. “The addition of a self determination program where we can purchase certain foods ourselves is certainly

something we welcomed and has proven to be a very good change.”

Chief Hoskin remarked that the program gives his citizens a sense of normalcy, no different than a consumer going out to purchase groceries at the supermarket.

“It’s a good program, it’s an effective program, we’ve used it to good ends,” Chief Hoskin said. “These food distribution programs are in our tribal lands grocery store experiences in which the dignity of the citizen is maintained where they are able to access food that they need. This is beneficial because it allows us to buy locally.”

Azbell believes that the bill is a good step in the right direction for the tribes, however it will take time to build the agribusiness economy, including MCN’s. Although the fruits from a permanent bill might not be harvested immediately, Azbell said the result is worth it.

“People in general have gotten away from ag. It now comes down to just a few producers in the United States,” Azbell said. “Building that back is going to take time. And a willingness for people to go back and reengage with ag. You know, roll up their sleeves and get dirty. There’s a lot of opportunities.”

VETERANS EDITION

Mvskoke Media is now taking submissions for the 2025 Veterans Edition of the Newspaper set to publish on November 1st



For submissions, please submit a biography including the name, branch, years served and any other relevant information. Please include a high resolution photo to accompany the bio as well.

Submissions will be accepted no later than Monday, October 20th at 5pm CST

Send submissions to info@mvskokemedia.com

INDIGENOUS INK IS MAKING THE MARK

CHEYENNE KELLY'S MAKE-UP BUSINESS HAS RECEIVED AN OVERWHELMING RESPONSE



Cheyenne Kelly at the Beauty Bar Med Spa. (Photo Courtesy: Cheyenne Kelly)

BY SHAYLN PROCTOR
REPORTER

TULSA – Cheyenne Kelly (Yuchi/Mvskoke) is a 25 year old certified makeup artist and the face of Indigenous Ink, a beauty service specializing in permanent makeup- ombre powder brows, nano blading, lip blushing, and eyeliner tattooing. Currently part-time at Beauty Bar Med Spa in Tulsa, Kelly has grown her own clientele and plans to expand her skills and services.

How it started

Kelly began work right after high school graduation full-time at a post office. She felt she struggled in school and didn't want to go to college. She worked there for five years and thought it would be her forever placement until

life took a turn when she lost her father.

“That just kind of changed the trajectory of my life. I was kind of like ‘I’m not supposed to be here anymore, I need to go back home,’” Kelly shared. Kelly moved home, and was unemployed for a few months before finding fulltime work.

Knowing her interests, she began researching permanent makeup training and learned it can cost thousands of dollars. Knowing that federal funding wouldn’t help her through school, she waited two years before fully committing.

After looking into Beauty Bar Med Spa in Tulsa, Kelly learned that not only was their training cost affordable but they also offered night classes, ensuring she could stay at her full-time job.

“Through Oklahoma, you have to take 300 hours to get a license, so I just went from 3-7 p.m. and two days out of the weekend. My job was thankfully flexible with me,” said Kelly.

“I’m kind of at the part where I’m done with my schooling, I already took my test through the state and I’m licensed. I’m dabbling into more stuff so I have my business going, I’m still at Beauty Bar Med Spa right now,” Kelly said.

Media Buzz

She started her training in January of this year, and she has been doing cosmetic tattooing since February. She started a social media account, “Indigenous Ink,” to reach potential clients through her profile.

Currently running her own social media business, Kelly is still learning how to navigate her business and on-line presence.

“Honeslty, I didn’t even expect

that I just graduated the program and they had to take pictures of me so I was like I’ll just post them and honestly, genuinely I didn’t expect that reaction at all. I’m so grateful for people that shared and followed my page because I didn’t think it was gonna go anything like that. I’m very grateful it did,” Kelly said.

Her clientele list so far has traveled from Oklahoma City, Holdenville, and Seminole. She even has a waiting list.

“People travel from down south to come up, they have been messaging me and they don’t care what prices that they pay, they just want me to do it, which is crazy to me,” said Kelly.

Kelly tries to message everyone back, she wants to reach a personal connection with each potential client. She shared, “It’s not just about the price, what are they looking for? Am I the right fit or not?”

According to Kelly, permanent makeup requires understanding how skin texture can affect the outcome. “You have to talk to people and get to know how their skin is, just to see what they’re interested in because some people don’t wear makeup at all and they don’t know what they want. They’re like ‘is this going to look crazy on me? Is there another alternative that we can do?’ Stuff like that, they don’t know it’s going to look natural,” Kelly said.

For Kelly, the difficulty was not the cosmetic tattooing itself, but realizing that everyone’s face is unique. So she has to look at their face shape, figure out what would fit their frame, map their face and make sure no mistakes are made in the process.

“I always tell my clients like everything that I do to you, I’m not making you look better. I’m

just enhancing your natural looks because you’re already beautiful. So everything that I do is just enhancing whether it’s defining your lip border, giving you eyebrows. I try to stay pretty natural to their natural shape unless they don’t want to,” Kelly said.

The enjoyment

“I like being able to help people feel better about themselves and a lot of people come and they’re a little bit vulnerable,” Kelly said. “So they’re kind of like ‘I don’t like this about me’ or ‘I want a change and not have to wake up and not have any brow’ so I kind of like that part of it.”

Kelly likes working for herself and putting her results on her Indigenous Ink social media pages and seeing all of the responses.

“As far as running my own business I guess I can’t say I haven’t fully dove into that yet, but the business is a reflection of me so I really like that people like what I’m doing and I’m able to express myself, this is mine and I’m able to say I did this on my own.”

Kelly is currently starting to get into the paramedical services such as scars, stretch marks, and areola restoration. After she receives her license for those, she wants to get into scalp services for people that are dealing with hair loss.

Future plans

Right now Kelly is focused on adding more to her services at Beauty Bar Med Spa, however her plan later on is to be able to venture off and run her own place. Currently she is working to get her Limited Liability Corporation (LLC), and she wants to make sure she has the confidence to run her own spot.

“Within 5 to 10 years I want to have my own spot. I live in Glenpool, so I’d like to bring something like a Beauty Bar to Glenpool. I want to be able to teach other people when I get my instructor’s license and help other people that want to do the same thing that I do,” Kelly said.

Beauty Bar Med Spa owner Kristy Ha is Kelly’s instructor and taught Kelly everything she knows. According to Kelly, Ha is First Nations from Canada. Kelly’s instructor Ha was her motivator. Kelly saw how much Ha had pushed her and believed in her.

“She has a great establishment, all the people that work there are super nice and she has such patience with every student. Honestly, I’m only as good as what she has taught me, she really poured in a lot and she has a lot of late nights that she’s there with students. She has offered more stuff to me to advance my techniques that I have right now, so that’s what I’m doing,” Kelly said.

Appreciative of all her clients

Kelly is very grateful for the overwhelming response, especially in the community. “Native people are big with community. They want to see everybody else be better and strive to be the next big thing. So I feel super grateful that I brought something new to the community,” said Kelly.

“It’s just the small things and making a difference in people’s lives, making it easier and making them feel better about themselves. We deserve to feel good about ourselves.”

For anyone that wants to look at her services, results or consult about the services she provides you can find her on Facebook Indigenous Ink by Cheyenne.

IN MEMORIAM

RAYMOND LEWIS MEELY

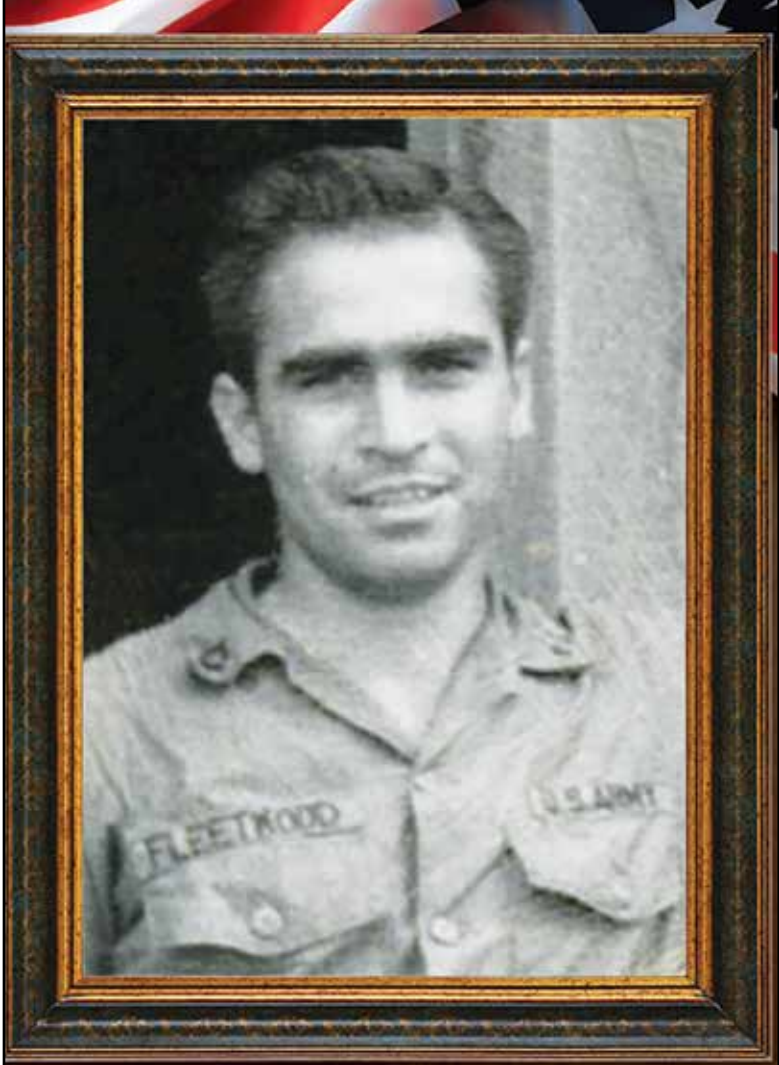


ber 24th, 1961 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma to Lincoln Meely and Elizabeth (Fixico) Meely. Raymond graduated from Holdenville high school in the Class of 1980. After high school, he attended and graduated from Tulsa Welding School. Raymond worked as an independent contractor for Tank in Seminole. He enjoyed fishing and family get togethers. Raymond loved OSU and 4th of July. He was Mekko Chief of Arbeka Ceremonial grounds.

Raymond is preceded in death by his parents Lincoln and Elizabeth Meely, brother Preston Meely, Uncles; Johnny Fixico, Billy Fixico, Robert Fixico, Aunts; Anna Culley, and Jeanette Fixico. He is survived by brother Arnold Meely, nephews; Bradley Meely, Johnathan Meely, nieces; Thelma Meely, Mamie Meely, Andye Wolfe, Toby Meely, Katy Meely and life long friend Bobby Eller.

VETERANS SPOTLIGHT

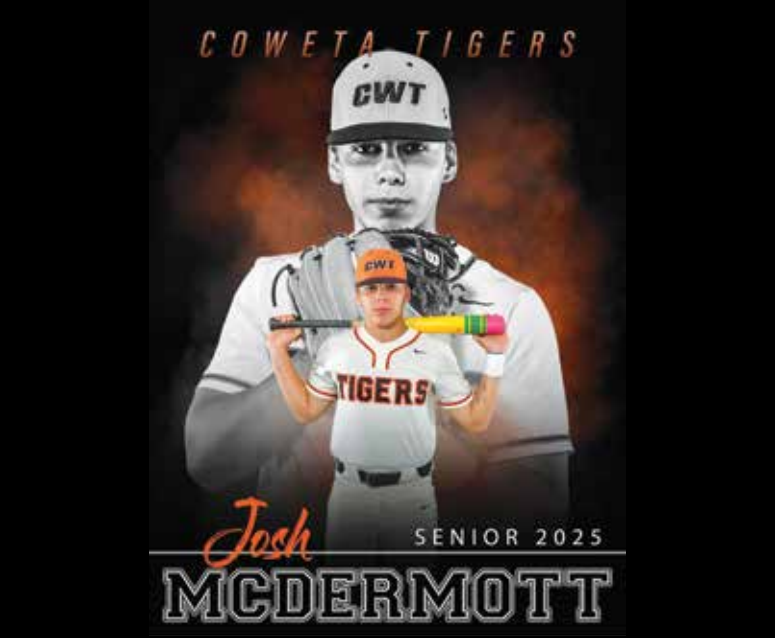
DARRELL HILLARD



Jimmy L. Fleetwood
U.S. Army
Vietnam War Veteran
Purple Heart Recipient
1967 - 1970

(Image Courtesy: VASO)

SUBMISSION



Joshua McDermott, who graduated from Coweta high school this past spring, was selected as 5A All State Player for the varsity baseball team. Josh had a batting average of .426 with only 3 strikeouts the second half of the season. He played right field and was also selected to play in the Native All State Game in Okmulgee which

was to be played in June but was cancelled due to rain. Josh carried a 3.4 GPA and is presently attending the College of the Mvskoke Nation in Okmulgee for natural resources management, he plans on finishing his degree at OSU. Josh is the son of Micah and Tammy McDermott. His family is very proud of him and his accomplishments.

Muscogee Nation Veterans Services Office is proud to honor tribal veteran Darrell G. Hillard for his dedicated service to the U.S. Army, the United States and the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. Darrell honorably served nineteen years from 1967 to 1986 and is a recipient of several honors: Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (4 awards), Army Commendation Medal, Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal, Army of Occupation Medal (Berlin), National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal (4 battle stars), Vietnam Campaign Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, Army Service Ribbon, Army Overseas Service Ribbon. Mvto Mr. Hillard for your selfless service to your country and your community.

MVTO FOR YOUR SELFLESS SERVICE!

RECYCLE

Continued from Page 4

are poured down the drain, it can erode the pipes. Williams strongly encourages everyone to routinely clean out their homes of chemicals that are either expired or no longer used.

“Sometimes (the chemicals) will separate inside that container and if it separates inside it can erode that container and you’ll get leakage,” Williams said. “The longer you have them around the lids will rust depending on the make up of the chemical in the cleaner. The vapors could get to your eyes or skin and be an irritant.”

The collection used a licensed Mvskoke vendor, Basin Environmental, to transport the hazardous material to a disposal site in Oklahoma City where it is incinerated. Basin Environmental is owned and operated by Mvskoke citizen Brock Holleman. Williams said MCN Principal Chief David Hill even stopped by to drop off his unused chemicals before departing for the annual Okmulgee Indigenous Celebration in Macon, Georgia.

Williams has become known around his neighborhood as the neighbor that hosts recycling and hazardous waste collection events for the Nation. Neighbors have given him recyclables and hazardous waste to take to the annual collection events. This month a neighbor gave Williams 20 cans of paint to deliver to the event. Although it is a chore, Williams is happy to do it and he doesn’t even charge a delivery fee.

The next collection event held by MCN Office of Environmental Services will be Recycling Day scheduled for the week of Nov. 15. To stay up to date on the department’s collection events, visit their Facebook page, Muscogee Creek Nation Office of Environmental Services.



(Braden Harper/MM)



BY **SHAYLN PROCTOR**
REPORTER

MVSKOKE RESERVATION - On September 9, the Land, Natural Resources and Cultural Preservation Committee held an in-person meeting.

The committee addressed the following legislation, the interpretation of which is attributed to language in the bills. All legislation passed through committee will be presented in the next session for full council approval.

TR 25-080 A tribal resolution of the MCN authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a Memorandum of Agreement with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation on behalf of the Nation’s Federal Roads Program for a Declaration Lane Improvement Project on U.S. Highway 75 passed with a vote of 3-0. Representative Robyn Whitecloud sponsored this legislation.

This MOU will be able to help complete roadway and bridge construction projects, the portion that was identified was on the highway near the Nation’s Capitol Complex. This MOU agreement will be able to help with competition of design, permitting, utility relocations. Bidding and construction as well as the Oklahoma Department of Transportation to help

MOU AGREEMENT BETWEEN MCN AND CITY OF TULSA RELATING TO COUNCIL OAK AND STICKBALL PARK'S PASSED LNC

MCN HISTORIC AND CULTURAL PRESERVATION WILL BE STARTING A 3 YEAR RESTORATIVE PROJECT WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF TULSA

with maintenance responsibilities til completion, according to the bill.

TR 25-081 A tribal resolution of the MCN authorizing the Principal Chief to execute the University of Georgia’s Transfer Form and Care and Trust Agreement for the transfer of ownership and legal control of certain ancestors, associated and unassociated funerary objects, sacred items, and/or other items of cultural patrimony passed with a vote of 3-0. Rep. Whitecloud sponsored this legislation.

The MCN Department of Culture and Humanities is wanting to work with the University of Georgia for the transfer of ownership and legal control. According to the bill, nothing in the NAGPRA Care and Trust Agreement waives the sovereign rights of the Nation.

TR 25-082 A tribal resolution of the MCN authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a Memorandum of Agreement with the county of Muskogee on behalf of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Federal Roads Program for the replacement of the South 54th Street bridge and to apply for Federal funding through the Bureau of Indian Affairs Tribal Transportation Bridge Program to fund the project passed with a vote of 3-0. Rep. Whitecloud

sponsored this legislation.

MCN has identified an issue about the bridge located in Muskogee that is structurally deficient and hazardous to the traveling public; this bridge is in need of reconstruction.

TR 25-083 A tribal resolution of the MCN authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a Memorandum of Understanding between the MCN and the City of Tulsa for the conveyance of Council Oak Park and Stickball Park passed with a vote of 3-0. Representative Galen Cloud sponsored this legislation.

According to the legislation, the City of Tulsa proposed to convey the Stickball Park and the Council Oak Park to MCN, this will be an acknowledgement that the Nation is the proper steward of these sites and that the public will benefit from the Nation’s ownership and stewardship of the Parks, according to the bill. MCN will be able to maintain and improve the Parks, so that the public will be able to learn about the importance of tribal, local, state and American History.

TR 25-084 A tribal resolution of the MCN authorizing the Principal Chief to submit a grant application to the FHL-BANK of Topeka Affordable Housing Program Implementa-

tion Plan for the benefit of the Department of Housing passed with a vote of 3-0. Representative Mark Randolph sponsored this legislation.

The grant application will be going towards the construction for 60 rental units located in Okemah, this is for the citizens that are under low to moderate income American Indians/ Alaskan Natives.

NCA 25-081 A law of the MCN authorizing the expenditure of the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service Temporary Bridge Program Grant for the benefit of the MCN Department of Transportation passed with a vote of 3-0. Rep. Whitecloud sponsored this legislation.

The amount of \$394,000 will be going towards establishing a Temporary Bridge Program by the purchase of four temporary bridges to help support the tribal community members, according to the bill.

NCA 25-082 A law of the MCN authorizing the expenditure of the University of Tulsa Subaward for the benefit of the Historic and Cultural Preservation Department passed with a vote of 3-0. Rep. Whitecloud sponsored this legislation.

The Historic and Cultural Preservation was awarded

\$60,000. These funds will be going toward their 3 year restorative project which will be in collaboration with the University of Tulsa. According to the bill, these funds will be used exactly for the digitization and rematriation of the Roberson-Worcester Collection.

NCA 25-083 A law of the MCN authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the U.S. Department of Housing for the resident opportunity and supportive services- services coordinators (ROSS-SC) grant for the benefit of the MCN Department of Housing passed with a vote of 3-0. Rep. Randolph sponsored this legislation.

The amount of \$251,702 will be going into each year for a period of three years with the grant award budget, according to the bill.

NCA 25-084 A law of the MCN authorizing the expenditure of MCN Department of Housing’s program income funds passed with a vote of 3-0. Rep. Randolph sponsored this legislation.

This amount will be able to help MCN Department of Housing to be able to access and expend Housing program income funds.

For more information visit, www.mcnn.com.



BY **THOMAS JACKSON**
REPORTER

MVSKOKE RESERVATION – On Sept. 18, the Business, Finance and Justice Committee held an in-person meeting. Passed legislation will go on to the next full council meeting, unless otherwise noted.

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

TR 25-073 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation confirming the nomination of Tim Wheeler to serve on the Mvskoke Loan Fund Board was passed with a vote of 4-0. Representative Nelson Harjo Sr. sponsored the legislation. The legislation was previously postponed on Aug. 14.

BFJ PASSES NATIONAL COUNCIL TERM LIMITS TO COUNCIL

REPS WOULD BE RESTRICTED TO THREE TERMS

If adopted, this resolution will allow Tim Wheeler to serve on the Mvskoke Loan Fund’s Board, with his term beginning on the date of his confirmation and ending after, at the most, three years.

TR 25-087 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation confirming the nomination of Jessie Stomski Seim to serve as a Supreme Court Justice of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation passed with a vote of 4-0. Speaker Randall Hicks sponsored the legislation.

If adopted, this resolution will allow Jessie Stomskki Seim to serve as a Supreme Court Justice of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, with her term beginning on the date of confirmation and ending on Sept. 18, 2031.

TR 25-088 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Prin-

cipal Chief to execute a certain intergovernmental detention agreement with the Board of County Commissioners of the County of Seminole to hold criminal defendants at Seminole County Jail in Seminole County, City of Wewoka, Oklahoma passed with a vote of 4-0. Representative Dode Barnett sponsored the legislation.

If adopted, this resolution would allow the Muscogee (Creek) Nation to keep defendants under its jurisdiction at the Seminole County Jail, provided that the Nation pays for the housing at a rate of \$50.00 per day, not including the cost of medical care.

TR 25-089 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a certain intergovernmental detention agreement with the Board of County Commissioners

of the County of Wagoner to hold criminal defendants at the Wagoner County Jail in Wagoner County, Oklahoma passed with a vote of 4-0. Rep. Barnett sponsored the legislation.

If adopted, this resolution would allow the Muscogee (Creek) Nation to keep defendants under its jurisdiction at the Wagoner County Jail, provided that the Nation pays for the housing at a rate of \$66.00 per day, not including the cost of medical care.

NCA 25-087 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation amending the Constitution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation by replacing “Muscogee” with the traditional spelling of “Mvskoke” and deleting the word “Creek” throughout the Constitution passed with a vote of 4-0. Representative Mark Randolph sponsored the legislation, with Representatives Leonard Gouge and Thomasene Yahola Osborn serving as co-sponsors.

Representatives Robert Hufft, Patrick Freeman, and Sandra Golden; and Rep. Harjo and Rep. Barnett were added as co-sponsors during committee.

NCA 25-090 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation amending Article VI Section 2 of the Constitution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation to establish term limits for National Council Representatives passed with a vote of 4-0. Rep. Osborn sponsored the legislation. Representative Mark Randolph and Rep. Barnett were added as co-sponsors during committee.

If adopted, this law will limit National Council Representatives of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation to a total of three terms, whether consecutive or non-consecutive, though partial terms created by election to fill a vacant spot are not included. The law will go into effect beginning in Jan., 2026

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



BY **BRADEN HARPER**
MANAGING EDITOR

MVSKOKE RESERVATION - On Sept. 9 the Health, Education, and Welfare Committee held a mixed virtual and in-person meeting. Passed legislation will go on to the next full council meeting, unless otherwise noted.

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

TR 25-085 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation respectfully requests the consideration of Allie P. Reynolds, a Muscogee (Creek) Citizen, as a National Baseball Hall of Fame candidate on the Classic Baseball Era Ballot. The legislation was sponsored by Representative Sandra Golden, Representative Galen Cloud, Representative Joyce Deere, Representative Leon-

ard Gouge, Representative Nelson Harjo Jr., Speaker Randall Hicks, Representative Robert Hufft, Representative Anna Marshall, Representative Mary Crawford, and Representative Darrell Proctor. The bill was approved to be 3-0.

Reynolds played Major League Baseball for the Cleveland Indians and the New York Yankees. In college he played for Oklahoma A&M College, now Oklahoma State University. Reynolds won six World Series Championships, five of which were consecutive. He was a six-time All-star and held numerous other honors.

TR 25-086 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute an agreement with the Fort Still Apache Casino Hotel for the use of their venue and hotel rooms at the Apache Casino Hotel for the Citizens Beyond the Reservation Outreach in Lawton, Oklahoma. Rep. Marshall spon-

sored the legislation. The bill was approved 3-0.

According to the bill, the agreement will include waivers of sovereign immunity regarding indemnification, attorney’s fees, and waiver of jury trial.

NCA 25-079 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the expenditure of the Marathon Petroleum Community Investment Programs Grant for the benefit of the Emergency Management Department. Rep. Gouge sponsored the bill. The bill was approved 3-0.

The \$60,000 grant will be used for the purchase of a Compact Rapid Deployable (CRD)/COW Cell-On-Wheels.

NCA 25-080 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing an appropriation for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Citizenship Office. Rep. Marshall sponsored the legislation. The bill was voted to be postponed indef-

initely 3-0.

If the bill was adopted, it would have provided \$50,000 for legal services for MCN Citizenship.

NCA 25-085 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation amending MCNCA Title 11, § 3-205 entitled “Disbursement of Funds.” Speaker Hicks sponsored the bill. A motion to postpone a vote on the bill for 30 days was approved 3-0.

If the bill is eventually passed, it will add language that includes supplemental funding to charter communities, subject to tribal administration guidelines and application procedures. In particular, the supplemental funding will be used between Sept. 30 and Oct. 15.

NCA 25-086 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation amending MCNCA Title 11, Chapter 3 entitled “Annual Funds for Operational Costs, Economic Development, and Social Service Programs of Chartered Commu-

nities”. Representative Mark Randolph, Representative Charles McHenry, Representative Robyn Whitecloud, and Representative Dode Barnett sponsored the legislation. The bill was approved 3-0.

If the bill is adopted into law, it will increase the annual appropriation of \$1,500,000 to \$2,500,000 to all chartered communities. Each community will receive \$90,000 each fiscal year in increments of \$30,000. Disbursements will begin in FY 2026.

Other Business:

MCN Secretary of Health Shawn Terry gave updates on the health system. His department will start distributing influenza vaccinations at the end of the month. Cancer patients receiving treatment through MCN Health will now be assigned a case manager.

To view the full agenda, visit mcnn.com.

LEGALS

CON COM ELECTION NOTICE

MCNNRCD-3D (08/25)

NOTICE OF FILING PERIOD FOR ELECTION OF MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

TO ALL PERSONS INTERESTED:

Notice is hereby given that any person who is a Muscogee (Creek) registered voter and a resident of the Muscogee (Creek) boundaries of the MCN Conservation District and has entered into or will enter into a Cooperator Agreement with the said District, may have their name placed on the official ballot of the District Commission Election of said District for “Seat B” – restricted landowner and “Seat D” – fee landowner by filing a Notification and Declaration of Candidacy with said District located at the MCN Housing building Room 220 or call 918-549-2609 between the dates of November 3-19, 2025. Notification and Declaration of Candidacy forms may be obtained at the above location and must be returned to the same location before close of business on the last day of the filing period. The Election will be held in December 2025.

JV-2025-13 (JESSE MELTON)

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

IN THE MATTER OF:)
A.M.; DOB: 08/15/2008;) JV-2025-13
Alleged Deprived Child(ren).)

JUVENILE SUMMONS

THE MUSCOGEE NATION to: JESSE MELTON

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that a Petition has been filed in the Court of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation alleging that the above-named child is a deprived child and that, as the parent of said child, A.M., you have been named as the Respondent, all as more fully set out in the Petition.

YOU ARE THEREFORE ORDERED TO APPEAR at the Courtroom of the District Court of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, Okmulgee, Oklahoma, on the 16th day of November, 2025 at the hour of 9:00 a.m. for an **Adjudication/Disposition Hearing** and to there remain subject to the call of the Court until discharged, so that you may be advised of the allegations and may answer that you admit or deny the allegations of the Deprived Petition.

You may seek the advice of any attorney on any matter relating to this action at your own expense. Or, if you are qualified as indigent, an attorney can be appointed for you.

IF YOU FAIL TO ATTEND THIS HEARING, YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS MAY BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED AND YOU MAY BE CITED FOR CONTEMPT OF COURT AND A BENCH WARRANT MAY BE ISSUED FOR YOUR ARREST.

Issued this 10th day of September, 2025.

Seal

TOL

Deputy Court Clerk
Muscogee (Creek) Nation District Court

JV-2025-13 (LILLIE LIGHTNING)

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

IN THE MATTER OF:)
A.M.; DOB: 08/15/2008;) JV-2025-13
Alleged Deprived Child(ren).)

JUVENILE SUMMONS

THE MUSCOGEE NATION to: LILLIE LIGHTNING

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that a Petition has been filed in the Court of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation alleging that the above-named child is a deprived child and that, as the parent of said child, A.M., you have been named as the Respondent, all as more fully set out in the Petition.

YOU ARE THEREFORE ORDERED TO APPEAR at the Courtroom of the District Court of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, Okmulgee, Oklahoma, on the 16th day of November, 2025 at the hour of 9:00 a.m. for an **Adjudication/Disposition Hearing** and to there remain subject to the call of the Court until discharged, so that you may be advised of the allegations and may answer that you admit or deny the allegations of the Deprived Petition.

You may seek the advice of any attorney on any matter relating to this action at your own expense. Or, if you are qualified as indigent, an attorney can be appointed for you.

IF YOU FAIL TO ATTEND THIS HEARING, YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS MAY BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED AND YOU MAY BE CITED FOR CONTEMPT OF COURT AND A BENCH WARRANT MAY BE ISSUED FOR YOUR ARREST.

Issued this 10th day of September, 2025.

Seal

Th

Deputy Court Clerk
Muscogee (Creek) Nation District Court

PB-2023-076

FILED
IN DISTRICT COURT
SEP 22 2025
OKMULGEE COUNTY, OKLAHOMA
CHARLY CRINER, Court Clerk
By Deputy

IN THE DISTRICT COURT IN AND FOR OKMULGEE COUNTY
STATE OF OKLAHOMA

In the Matter of the Estate of)
CORAIN ELAINE LOWE-ZEPEDA, Deceased.) Case No. PB-2023-076

ORDER FOR HEARING
SECOND PETITION TO SELL REAL PROPERTY

Upon the filing of a verified Second Petition for the sale of the real property in this estate, Letisha Couch, Personal Representative of the Estate of Corain Elaine Lowe-Zepeda, deceased, and it appearing to the Court that it is necessary to sell the real property of this estate;

IT IS ORDERED that the Second Petition is set for hearing before the District Court of Okmulgee County, State of Oklahoma, Courtroom Three, 314 West 7th Street, Suite 305, Okmulgee, Oklahoma, on the 21st day of October, 2025, at 9:00 o'clock a.M., at which time the heirs and all persons interested in the above-named estate are required to appear and show cause, if any they have, why an Order should not be granted for the sale of the real property of this estate for the reasons stated in the Second Petition and for other Orders requested in said Second Petition; and,

That a copy of this Order be mailed, with postage prepaid, to all heirs at law, at their last-known address, not less than ten (10) days before the hearing of the Second Petition; and,

That a copy of this Order be published in one (1) issue in a newspaper of general circulation in Okmulgee County, not less than ten (10) days before the hearing of the Second Petition.

Dated this 18th day of September, 2025.

HILTON LAW OFFICE
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Skialook, OK 74070
(918) 396-4400
ATTORNEYS FOR THE PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE

Lythia D. Robinson

JUDGE

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Elder’s Meeting

Okmulgee Elder Nutrition Center
2900 N. Osage Pl. Okmulgee, OK.
Oct. 8 | 9:30 a.m.

Coffee and Donuts

Veterans Affairs Services Office
Oct. 9 | 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.
1006 Bear Ln,
Okmulgee, OK 74447
For questions, contact
918-732-7739.

Revival

Haikey Chapel UMC
Oct 19-20
On Oct. 19 dinner will be served at 5:00 p.m., service starts at 7:00 p.m. On Oct. 20 service starts at 7:00 p.m.
8815 E. 101st St.
Tulsa, Okla

Fall Arts and Crafts Market

Holdenville Creek Indian Community Center
Nov. 1 | 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
224 E. Poplar Holdenville, Okla
Free setup and 1 table, 2 chairs provided
To reserve a spot call,
405-379-3485

Health Shelf Donation Drive

College of Muscogee Nation
Health & Wellness is seeking hygiene products, laundry detergent, and gently used blankets and pillows for students in need.
Every five items donated will enter donors into a drawing.
Donations can be dropped off at 2170 Raven Circle, Okmulgee, OK.
For more info., contact
918-549-2800.

Plant ID Field Day

MCN Conservation District
Oct. 9 | 10 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
33904 East 111th St.
S. Coweta, Okla
For questions,
contact 918-549-2609

Haskell Reunion & General Membership Meeting

Oct 17-19
Grand Casino Resort/
Hotel in Shawnee
Registration begins at 3:00 PM Friday \$75 per person includes Fri. reception and Sat. Board Meeting Brunch
Sat. Dinner Registration \$50 and Membership dues: \$25 Special room rates: \$110/night
Call 405-964-7777 to reserve rooms

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FOR QUESTIONS OR TO PLACE AN ORDER /// CREATIVE@MVSKOKEMEDIA.COM /// 918.732.7640

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