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MVSKOKE NEWS

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SKO RED EVENT EDUCATES FOR HEART HEALTH AND STROKE AWARENESS



The Stroke Prevention Program offered material and hands-on learning. (Shayln Proctor/MM)

BY SHAYLN PROCTOR

GLENPOOL – The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Stroke Prevention Program held the SKO Red event at the Glenpool Conference Center on Feb. 25. The event educated about stroke risk and encouraged healthier choices. They had activity stations, walking program enrollment, hands-only CPR classes, and chair yoga. Everyone who attended received a free t-shirt, goodie bags, and a box lunch.

“The event encourages early detection, healthy lifestyle choices, and empowers Mvskoke citizens to take proactive steps towards preventing stroke,” stated MCN Health Prevention Program Nurse Navigator Angela King.

The Sko Red theme was chosen because of the native slang “SKODEN,” which means “let’s go then,” and red is the color of heart health month.

This year, two prizes were given away at the event: Bluetooth pressure monitors and a salt book called “Eat Less Salt” from the American Heart Association, which provides examples of how much salt is needed, recipe tweaks, and modifications for eating out.

King pointed out that women do have a higher overall risk than men for strokes and heart attacks, and their program wanted to make sure that everyone has education for reducing their risk.

“Strokes and heart attacks are 80% preventable for everyone. We can reduce that risk by aiming for 30 min of activity most days, getting 7-9 hours of sleep per night, giving nicotine and alcohol the boot, practicing healthier coping habits (because some stresses we can’t eliminate), making healthier eating habits, & management of our chronic diseases, such as diabetes, hypertension, & high

cholesterol,” stated King.

Their program provided information in the goodie bags, which included a neck massager and a pedometer watch. They had wallet-sized pocket cards to track activity and healthy numbers for blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol.

Other items offered in the bags included informational reminders. “There are magnets we can stick on our fridge or desk, so it reminds us of what to do if we are ever in that situation, because most of us don’t think as clearly in that moment of panic so frequently looking at these can help with memory retention for those stressful events,” King explained.



Participants practiced chest compressions on CPR dummies. (Shayln Proctor/MM)

The hands-only CPR class was a noncertification training; however, participants were given two steps proven to

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U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS DISCUSSES FUNDING FOR PUBLIC SAFETY

BY BRADEN HARPER

WASHINGTON – Public safety, crime rehabilitation, and child welfare were on the table during the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs hearing on Wednesday, Jan 28. The committee heard testimony from leaders of the Spirit Lake Nation, the Fort Belknap Indian Community, StrongHearts Native Helpline, and the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission. The committee’s main focus was Title II of the draft Native Children’s Commission Implementation Act. If adopted into federal law, it will secure federal funding for crime victim services for Alaska Native, Hawaii Native, and Native American communities.

Title II would establish a Tribal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice that would focus on delinquency prevention for Indigenous youth. The act would also establish a Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) study on missing Native American/Alaskan Native children cases, analyzing the scope and context of cases connected to criminal circumstances.

Hawaii Senator Brian Schatz serves as the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs Vice Chairman. Schatz voiced his support for passing the drafted bill. He believed it was urgent to address the funding needs of the crime-advocate programs in Indigenous communities.

“It’s clear we need to do more to address public safety,” Schatz said. “Today we continue this work with a specific focus on children and families.”

Other sections in Title II include funding for the Denali Commission; Alaska Native and American Indian family violence prevention, services, and treatment; and the Tiwahe Program. The committee discussed how the Tiwahe program was a model for the NCCIA. Tiwahe is the Lakota word for embodying the concept of family and highlighting interdependence among living entities. The program creates alternatives to incarceration by connecting Tribal citizens with culture and community.

If Congress adopts the law, Title II of the NCCIA will codify the Tiwahe program within the Department of the Interior.

The Tiwahe Program was developed by the Spirit Lake Tribe, whose reservation is located in east-central North Dakota and comprises approximately 8,000 Tribal citizens. The program was developed to support troubled youths and adults. Through the program, participants have access to resources that help them find employment, housing, and maintain a healthy lifestyle. In her testimony, Spirit Lake Tribal Council Chairwoman Lonna Jackson-Street called for cooperation agreements, increased funding for Tribal law enforcement agencies, and enhanced training for Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents operating in Indian Country.

“Our Tiwahe program, the passage of the Native Children’s Commission Implementation Act, as well as our other recommendations, are essential to save the generations of our youth in Indian Country,” Jackson-Street said.

On Thursday, August 20, 2025, the Fort Belknap joined the Tiwahe Program. Fort Belknap Council Member Joan Johnson remarked that the program’s flexibility allows them to take a unique approach to treating addiction: culture, not punishment.

According to Johnson, the program has also allowed the Fort Belknap Indian Community to provide transportation for citizens going to doctors’ appointments or the hospital. “For Fort Belknap, Tiwahe is not just a line item in a budget; it’s a cornerstone of our success in protecting our most sacred resource, which is our children,” Johnson said.

Regarding the Justice and Safety for Native Children Act, Johnson remarked that the act allows children’s voices to be heard despite ongoing custody battles between the parents. She argued that the act was in the best interests of Indigenous children, yet it needed to be well-funded to be successful.

StrongHearts Executive Director Lori Jump explained that Title II of this act will codify provisions to secure funding for programs that serve Indigenous children. StrongHearts, like the other organizations referenced in Jump’s testimony, provides crucial services for survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

“These include the Alaskan Native Women’s Resource Center, the Native Hawaiians’ Resource Center, and StrongHearts Native Helpline,” Jump said. “Indigenous people have a different worldview that is often misunderstood by Western organizations. Where others say ‘we have rights, we say we have obligations. Where others say ‘I don’t know that person,’ we say ‘they are our relative.’ As a relative, we have an obligation to care for them.”

The Native Children’s Commission Implementation Act is currently in draft form and can be read on the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs website at indian.senate.gov.

OH, THE PLACES CHIEF GOES!

A READ-ALOUD VISIT BEGINS DR. SEUSS WEEK

BY THOMAS JACKSON

OKMULGEE – The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Okmulgee Child Development Center kicked off Week of the Young Child with a read-aloud visit by Principal Chief David Hill and Second Chief Del Beaver on Friday, Feb. 27.

The week coincides with Read Across America Week, also known as Dr. Seuss Week, a reading event celebrating the famous author.

Principal Chief Hill and Second Chief Beaver read the book “Fry Bread: A Native American Family Story,” written by Kevin Noble Maillard (Seminole) and illustrated by Juana Martinez-Neal.

During the read-aloud, the children followed the recipe for fry bread shared in the book.



Students at the MCN Okmulgee CDC wear Cat in the Hat toppers during the read-aloud visit. (MCN CDC)

The story illustrates the many cultural connections the food holds for Indigenous people in the United States.

Okmulgee Child Development Center supervisor Dana Maxwell told Mvskoke Media that it was an honor to have the Principal Chief and the Second Chief participate in Dr. Seuss Week and read the book.

“As we honor this special week, we also renew our commitment to young learners. Investing in early childhood education strengthens families, builds resilient communi-

ties, and shapes a brighter future for everyone,” Maxwell said. “Whether through a shared song, a creative art project, or a moment of connection between teacher and family, the Week of the Young Child reminds us that every experience matters-and every child matters.”

The center celebrated each day of the week with a Dr. Seuss-based theme. The week culminated on Friday, March 6, with “Green Eggs and Ham Friday,” where kids wore green and were served green eggs and ham for breakfast.

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HEALTH

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help save a life. They wanted citizens to know what to do in a situation, giving them confidence and the skills they would need until professional medical help arrived. Registered Nurse Diabetes Educator/Coordinator Victoria Lowry at the Sapulpa Indian Clinic taught this demonstration.

“This was just to give people the opportunity to practice the feeling of how fast and how hard that you actually have to push, because a lot of times I’ve talked with people after they’ve had to do CPR and they worried that they weren’t doing it right, too hard, or not hard enough,” King said. “So this actually gave them a real-life feel of how hard that they would have to push.”

The next activity was the Corn Husk Dolls, taught by MCN Native Youth Community Project Curriculum Specialist Cassandra Thompson (Mvskoke). She has done a ton of traditional art and crafts in the past; their program chose Thompson because it can also be a stress-relief activity. King mentions that they wanted to include activities that would help reduce risks while also having a Native theme.

For their final activity, they did chair yoga, demonstrated by Jill Fox (Chickasaw), who has been practicing yoga for 25 years. Chair yoga can be used daily; this activity helps improve posture and relieve tension and tightness in the

hips, back, and shoulders.

King related, “We have used her in multiple different events, especially with the MCN Diabetes Summit, and everybody loves her classes. The chair yoga is so relaxing, and anybody, any age, no matter their ability, and they can be wheelchair bound.”

King believes this event is important for citizens,

as a community, because it emphasizes taking care of one another and taking care of ourselves- some habits have been contributing to health issues.

“Especially our elders, we need to be able to get back to some of the things that we used to be doing that improve our health. Like we’re trying to do more with the College of


the Muscogee Nation to help with gardening and stuff like that,” King said. “As a community, we need to be more active; we need to help each other. We need to go back to a lot of the way that our ancestors did.”

During the event, they also had a Walking for Life enrollment, an annual, incentive-based program that


encourages the Native community to be more physically active year-round, as King stated. The Health Promotion and Wellness Team and the Public Health Nurses helped citizens enroll.

For King, the job is rewarding. “It’s a very good feeling, helping the community the way that I am able to, and getting feedback from so many people,” King said.


Signs of a heart attack can include...




Chest discomfort




Cold sweat




Difficulty breathing




Pounding or irregular heartbeat





Heartburn, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain



Discomfort in arms, back, neck or jaw



Dizziness or lightheadedness

SPOT A STROKE

F.A.S.T.



FACE

Drooping



ARM

Weakness



SPEECH


Difficulty




TIME

to Call 911



Hands-Only CPR




Why Learn Hands-Only CPR?

Cardiac arrest – an electrical malfunction in the heart that causes an irregular heartbeat (arrhythmia) and disrupts the flow of blood to the brain, lungs and other organs – is a leading cause of death. Each year, more than 350,000 EMS-assessed out-of-hospital cardiac arrests occur in the United States.

When a person has a cardiac arrest, survival depends on immediately receiving CPR from someone nearby. According to the American Heart Association, about 90 percent of people who suffer out-of-hospital cardiac arrests die. CPR, especially if performed immediately, can double or triple a cardiac arrest victim's chance of survival.


Be the Difference for Someone You Love

If you are called on to give CPR in an emergency, you will most likely be trying to save the life of someone you love: a child, a spouse, a parent or a friend.



70%

Over 70 percent of out-of-hospital cardiac arrests happen in homes.




Only about 40% of people who experience an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest receive the immediate help that they need before professional help arrives.

Hands-Only CPR has been shown to be as effective in the first few minutes as conventional CPR for cardiac arrest at home, at work or in public.

Hands-Only CPR has just two easy steps, performed in this order:


1



Call 911 if you see a teen or adult suddenly collapse.

➔

2



Push hard and fast in the center of the chest to the beat of a familiar song that has 100 to 120 beats per minute.

Call 911

The telecommunicator on the other end of the line can assist you while getting the emergency help you need on the way.

Music Can Save Lives

Song examples include “Stayin’ Alive” by the Bee Gees, “Crazy in Love” by Beyoncé featuring Jay-Z, “Hips Don’t Lie” by Shakira” or “Walk the Line” by Johnny Cash. People feel more confident performing Hands-Only CPR and are more likely to remember the correct rate when trained to the beat of a familiar song.

When performing CPR, you should push on the chest at a rate of 100 to 120 compressions per minute, which corresponds to the beat of the song examples above.

Take 90 Seconds to Learn How to Save a Life

Watch the 90-second video. Visit heart.org/handsonlycpr to watch the Hands-Only CPR instructional video and share it with the important people in your life. Hands-Only CPR is a natural introduction to CPR, and the AHA encourages everyone to learn conventional CPR as a next step. You can find a CPR class near you at heart.org/CPR.

NOTE: The AHA still recommends CPR with compressions and breaths for infants and children and victims of drowning, drug overdose, or people who collapse due to breathing problems.

CPR week is June 1-7 | To learn more, visit heart.org/handsonlycpr | #CPRwithHeart

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COWETA CASINO HOTEL OPEN FOR BUSINESS

COMPLETED IN UNDER TWO YEARS, THE NEW LOCATION WILL EMPLOY 95 NEW TEAM MEMBERS AND STRENGTHEN TOURISM IN THE EASTERN PART OF THE RESERVATION

BY BRADEN HARPER

COWETA – Tribal leadership cut the ribbon on the newest addition to Muscogee Nation Gaming Enterprises on Monday, March 2. The Coweta Casino Hotel is a \$100 million project that spans 104,000 square feet. The casino’s 35,000 square foot gaming floor contains 750 new gaming machines and features a player’s club. The 46-room hotel features a pool, fitness center, and concierge services. In-house dining options include a raised casino bar, a full-service restaurant, and convenient grab-and-go options. The investment will create 250 full-time positions and is estimated to generate \$27.5 million in annual revenue.

The casino’s lobby features original commissioned artwork by Muscogee (Creek) Citizen Carly Treece. Titled “Kvwtv,” it honors one of the four Mother Towns originally

located in the Southeast homelands. The piece depicts the Chat-tahooche River in three panels and symbolizes the lifeblood of Muscogee towns; a source of ceremony, governance, trade, and connection. The panels are layered with natural materials, including ash, charcoal, and soil.

Tribal leaders shared that the casino is simply the next chapter in their relationship with the City of Coweta. MCN Principal Chief David Hill remarked that the new casino is just one of the many ways the Nation has invested in the community. “When the Muscogee Nation invests in one of our communities, it is more than just building and maintaining infrastructure. It’s laying the groundwork for generational prosperity,” Principal Chief Hill said.

“With each investment, we honor the heritage by ensuring lives

are improved, opportunities are created, and a better future becomes possible for all.”

City of Coweta Mayor Naomi Hogue expressed her gratitude to the Nation for its investments in the community. According to Hogue, the Nation has also invested in road-way repairs and provided the city’s fire department with a fire ladder.

“Coweta’s partnership with the Muscogee Nation is reflected in their investment made to our community. We are proud to welcome this new investment to our community,” Hogue said.

According to MNGE CEO Pat Crofts, Coweta was an easy location to select due to its accessibility and cooperation.

“Since announcing this project, we have often been asked, ‘Why here? Why Coweta?’ The answer is clear. The City of Coweta is growing. Wagoner County continues to



The Coweta Casino Hotel opened on March 2. The casino is estimated to create 250 full-time positions and generate over \$25 million in revenue. (Braden Harper/MM)

gain momentum as an important part of the Tulsa metropolitan area,” Crofts said.

“Where population grows, demand for entertainment, hospitality, and tourism grows with it.

Accessibility, growth, and partnership matter. Coweta represents all three of these things. That’s why we have invested here.”

The Coweta Casino Hotel is located at 13185 S. State Highway 51.

DANCE FOR LIFE WITH JULIE OFFERS HEALTH BENEFITS FOR CITIZENS



Bryant (Center) teaches Dance for Life at centers across the reservation. (Image credit: Julie Bryant)

BY SHAYLN PROCTOR

MVSKOKE RESERVATION – The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Health Department began the Dance for Life program with Julie Bryant (Mvskoke). Classes are free and held at three Indian Community Centers across the reservation. This is open to all MCN Tribal and Health

Staff, MCN community elders, and walking program participants. These sessions will run through the end of May.

Class sessions will be held at Weleetka Indian Community Center, Glenpool Indian Community Center, and Twin Hills Indian Community Center.

“You can come as many times as you want, it’s free,

and basically we’re focusing on aerobics and fun. You don’t have to be a dancer, you don’t have to have a right foot and a left foot, you can have two left feet, as people say, you’re fine in our class,” Bryant said. Bryant explained that their main goal is to get people moving while having fun.

Bryant views the classes as beneficial for citizens because they focus on aerobics, flexibility, and strength training. Plus, people of all ages can do these exercises.

“It’s all fitness levels because we have some people who can only stay on their feet for a certain length of time or even exercise out of the chair,” Bryant said. “We have to have movement, we have to have functional movement. By that I mean, being able to reach down and pick something off the floor, being able to put something on the shelf, being able to be as ambient as we can be our entire lives.”

She shared that the classes have been well attended, and

some participants have lost weight and become more flexible. “We just have a lot of fun, because we want everybody to enjoy themselves while they’re there. I feel like it’s a really important thing for everybody to have a level of fitness, and well all can improve,” Bryant explained.

Bryant has taught dance for over 60 years and has been a member of the American Council of Exercise for 35 years. She’s also taught at the MCN Health Diabetes Summits for the past nine years, taught all types of aerobic and fitness classes, and even provides personal training.

“Dance and fitness have been my life forever; it’s just one of those things that just kind of happened. I started teaching dance before I ever left college, and when I went back for a Master’s degree in Physical Education at OSU (Oklahoma State University), I taught at Oklahoma State University and created some of their dance departments.

Started teaching tap, ballet, and jazz,” Bryant said.

Bryant always had fun in past classes and enjoyed working with MCN Health on the classes. “It’s never been really a job; it’s just a part of my everyday life. These classes are more fun than anything because they want to be there,” Bryant explained.

DANCE CLASS SESSIONS

Twin Hills Indian Community Center:

Monday, 6:15 p.m.
Except on the last Monday of every month, class sessions will start at 5:30 p.m.

Glenpool Indian Community Center:

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6 p.m.

Weleetka Indian Community Center:

Wednesdays, 6 p.m.

BILL TO CHANGE DUI ENFORCEMENT ADOPTED BY MCNNC

BY THOMAS JACKSON

MVSKOKE RESERVATION – A bill changing how DUI charges are to be enforced and punished on the reservation passed the Business, Finance, and Justice committee on Feb. 19 and was adopted at the National Council Regular Session on Feb. 28. Proposed by the Attorney General’s Office and sponsored by Representative William Lowe, the bill, NCA 26-034, passed unanimously at both meetings.

The bill amends MCNCA Title 14, subsection 3-1304: “a law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation amending entitled ‘Persons under the influence of alcohol or other intoxicating substances or combination thereof.’”

According to Attorney General Geri Wisner, who spoke during committee discussion, one goal is to fix an error in the MCN criminal code: an intoxicated person in the driver’s seat and in control of the vehicle, but not driving it, can be charged only with Public Intoxication.

She stated, “As it currently reads, the MCN Criminal Code does not allow any other charge of persons under the influence unless they are actually driving a vehicle.”

For example, the change includes people in the driver’s seat of a vehicle while intoxicated, regardless of whether they have been observed driving.

“As we recognized, there are many situations where someone may be under the influence, sitting in the driver’s seat, car keys in the ignition, and it may be running, but they don’t have it in drive. This would allow us to be able to charge without it [the car] being in motion,” Wisner said.

Another motivation, mentioned by Wisner during the discussion, is to align the MCN criminal code more closely with state law.

The bill includes a change not mentioned during the discussion: a DUI charge now results in a felony if it occurs within 10 years of a prior DUI charge or a deferred judgment.

According to the bill, this change was made due to “a lack of accountability for individuals who recommit this violation a second time, either by a conviction or a deferred judgment.” Additionally, this prevents offenders from having multiple first-time offenses by requiring a check for prior charges.



Office of Environmental Services

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE (HHW) COLLECTION EVENT

Friday, March 27, 2026 / 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

OES Household Hazardous Waste Collection event WILL ACCEPT the following items:

- ✓ **AUTOMOTIVE PRODUCTS:** antifreeze, fluids, motor oil, oil filters, gasoline, polish, and waxes (NO battery acid)
- ✓ **PAINT PRODUCTS:** oil-based paint, spray paint, caulk, wood preservatives, wood stain products, paint thinners, and paint strippers
- ✓ **OTHER HOUSEHOLD CHEMICALS:** toilet bowl cleaner, shower/tile cleaner, carpet cleaner, rust remover and more
- ✓ **LAWN CARE CHEMICALS:** bug repellent, fertilizers, flea & tick repellent, fumigators, herbicides, insecticides, mosquito fogger, pesticides, rodenticides, stump remover



OES Household Hazardous Waste Collection event WILL NOT ACCEPT the following items:

- ✗ **NO COMMERCIAL WASTE**
- ✗ **NO LATEX PAINT:** dry and throw away, (if the can is too full) spread paint over cardboard, wait for the paint to dry (both can and cardboard), and then throw away
- ✗ **ELECTRONIC WASTE:** answering machines, calculators, cameras, CD/DVD players, cell phones, pagers, holiday lights, modems, monitors, printers, radios, scanners, microwaves, etc.
- ✗ **MISCELLANEOUS:** any batteries, ballasts, fluorescent bulbs, tires, cooking oil and grease, Freon cylinders or compressed gas cylinders, home fire extinguishers, mercury thermometers, thermostats, nail polish, aerosols, unused ammunition, and unused fireworks



Muscogee (Creek) Nation RECYCLE CENTER
 12675 Gun Club Road
 Okmulgee, OK 74447
FOR MORE INFO, CONTACT 918-549-2580





WILSON STUDENTS SERVE UP SMILES (AND INDIAN TACOS)

AWARD-WINNING WILSON COOKING CLASS SERVES DINNER TO MCN REINTEGRATION CLIENTS AND STUDENTS AT THE MURROW INDIAN CHILDREN'S HOME



The Wilson Creek Community Center Cooking Class. Louise Roberts (center) with some of her students, the frybread inspectors. For Roberts, teaching spreads community, she shared, "It's learning to give back, to be helpful, to help those that are in need. That's what I'm trying to teach them (Wilson Indian Community students), how to be a good person and help out wherever they can." (Braden Harper/MM)

BY BRADEN HARPER

HENRIETTA – Louise Roberts (Mvskoke) takes to heart the proverb, “If you give a man a fish, he will eat for a day. If you teach a man to fish, he will eat for a lifetime.” Roberts uses that belief to organize and teach the Wilson Indian Community Cooking Class. The class teaches students ages 10-14 how to prepare basic meals and traditional Mvskoke foods. The class prepared an Indian taco dinner for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Reintegration program (RiP) on Thursday, Feb. 19 and for the Murrow Indian Children’s home on Saturday, Feb. 21.

The dinner served two purposes: to serve others and to encourage students to make good career and personal choices. RiP clients like Tonya Osborne (Mvskoke) and Patrick Tims (Mvskoke) were able to sit down with students to share their testimonies. Osborne described the dinner as a blessing; Tim described it as heartwarming.

The dinner is one of the many ways the RiP program reintegrates clients back into society. The program serves as a second chance for those transitioning from prison. It also provides housing and helps clients find employment, like through the Fiber Optic Lineman Training Program. Osborne is one of the program’s newest alumni.

“The community has been really good to us. I would encourage everybody to go do the linemen classes because they are a great opportunity,” Osborne said.

In addition to the career opportunities offered through the program, Tims and Osborne agreed that events like



Roberts (Left) and her daughter, Kim Morrison (Right). (Braden Harper/MM)

the Indian Taco Dinner help them stay connected to their culture and faith. According to Tims, spiritual faith and faith in himself are what give him strength and purpose.

“It creates a more stronger, intimate relationship with God,” Tims said. “We have activities and we have people

come visit us every week but most importantly it’s about God and believing in ourselves.”

Wilson Cooking Class

The Wilson Cooking Class is a family affair for the Roberts’ family. Her daughter, Kim Morrison (Mvskoke), and her grandson help with the class. For Roberts, the class is relatively new, having started about a year and a half ago. Originally, it was a way to teach community members of all ages how to cook for themselves. As time moved on, most adult members left due to personal responsibilities. However, Roberts remarked that the kids stuck around, eager to learn more. It became an ongoing event they looked forward to.

“I told these kids, ‘One day you’re going to be leaving home. You’re going to college, or you’re going to get married. I don’t want you all to get hungry. I want you to be able to learn how to make little, simple foods, even if it’s just a sandwich, to survive.’ Here, let’s learn how to cook, and they were eager to do it,” Roberts said.

From there, students learned how to make easy-to-make meals such as spaghetti, goulash, stew, and chili. Traditional foods included salt meat, wild onions, chicken and dumplings, pork and hominy, and grape dumplings.

Food safety is an essential skill taught in the cooking class. Students learn to use utensils responsibly and operate kitchen appliances. For kitchen safety, the class requires that students be over 10 years old. However, that does not stop younger children from wanting to participate. Roberts makes sure everyone feels included and assigns small, safe tasks to the younger kids.

At just under two years old, the Wilson Cooking Class has already received accolades. They appeared in last year’s Johnson O’Malley’s 2nd Annual Cultural Cook-Off held during their Family Cultural Night. The Wilson Cooking Class took home first place for their traditional Mvskoke foods.

A Story behind every Food

Some foods, particularly traditional foods, are special to Roberts because she has a personal connection to them. Her grandmother, Lucy Roberts, was a full blood Mvskoke citizen and taught her how to make grape dumplings. She recounted stories of grape-hunting and wild onion-picking with her grandmother along creek banks. Sticks were

used to pull down vine branches, and small shovels were used to pick onions.

“The ladies would dig it, the husbands would grab it, pull it, shake it, then they would come home and clean them, and you had a feast,” Louise Roberts said.

“There was a lot of work to it. This is how my grandmother did it.”

Growing up in Louise Roberts’ childhood home, food mainly came from gathering and hunting. If you wanted a particular food like blackberries, peaches, or pecans, you



Roberts hard at work in the kitchen. (Braden Harper/MM)

had to wait for the right season. Louise Roberts recounted that everything was made by hand- nothing came out of a box.

One of Louise Roberts’ first lessons for the cooking class was on an Indigenous favorite: frybread. Although it is well-beloved today, Roberts made sure to share with her students its origin as a survival food for the Navajo people. Roberts, like other Indigenous chefs, believes it is important for the unpleasant history of frybread to be passed down to the next generation.

“I told them the story about how it (frybread) came out of the Navajo Nation, in the camps, when they were held captive, and their rations were limited,” Roberts said.

“They had to use what they had, so they came up with frybread. That’s what they survived on.”

The class is open to any student age 10 and over, even if they are not a Wilson Indian Community member. For those interested, visit the Wilson Indian Community Facebook page.

LOUISE ROBERTS' GRAPE DUMPLINGS

Ingredients:

- 2 cups of sugar
- 2 Bottles of Welch’s Grape Juice
- 4 Cups All-Purpose Flour

Instructions:

Pour one bottle of grape juice into a pot and bring to a boil.

Pour in four cups of all-purpose flour and grape juice into a separate bowl. Take a spoon and turn it into dough.

Use your hands to incorporate the flour until it is firm. Pinch off a piece of dough (as if it’s frybread) and round it into circles on a tabletop. Pinch off pieces from the circle and drop them into the pot of boiling water.

Let the dough cook inside the pot. Stir, and check periodically. Use a fork to cut into the dough pieces to check the texture. Cook until soft.

Add two cups of sugar (depending on how sweet you want it). Continue boiling and stirring for 20 minutes, or until the juice thickens slightly.

When done, turn off the stove and allow it to cool for 10-15 minutes.



Grape dumplings served during a meal. (Shayln Proctor/MM)



BY BRADEN HARPER

OKMULGEE – The Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council held a Regular Session in person on Saturday, Feb. 28, at the Mound Building.

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

NCR 26-001 A resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) National Council approving the service contract agreement between the Muscogee (Creek) National Council and Soaring Bird Solutions LLC. Representative Lucian Tiger III sponsored the legislation. It was cosponsored by Representatives Mary Crawford, James Factor, Sandra Golden, William Lowe, Anna Marshall, Cody Phillips, and Darrell Proctor. The legislation was adopted 15-0.

According to the legislation, Soaring Bird Solutions LLC will provide a “comprehensive compensation evaluation” and a report of the compensation paid to National Council members.

TR 26-006 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute an assurance of continuing support of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation (MCN) Tribal Family Assistance Plan (TFAP) through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. Representative Thomasene Osborn sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

According to the legislation, the program will focus on developing a centralized Tribal TFAP office.

TR 26-007 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation approving the absentee workers for the 2026 Muscogee (Creek) Nation Special Election. Representative Charles McHenry sponsored the bill, which was adopted 15-0.

According to the legislation, a total of eight absentee workers and two alternates will work the 2026 special election.

TR 26-008 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation approving the early in-person voting sites for the 2026 Muscogee (Creek) Nation Special Election. Rep. McHenry sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

According to the legislation, the approved voting sites are the Eufaula Indian Community Center, the Tulsa Indian Community Center, the Okemah Indian Community Center, and the Okmulgee Indian Community Center.

TR 26-009 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation confirming the nomination of Andrea James to serve on the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Election Board. Representative Lora Harjo-King sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 13-2. Rep. Golden and Rep. Marshall voted no on the legislation.

According to the legislation, James’ term will end on May 31, 2031.

TR 26-010 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a separate memorandum of agreement with the City of Checotah, McIntosh County, State of Oklahoma, for the maintenance of roadways and associated rights-

of-way constructed or improved by the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Tribal Transportation Program. Representative Galen Cloud sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

According to the legislation, the City of Checotah, McIntosh County, and the State of Oklahoma will be responsible for maintaining each of the aforementioned Tribal Transportation Program routes.

TR 26-011 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute an updated compact of self-governance and a multiyear funding agreement between the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and the Secretary of the Interior. Representative Dode Barnett sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

According to the legislation, the updated compact will allow the Nation to redesign programs, services, functions, and activities (PFSA). It will allow the Nation to reallocate funds and determine what is a tribal priority. It will enhance the long-term financial stability of the Tribal government and include fire protection as part of justice services.

TR 26-012 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a memorandum of agreement with the City of Beggs detailing the roles, responsibilities, and funding arrangements for the Beggs Main Water Line Replacement Project. Representative Robyn Whitecloud sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

According to the legislation, the funds from the arrangement will be used for the Beggs Main Water Line project. It will replace cast-iron water lines with PVC water lines for the City of Beggs’ drinking water treatment plant.

TR 26-013 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation confirming the nomination of Nalani Ching to serve as a district trial judge for the criminal law division of the district trial court of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. Rep. Factor sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 14-0. The adoption of this legislation required a 2/3 vote of the full council. Rep. Whitecloud was not in her seat at the time of the vote.

According to the legislation, Ching’s term will end on December 31, 2030.

NCA 26-023 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the expenditure of funds awarded from the Department of Health and Human Services for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Department of Health-Special Diabetes Program. For Indian Diabetes Prevention and Treatment Projects. Rep. Crawford sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

According to the legislation, \$2,250,743 in grant funds will be expended for diabetes treatment and prevention.

NCA 26-024 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the Indian Health Service, Native Public Health Resilience Planning Fund Grant for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Department of Health. Rep. Crawford sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

According to the legislation, \$200,000 will be used to develop

COUNCIL VOTES NO ON EXPANDING TERM LIMITS FOR CHIEF AND SECOND CHIEF

SIX CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS ADOPTED, THREE CONSTITUTIONAL BALLOT INITIATIVES ADDED TO THE 2026 SPECIAL ELECTION

a Public Health Program that is practicable with the ten Essential Public Health Services (EPSS) by the Nation’s Department of Health.

NCA 26-025 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the Indian Health Service, HIV/HCV/Syphilis Epidemic Project Grant. Rep. Harjo-King sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

According to the legislation, \$186,507 in grant funds will be used to combat the HIV/HCV/Syphilis epidemic.

NCA 26-026 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the revision due to cumulative funding awarded from the pass-thru entity Southern Plains Tribal Health Board (SPTHB), funded by the Center of State, Tribal, Local and Territorial Support (CSTLTS) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Rep. Crawford sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

According to the legislation, \$180,000 in grant funds will be used to develop public health programs that address the drug overdose crisis.

NCA 26-027 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and Prevention, Strengthening Public Health Systems in Indian Country Grant. Rep. Crawford sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

According to the legislation, \$1,040,000 will be used to improve the overall infrastructure of the Nation’s Tribal public health system.

NCA 26-028 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, for medication-assisted treatment-prescription drug, and opioid addiction. Rep. Crawford sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

According to the legislation, \$1,050,000 in grant funds will be used to increase access to medication-assisted services for people with opioid abuse disorders.

NCA 26-029 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the Southern Plains Tribal Health Board and the Oklahoma Area Tribal Epidemiology Center for the benefit of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Department of Health. Rep. Proctor sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

According to the legislation, \$145,000 in grant funds will be used to manage, prevent, and treat chronic diseases.

NCA 26-030 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation to amend Article VII of the Constitution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation regarding supreme court justices. Representative Robert Hufft sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 12-3. The adoption of this legislation required a 2/3 vote of the full council. Rep. Barnett, Rep. Osborn, and Rep. Whitecloud voted no on the legislation.

Under the legislation, if any Supreme Court Justice recuses themselves from a case, a Special Justice will be appointed to ensure that seven Justices hear each case. During the discussion, Rep. Barnett explained that she could not vote yes on this legislation because there

was already a mechanism for the appointment of Tribal Supreme Court Justices. She further explained that she believes this would allow the National Council to appoint Special Justices in certain cases that would affect their outcomes. This legislation will appear as a question on the ballot in the 2026 Special Election.

NCA 26-031 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation to amend Article IX of the Constitution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation regarding special elections. Rep. Robert Hufft sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0. The adoption of this legislation required a 2/3 vote of the full council.

According to the legislation, the Principal Chief may call a Special Election, and it may be combined with a General Election if the constitutional ordinance is enacted at least 90 days prior to that election. This legislation will appear as a question on the ballot in the 2026 Special Election.

NCA 26-032 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation repealing MCNCA Title 16, § 2-103 entitled, “Evaluation Committee.” Rep. Tiger sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

According to the legislation, MCNCA Title 16, § 2-103, does not allow a third-party entity to submit Council evaluations for compensation and comparisons for the Principal Chief and the Second Chief.

NCA 26-033 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation amending MCNCA Title 14, § 2-114 entitled “Supplemental Crimes Act.” Rep. Lowe sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

According to the legislation, the code on fines and classifications on criminal acts will be updated.

NCA 26-034 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation amending MCNCA Title 14, § 3-1304 entitled “Persons under the influence of alcohol or other intoxicating substances or combination thereof.” Rep. Lowe sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

According to the law, the code on DUI fines and punishment will be updated.

NCA 26-036 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation amending MCNCA Title 31 Chapter 2 entitled “Homage to deceased officials.” Rep. Osborn sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 15-0.

According to the legislation, the National Council will include in its budget line items for 12 outdoor Muscogee (Creek) Nation flags. These flags will go to surviving spouses or children of deceased MCN officials.

NCA 26-037 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation amending article V Section 1 (a) and (c) of the Constitution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. Rep. Tiger sponsored the bill, which failed 9-6. The adoption of this legislation required a 2/3 vote of the full council. Rep. Barnett, Rep. Factor, Rep. Harjo-King, Rep. McHenry, Rep. Whitecloud, and Rep. Osborn voted no on the legislation.

If adopted, the legislation would have increased the term limits for the Principal Chief and Second Chief from two terms to three. Rep. Tiger argued that this legislation was necessary to be consistent with the National Council’s term limits. Current MCN Principal Chief David Hill said that if the Constitution needs to be changed, it is up to the will of the people. Current MCN Second Chief Del Beaver said it was not fair to future candidates running for Second Chief if the law was adopted.

NCA 26-038 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation amending NCA 25-105 (A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation amending article VI Section 2 (a) of the Constitution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation to establish term limits for National Council Representatives). Rep. Osborn sponsored the bill, which was adopted 15-0. The adoption of this legislation required a 2/3 vote of the full council.

According to the legislation, National Council representatives will be limited to a total of three terms, consecutive or non-consecutive, beginning in January 2028. This legislation will appear as a question on the ballot in the 2026 Special Election.

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

LEGALS

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE MUSCOGEE CREEK NATION


IN THE MATTER OF THE GUARDIANSHIP OF: M.S., M.M. and A.H.: Minor Children.	}	DISTRICT COURT FILED Case No. GD-2026-11 MAR -2 A B 34 CYNTHIA FREEMAN COUNT CLERK
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ORDER AND NOTICE OF HEARING PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF GENERAL GUARDIAN

Notice is hereby given that JOHNNIE FELIX has filed in the District Court of the Muscogee Creek Nation, a petition requesting the appointment of a guardian of the person and property of M.S., date of birth January 4, 2019; M.M., date of birth June 12, 2020; and A.H., date of birth June 6, 2021.

And that the 3rd day of March 2026 at the hour of 9:00 o'clock, a.m., in courtroom of the Muscogee Creek Nation District Court has been appointed as the time and place for hearing the petition, when and where any persons interested may appear and show cause, if any they have, why such appointment should not be made.

DATED this 2nd day of March, 2026.


 JUDGE OF THE MUSCOGEE CREEK NATION

(0099666.DOC / 1)

2026 WILD ONION DINNERS LIST

Fife UMC
Friday, March 20
5 p.m. - 7 p.m.
\$11/plate
1100 Eufaula Ave., Muskogee

Mary Lee Clark UMC
Saturday, March 21,
11 a.m. - 3 p.m.
\$15/plate
1100 Howard Drive, Del City

Thlopthlocco UMC
Saturday, March 21,
11 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Adults \$12/plate, Kids 3-12 \$6/plate, Veterans w/ ID \$10/plate
8 mi south of Okemah, North of Wetumka on HWY 27, at the crossroads of East 1170 Road and North 3780 Road, Okemah
Vendor space available, call 918-346-0308

Big Cussetah UMC
Saturday, March 21,
11 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Adults \$15/plate, Children 10 and under \$8/plate

20566 Prairie Bell Rd., Morris
Vendor Space Available,
call 539-307-0108

American Indian Resource Center
Scholarship Fundraiser
Tuesday, March 24,
11:30 a.m. -1:30 p.m.
\$10/plate
Silent Auction
Tahlequah Community Building
908 S. College Ave, Tahlequah

Tohwali UMC
Saturday, March 28
\$15/plate
4405 Old Golden Hwy, Broken Bow

Broken Arrow Indian UMC
Saturday, March 28,
11 a.m.-3 p.m.
\$15/plate, plus drink and dessert

Mitchell Memorial UMC
Friday, April 3, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.
\$15/plate, dine in or take out
221 West 7th Street, Ada

Sand Creek Eufaula Baptist Church
Saturday, April 11, 11 a.m.
All you can eat, Adults \$15/plate, children 10 and under \$10/plate
EW 131 Rd. Wewoka, Okla

Eastern Shawnee Cultural Preservation
Saturday, April 11,
11 a.m. -2 p.m.
\$10/plate
Natives Connected, 10400E HWY 60 Wyandotte

OK Chahta Tribal Alliance
Saturday, May 2, 11 a.m. -3 p.m.
\$15/dinner
baked goods, soda, and vendors

Mvskoke News searched high and low, scouring the internet and social media for our Wild Onion Dinner list! Want to be added to the list? Contact us at: info@mvskokemedia.com, subject: wild onions

VETERANS SPOTLIGHT



The Muskogee Nation Veterans Services Office is proud to honor SFC Leslie G. Montemayor for her dedicated service to the U.S. Army, the United States, and the Muskogee Nation. Leslie honorably served twenty two years from 2000 to 2022 and is a recipient of several honors: Army Commendation Award (3rd Award), Navy Unit Commendation Ribbon, Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal (3rd Award), National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal with Campaign Star, Iraq Campaign Medal with Campaign Star, Global War On Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War On Terrorism Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal with M Device, Army Service Ribbon, Army Overseas Service Ribbon, Army Reserve Components Overseas Training Ribbon, NATO Medal.

In addition to her military service, SFC Montemayor remains deeply connected to her cultural heritage. While deployed to Iraq in September 2004, she participated in a Powwow, where she wore an Honor Shawl in tribute to PV2 Estes III (Ponca) and his family—an act reflecting her commitment to honoring fallen warriors and supporting Gold Star families. She is also a member of the Este Cate Hoktve Sulelaw, further demonstrating her dedication to preserving and representing her cultural traditions. Mvto SFC Montemayor for your selfless service to your country and your community.

MVTO FOR YOUR SELFLESS SERVICE!

The Veterans Spotlight is submitted by the MCN VASO

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Diabetes Undone!
How to fight back against diabetes and even beat it-group support, expert advice, and cooking demos
Thursdays, March 12 - April 30, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
Light meal following
College of the Muskogee Nation, Student Center Rm 108
For information, contact Thor Shaffer 405-607-7460

Income Tax Filing
Vita/TCE Tax Program
Open to all MCN citizens with a total household income of \$69,000 or less. In-office days are M, T, Th, & F, 8:45 a.m. - 3:45 p.m. by appointment only.
4900 N. Wood Drive, Okmulgee

Elder's Meeting
Okmulgee Elder Nutrition Center
Wednesday, April 1, 9:30 a.m.
2900 N. Osage Pl., Okmulgee

American Indian Festival of Words
Tulsa City-County Library
Begins March 2 -21. Features free activities celebrating and honoring American Indian culture and achievements.
Visit tulsalibrary.org for dates.

Coffee and Donuts
Veteran Affairs Services Office
Thursday, April 9
8a.m. - 12 p.m.
1006 Bear Lane, Okmulgee

Tribal Women Veterans Summit
Thursday, April 2, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
RiverSpirit Casino
8330 Riverside Pkway, Tulsa
Registration opens at 8 a.m.
To pre-register, call 918-732-7739

Spring Festival
Tulsa Indian Club
Saturday, April 11,

11 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Arts, crafts, Indian Taco sale, an exhibition singing/drumming.
Jenks Riverwalk
300 Riverwalk Terrace, Jenks

Community Garage Sale Tulsa Creek Indian
Community
Saturday, April 11,
8 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Seeking garage sale vendors, \$10/table. All vendors must fill out a MCN Temporary Vendor's Sales License application. Contact the Jenks MCN Tax Commission Office at 918-802-2599. For vendor information, contact 918-298-2464
8611 S. Union Ave., Tulsa

Mvskoke Art Market
Saturday, April 18, through Sunday, April 19
Times to be announced
River Spirit Casino
8330 Riverside Pkway, Tulsa

SUBMISSIONS

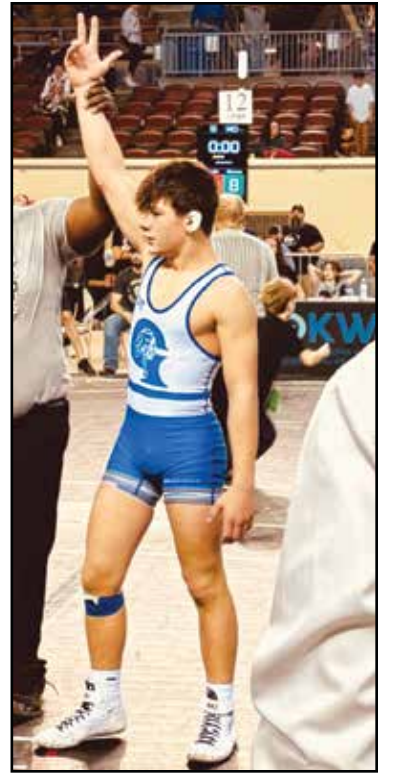
A-TSI-LA "G" MCINTOSH MAKES NORTH AMERICAN INDIGENOUS ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME

A-Tsi-La "G" McIntosh had been wrestling since the age of five and quickly became one of the most accomplished young wrestlers in the country. A six-time State Champion, "G" was also a United States Junior Open Champion, a two-time Adidas Wrestling Nationals Champion, and a three-time All-American at Adidas Nationals. Known for his dominance on the mat, he was named "Outstanding Wrestler" at multiple tournaments and competed on numerous national dual teams alongside elite athletes from across the nation. "G" was a multi-style wrestler, holding state titles

in Folkstyle, Freestyle, and Greco-Roman — a rare and impressive achievement. He currently attends Glenpool Public Schools in Tulsa County, OK, where he balances academic life with a demanding training schedule. "G" is a dedicated student and plans to continue his wrestling career at the collegiate level, with hopes of one day coaching or mentoring the next generation of Native youth athletes. Proud of his Indigenous heritage, "G" represents the Muskogee (Creek) Nation, Cherokee Nation, and Yuchi Tribe. Raised in ceremonial culture since birth, he comes from the Yuchi Polecat Cer-

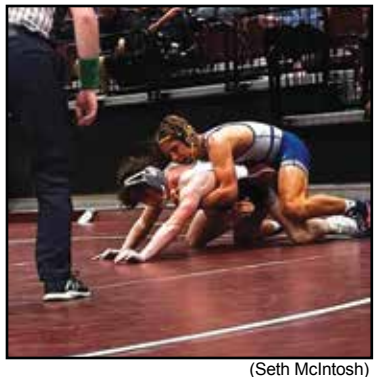
emonial Grounds in Kellyville, Oklahoma — a place that remains central to his identity and spiritual foundation. Family and faith are core to "G"'s life. He comes from a large, close-knit, and supportive family that has been a constant presence throughout his athletic journey. He deeply believes in staying grounded, not just as a competitor but as a person. "G" also values balance. Outside of wrestling, he enjoys being outdoors — whether it's around a campfire, in the woods, or simply surrounded by family and nature. This time helps him reset and stay centered amid the pressures of high-level competition.

While he trains with relentless discipline and pushes himself to elite levels, "G" knows being a true champion means more than winning — it's about mindset, humility, and knowing who you are. Champions are built through consistency — in every part of life. Whether it's training, school, or family. Staying consistent builds confidence, and confidence is the foundation of success on and off the mat. "G" is the son of Seth McIntosh (Euclidean/Mvskoke) and Jessica McIntosh (Cherokee). "G" will be inducted into the North American Indigenous Athletics Hall of Fame on May 30, 2026, in Green Bay, Wisconsin.



(Seth McIntosh)

ZA-DO-SH@-LAY "ZA" MCINTOSH MAKES THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIGENOUS ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME



(Seth McIntosh)

"ZA" McIntosh has been wrestling since the age of six and has grown into one of Oklahoma's top young athletes in the sport. He represents Glenpool Wrestling in Glenpool, OK, and he has spent his

entire wrestling career with the program. He began with Glenpool Youth Wrestling, coached by his father until seventh grade. "ZA" is a four-time Oklahoma State Champion and the only Junior High State Champion for the 2024-2025 season. Nationally, he's placed in the top four twice at WOW Tulsa Nationals, considered one of the toughest tournaments in the world. He's also a United States Junior Open Champion, a three-time Adidas Wrestling National Champion, and a three-time Adidas Nationals All-American and

has been named "Outstanding Wrestler" for multiple tournaments. "ZA" has been on multiple national dual teams with wrestlers all across the nation. Rooted in family and faith, "ZA" draws strength from a large, close-knit support system. His family's constant presence and strong values have shaped him not just as an athlete, but as a son and a young man. These values push him to pursue greatness while staying grounded in humility and purpose. "ZA" is proudly Indigenous, representing the Muskogee (Creek) Nation, the

Cherokee Nation, and the Yuchi Tribe of Oklahoma. Raised in the Yuchi language and ceremonial traditions, he comes from the Polecat Ceremonial Grounds in Kellyville. His cultural identity is central to his discipline and mental toughness, and he carries that pride with him in everything he does. While he pushes himself hard in every sport, "ZA" also values balance. Fishing is one of his passions, a space where he finds peace, focus, and a break from the high-energy demands of competition. It's his reset button and a place

where he achieves greatness in a different way. "ZA" believes a true champion isn't just defined by wins, but by mindset, character, and knowing who you are. With discipline, cultural pride, and a deep love for his family, he continues to train with purpose, always striving to be his best on and off the mat. "ZA" is the son of Seth McIntosh (Euclidean/Mvskoke) and Jessica McIntosh (Cherokee). "ZA" will be inducted into the North American Indigenous Athletics Hall of Fame on May 30, 2026, in Green Bay, Wisconsin.

IN MEMORIAM



SUTV VIOLET HARJO

Celebrating the Life of Sutv Violet Harjo

Born on September 14, 2004, in Shawnee, OK, Sutv Violet Harjo entered the world with a vibrant spark that never dimmed. Her mother, Cassandra Thompson, recognized early on that Sutv was a true embodiment of kindness, creativity, humor, and determination-qualities that beautifully intertwined throughout her life. From the beginning, their bond was strong, filled with warmth and love. Whether she was dancing, playing wahoo, with her pets, or enjoying moments with loved ones, Sutv had an extraordinary ability to turn ordinary experiences into cherished memories.

The Importance of Family

Family held a profound significance in Sutv's heart, and she welcomed her chosen family with open arms. Sutv adopted Jazmyne as her sister when she was four and gathered many more as life went on. Including elders who she met as mentors, but chose them as family. When she loved someone, they became her person. She admired her brother, Seth Harjo, cherishing his love, protection, accountability, athleticism, and bravery in serving his country. Sutv shared an unbreakable bond with her sister, Louisa Harjo, filled with laughter, sports, singing, dancing, and exciting adventures. Their connec-

tion was truly unique, showcasing the joy and strength of family as they celebrated each moment with enthusiasm and passion. Sutv's love for spreading joy extended to her cousins-Kiara, Devean, Elissa, Tanea, Blair, Mia, and Sergio-creating joyful memories whenever they gathered. She held her aunts-Mvnetta, Mvhayv, Jordan, Carol Kae, and Dana-close to her heart. Time spent with Pucv, Joe, and Pvwv Uncle Hully always brought excitement to her life. Her Grandma Dora and Suga-Momma represented the matriarchal strength she aspired to embody. Sonny Kvnvcv Barnes came into her life, making her the happiest aunt, and she was excited to show him the world.

While Sutv adored her human family, she also cherished her furry companions. Boss, Socks, Brownie, Tony Parker, Thunder Cat, Freddie Mercury, Roger, Rosie, Joseph, Jax, and her beloved baby Rocky were the highlights of her days. Whenever she was home, they were the ones she cuddled, danced with, and taught tricks to in the Mvskoke language.

A Journey Through Culture and Community

Sutv's name translates to "Sky" in the Mvskoke language, a heritage she takes great pride in. Hailing from the tribal town of Rvro Klvv (Fishpond) and Hotvlkvke (Wind Clan), she embraced her Native American identity throughout her life. As she matured, Sutv welcomed young adulthood with a hopeful spirit, beautifully integrating her Mvskoke culture into all facets of her existence. Through her engagement in Native American clubs, she celebrated her ancestral roots, mastering the art of creating a proper set of cans for stomp dance, fingerweaving yarn belts, and crafting moccasins under her mother's guidance. She cherished the skills of beading hats and speaking the Mvskoke language. Moments spent learning Mvskoke hymns with her sister, Louisa were particularly special; at just four years old, they were invited to perform "Oketv Cvmpusan" (Ekvnv Herusat

Ocet Os- Sweet By and By) alongside other hymns at local churches. Sutv loved singing these hymns and attending ceremonial grounds with her grandfather, Joe Sulphur.

Her most treasured lessons unfolded in her Suga-Momma, Grandma Carol Tiger's kitchen. Eager to master various traditional recipes, she especially relished making grape dumplings. Last year, she entered a contest with her grandma, securing second place while Grandma Carol took third. This achievement stood out as the pinnacle of her year. The wisdom shared by her elders motivated her to keep learning and sharing her culture with others.

Sutv participated in the Oklahoma Native Youth Language Fair for several years, earning first place for her Mvskoke comics four years in a row. She actively joined the Muscogee Nation Challenge Bowl each year and was ecstatic to volunteer as an adult.

Throughout her life, she exhibited a strong commitment to her tribal community, particularly in supporting elders through events like the Senior Sweetheart Dance, Senior Games, and holiday lunches at the elderly nutrition program. Recently, she volunteered as an Mvskoke Language moderator at the Challenge Bowl, all while managing her studies as a college student at the College of the Muscogee Nation, and serving as a dedicated member of the Mvskoke Nation Youth Council for a decade. Her sister and the MNYS gave her the encouragement to run in the Mvskoke Royalty pageant in which she earned several awards for her talents and introduction letter. Being a part of the Mvskoke Nation Youth Council brought Sutv immense joy.

Together with her sister Louisa, she participated in the inaugural Mvskoke Hymn Choir, attended UNITY conferences, and utilized her skills in service. Reflecting on her ten years with the Council, she shared:

"I've experienced cultural healing, activism, community, and service. Throughout this journey, I've not only made wonderful friends but also a

forever family. Words cannot capture the joy of the memories I've created with this incredible community. I am forever grateful to be part of this Youth Council and aspire to continue learning, growing, and giving back to the community that has shaped me into who I am today. Being a member of the Mvskoke Nation Youth Council has instilled in me the importance of honoring our culture, uplifting one another, and serving with purpose. I will always carry these lessons, memories, and connections with me."

A Cherished Heart & Soul

Sutv was a cherished member of the Uekewv Meku-sapkv Cuko-Springfield Indian Methodist Church, where she treasured the time spent with her church family. They instilled in her a deep care for people, family, and faith, values she embraced in her interactions with others-always with sincerity, empathy, and an open heart.

It is Sutv's heart that has united us. Through her love, her physical struggles, and the immense affection we held for her. When her heart began to fail, many of her dreams and aspirations had to adapt. She envisioned herself as a cultural teacher, aspiring to earn a degree, grow her following through makeup tutorials, create Mvskoke kid videos with her sister for her nephew Sonny, be the best aunt imaginable, learn every Mvskoke hymn, film her grandma's cooking tutorials while mastering her recipes, and perhaps one day become a makeup artist and producer of the Native Bades Reality Show.

To know Sutv was to experience her laughter, comfort, and inspiration. She possessed a remarkable ability to make others feel acknowledged, share captivating stories, provide unwavering support, and spread joy through her work. Her presence left an indelible mark that transcends time. Her smile, her voice, and her essence will forever be vivid in our memories, cherished by all who loved her.

She is lovingly remembered by her mother, Cassandra Thompson; sister, Louisa

Harjo and brother, Seth Harjo; her grandparents, Eugenia Tiger, Dora Taylor, and Joe Sulphur; her aunts, uncles, extended family, and many close friends, as well as countless others whose lives she touched in ways big and small. She was preceded in death by her paternal grandpa, Daniel "Bodee" Thompson.

A Celebration of Life

Sutv Violet, aged 21, lived a life that, though all too brief, was rich with warmth, laughter, and moments that will resonate in the hearts of those who cherished her for years to come. She departed this world on Saturday, February 7th, 2026, leaving behind a quieter existence without her vibrant spirit.

The Celebration of Sutv's life will commence on Tuesday, February 10th, featuring dinner at 5 p.m., followed by the wake at 6 p.m. Services will take place at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, February 11th, both at Springfield Indian United Methodist Church. Officiating will be Curtis Scott and Rev. Clarence Yarholar, Joy Harjo providing a tribute poem, and an obituary reading by Randy Colbert. Interment will follow at Tiger Home Place under the direction and care of Integrity Funeral Service. Family and friends will gather not only to grieve her loss but also to celebrate the beauty of who she was and the love she shared so freely.

Although her journey ended too soon, Sutv's life was filled with meaning, brightness, and deep affection. Her legacy endures - in the cherished memories we share, in quiet moments of remembrance, and in the everlasting love she leaves behind.

Pallbearers will be Michael "Hully" Sulphur, Wesley Nysm, Charles Mason, Eli Tilley, Brock Hicks, Leroy Harjo, John John Brown, Jace Fitzgerald, and James Arthurs.

Honorary Pallbearers will be Seth Harjo, Devean George, Shawn D. Wolfe, Aaron Little, and Past & Present Mvskoke Nation Youth Council.

Ushers will be Merle Berryhill, Thomas Yarholar, Stacy Scott, and John Wolfe.

It is with profound sorrow that we announce the passing of Noel Donald Brandon, age 31, affectionately known as "Boy" by close friends and relatives. Born in Renton, WA, on August 7, 1994, he was taken from us too soon, the victim of a tragic accident in Coweta, OK, on January 1, 2026. Noel was a devoted father, a beloved son, a loyal brother, and an adored uncle. His impatience to start life brought him to us two months early. The daily visits to the NICU would send Sis running down the hospital hall, crying, "Where's my Boy, where's my Boy," a moniker that would stay with him his whole life. Growing up in Renton, where he enjoyed Little League baseball and many other outdoor activities, including family camping trips, hunting and fishing excursions with his dad, and the annual family vacation to Twin Lakes.

He graduated from Liberty High School in 2012, where he was a three-sport athlete: football, wrestling, and track and field, where he threw the javelin. Currently, he was training to run the Ancient Lakes Trail Run ultra-marathon. After a brief period at college, Noel discovered his true calling at a local trade school, where he pursued a career in HVAC refrigeration. His dedication and proficiency led to a fulfilling role at UA Local 32 in March 2016, and he joined McDonald Miller Company in April 2016. Completing his apprenticeship, and journeyed out in November 2021. Noel's natural teaching abilities and patience guided him to where he contributed as a trainer manager.

He had a unique gift for mentoring others, a role in which he flourished. Recently, Noel took a significant leadership leap, dedicating himself



NOEL DONALD BRANDON

to workplace mental health by spearheading the Suicide Prevention and awareness curriculum. His passion for helping his coworkers and promoting mental health made a

lasting impact on the community. Beyond his professional life, Noel's essence was encapsulated by his love for his son Leon, whose name is a heartfelt tribute to his father's name spelled backward. Noel's world revolved around Leon, and together, along with his twin nephews, Donny and Cooper, they created a whirlwind of joy and laughter, treasuring every precious moment. Noel's diverse interests painted a picture of a man deeply connected to his roots and the world around him. A proud member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, he embraced his heritage and the lessons it provided. A quintessential outdoorsman, Noel relished time spent hunting and fishing, celebrating the simple pleasures of nature's bounty. His spontaneity often found him singing any tune that came to mind, and his love for cooking brought warmth not

only to the kitchen but to the hearts of those he nourished. Noel's memory is cherished by his beloved son Leon, his father Noel Wayne Brandon, his mother Donna Jeanne Brandon, his sister Bethany Brandon, his twin nephews Donny and Cooper Franklin, along with his grandmother Jeri Lou Brandon. He also leaves behind a legacy of love with his numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, and extended family members who felt the span of his generosity and spirit every day. Noel is preceded in death by his grandfather Noel Wayne Brandon Sr., and grandparents Donald and Edna Gardner. Noel's departure leaves a void that echoes through the lives of all who had the privilege of knowing him. As we bid farewell to "Boy," we carry forward the indelible mark he left on our hearts. He will be profoundly missed by all.

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IN MEMORIAM



BARRY BRANDON

Barry W. Brandon passed away on December 26, 2025, at the age of 64. He was a devoted

father, a respected attorney, and a nationally recognized leader in Native American law and public policy.

Barry earned his Juris Doctor from the University of Washington School of Law, an education that set the course for a distinguished legal career. Over more than three decades, his work focused on Federal Indian Law, tribal governance, and economic development in Indian Country.

Barry served in senior roles across the federal government, private practice, consulting, and tribal enterprise. Early in his career, he worked with the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of the Interior on complex matters involving treaty rights,

water rights settlements, and the federal trust responsibility to Native American tribes.

He later became a partner at a national law firm, where he was a founding member of its American Indian Law and Policy practice. In that role, he advised Indian Nations, tribal enterprises, and public entities on legal, regulatory, and policy matters. He went on to lead his own consulting firm, continuing to provide legal counsel to tribes and organizations working throughout Indian Country.

A significant chapter of Barry's career was his work with the Seneca Nation of Indians. As Senior Vice President and General Counsel of the Seneca Gaming Corpora-

tion, he played a central role in the legal and regulatory efforts that helped establish and grow the Nation's gaming operations. The Seneca Gaming Corporation has continued to expand and has had a significant, positive impact on Western New York's economy.

Barry combined a sharp legal mind and practical judgment with an easygoing manner and a playful sense of humor. Outside of his professional life, Barry's passions were music and Husky football, both of which brought him great joy.

Above all, Barry was a father. He is survived by his three sons, who were the center of his world, Wade Brandon and wife Caitlin of

Norfolk, VA, Luke Brandon of Tulsa, OK, and Cole Brandon of Wenatchee, WA; the mother of his children, Amy Brandon of Wenatchee, WA; his mother, Jeri Lou Brandon of Beggs, OK; his grandson, Tage Brandon; his brother, Noel Wayne Brandon, Jr. and wife Donna of Renton, WA; several nieces and nephews, nephew Noconi Brandon, who serves the Mvskoke Nation as a Lighthorse officer, and other relatives.

He was preceded in death by his father, Noel Wayne Brandon, Sr., and his brother, David Alan Brandon.

Barry's legacy lives on through the work he helped build, the people he mentored, and the family he loved.

It is with deep sorrow that we announce Harry Martinez, age 80, of Wetumka OK, passed away on 20 Feb. 2026, leaving a void that can never be filled.

Through his journey of 80 years, he touched many lives with his wisdom, love, and wise counsel. With Harry's departure, we remember a life lived with deep love for his wife, Amanda, family, and community.

Harry was born Aug 9, 1945, to Susie and Dario Martinez in Wetumka. His childhood was spent at Greasy Creek, helping pick crops, hunting and fishing, and going to church at Wetumka Indian Baptist. He attended elementary school at the Greasy Creek Country school, then went on to boarding school at Sequoyah. He came home to

graduate from Wetumka and went to college at Haskell. He excelled at school and played basketball, baseball, lettering in track and football. He was very friendly and sharply dressed. Everyone knew who he was.

Harry served his country in the United States Army from 1967-69 in Germany. He received the National Defense Service Medal, Good Conduct Medal, and the Marksman M14. Afterwards, he settled down and married his wife, Amanda, and pursued a career as a baker. During Harry's early /mid-adult years, he lived in Dallas with his wife, Amanda, and family. Harry was very active in his church and the community, as well as in softball and bowling, and even had the honor of saying he bowled a 300. Harry served



HARRY MARTINEZ

alongside his wife, Amanda, as Lay Speakers at the Dallas Indian United Methodist Church. Harry's deep love and wisdom touched the lives of

everyone who had the honor of knowing him. He was never a man of many words, but when he spoke, people listened.


In the late 90s and early 2000s, Harry and his wife took on a leadership role amongst the elders in the Dallas Community. Harry and Amanda devoted themselves to building a strong Elder Program at the Dallas Urban Intertribal Center, where they held classes and gatherings for the elders. This is where Harry learned his hobby of beadwork. Many late nights were held in his home teaching other elders how to bead. They traveled to pow wows far and wide, selling their beadwork and enjoying the pow wow culture. In his later years, he loved watching sports and taking care of his cats. He also encouraged

young people to get their education.


Harry's death was preceded in death by his wife Amanda, his daughter Anita, his son Neville, his grandson Josh, and his sister Anna. Harry is survived by his cats Mittens, Sally, and friends, son Lewis Yahola, daughter Zoe Anderson, siblings James, Leroy, Betty, and Freda, as well as many other extended family and friends.

Mvskoke News provides all Muscogee (Creek) Nation citizens who pass away a free obituary in the Mvskoke News. Families and funeral providers can send submissions via email to: info@mvskokemedia.com, subject: obit.


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