



THE

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VETERANS SUMMIT HONORS WOMEN WARRIORS

THE 2026 TRIBAL WOMEN VETERANS SUMMIT GAVE NATIVE WOMEN VETERANS THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONNECT WITH FEDERAL AND TRIBAL VA SERVICES



BY BRADEN HARPER

TULSA – Native American women veterans were celebrated for their service at the 2026 Tribal Women Veterans Summit on Thursday, April 2. The all-day event was held at the River Spirit Casino and featured a resource booth fair, panels, and a fashion show. Items on the day’s agenda included how to connect with veterans’ affairs resources, legal aid, and self-care practices. In opening statements, Tribal leaders noted that the annual summit is important because it provides an opportunity to celebrate a specific group of veterans who are often not recognized for their

service. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Tribal Government Relations Specialist Mary Culley is an enrolled Seminole Nation citizen and has Mvskoke heritage. Her department works closely with VA offices, including Muscogee Nation VASO. According to Culley, her department cohosts the summit because they are familiar with Native American women veterans who are not vocal about their service records. “They’re often left out of the picture,” Culley said. “This particular event we’ve done for the past three or four years gives these women their own voice. It allows them to tell their own

story in their own way.” Muscogee (Creek) Nation Principal Chief David Hill’s opening statement included his impression that the annual event had grown significantly over the years. He explained that the purpose of starting the event was to bring together women veterans. “We’ve come a long way. Not only the men but the women. All the sacrifices you all had to do while you were in the call of duty. I want to thank you all for that.” Principal Chief Hill said. Many specific federal programs are available for women veterans. To learn more about VA services, visit womenshealth.va.gov.



TOP: Attendees from across the United States gathered at the Women Veterans Summit. TOP LEFT: Cindy Miller (Seminole) and David Narcomey (Seminole) stand next to their booth. BOTTOM LEFT: Attendees learn about VA benefits at the resource booths. RIGHT: Army veteran LaRue Guoladdle (Kiowa) wears a distinct red dress adorned with her military patches. BOTTOM: The Este Cate Hoktkve Sulelaw presents the colors during the opening ceremony. (All Images: Braden Harper/MM)

REP. WHITECLOUD'S COURT DATE MOVED TO MAY 4

PROSECUTORS OFFICE REQUESTED MORE TIME TO RESPOND TO THE PREVIOUS MOTION FOR A SPECIAL PROSECUTOR

BY JERRAD MOORE

OKMULGEE – Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Representative Robyn Whitecloud’s April 6 court date has been delayed until Monday, May 4. As previously reported, Whitecloud was charged with four felony counts of preventing or attempting to prevent performance of official acts on Jan 16. Matthew Hall of the MCN Office of the Prosecutor made a motion on March 27 to extend the response date to a motion filed by Whitecloud’s attorney, Ryan Connonie, on March 2. This motion was to disqualify the MCN AG’s office from the case and to appoint a special prosecutor. Judge Nalani Ching granted the motion to extend the response date and scheduled the next court date for Monday, May 4. Mvskoke Media will have ongoing coverage of this developing story.

SECOND STATUS REPORT ORDERED IN GRAYSON/ KENNEDY CASE

MOTIONS FOR PRELIMINARY INJUNCTION AND CONTEMPT HELD IN ABEYANCE

BY JERRAD MOORE

OKMULGEE – The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Supreme Court has ordered that the MCN Citizenship Board and Principal Chief David Hill submit a second status report in the Grayson/Kennedy case. The deadline to file the report is April 22. As previously reported on March 9, Demario Solomon-Simmons, representing Rhonda Grayson and Jeffery Kennedy, filed a motion for a temporary restraining order and a preliminary injunction, as well as motions for contempt and for court enforcement of the order, and a show cause. On March 17, the NAACP and the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law filed a motion with the court seeking leave to file an amici curiae brief (a friend-of-the-court brief) in the case. This motion was denied on March 23. According to the MCN Supreme Court, the motion was denied because it was not filed within the 15-day window allowed for this type of motion. On the same day, the court issued an order directing the MCN Citizenship Board and Principal Chief Hill to submit a second status report in the case. The second report must answer the specific questions posed by the court:

1. “Provide the Court with an update (covering the time since the Appellant’s December 5, 2025, Status Report) addressing each of the questions previously submitted in the First Status Report (November 13, 2025), including specifically any new communications with the Principal Chief and/or National Council, and any updates concerning specific legislation, policies, or procedures being considered.”
2. “Has the Office of the Attorney General (as counsel of record for the Appellant and for the Executive Branch in this action) drafted proposed legislation creating law and/or procedures to implement the Court’s July 23, 2025, Order and Opinion? If so, provide true and correct copies of any draft legislation. If so, has the Office of the Attorney General provided this draft legislation to the National Council for consideration or sought a sponsor?”
3. “Has the Appellant and/or the Executive Branch sought and/or obtained a National Council Representative to sponsor legislation creating procedures to implement the Court’s July 23, 2025, Order and Opinion? If so, which Representative(s) has/have agreed to sponsor this legislation? If so, provide a true and correct copy of the draft legislation to be considered by the National Council. If no sponsor has been sought, provide a summary explanation described the reasons a sponsor has not been obtained.”
4. Provide an updated timeline for compliance with the Court’s July 23, 2025, Order and Opinion.”

The order also states that the motions filed by Grayson/Kennedy on March 9 will be “held in abeyance”. This is a legal term that means the motions are paused until the court rules on whether to grant or deny them. The second status report is due on or before Wednesday, April 22.

TERM LIMITS REJECTED: National Council votes down term limits change, again

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MCN COUNCIL REJECTS EXECUTIVE BRANCH TERM CHANGES, AGAIN

PROponents ARGUE THAT EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE TERMS NEED TO BE CONSISTENT

BY BRADEN HARPER

OKMULGEE – Another bill expanding the Principal Chief's terms to three and setting a limit for the Second Chief again failed to pass full council at the Tuesday, March 24, Muscogee (Creek) National Council Regular Session.

The bill, NCA 26-048, failed by a vote of 7-8. The bill required a $\frac{2}{3}$ supermajority vote to appear as a ballot initiative. Proponents of the bill stressed that it should be up to the voters to decide whether the chiefs' term limits should be set to three.

If adopted by the full council and approved by voters, the amendment would revise and add language to Article V, Sections 1(a) and 1 (c), of the MCN Constitution. The added language reads, "The Principal Chief and Second Chief shall be limited to a total of three terms, whether served in consecutive terms of office or non-consecutive terms. This shall include terms served before January 2028. A term shall not include a partial term created by election to fill a vacancy."

Representatives Dode Barnett, Galen Cloud, Mary Crawford, James Factor, Lara Harjo-King, Charles McHenry, Thomasene Osborn, and Robyn Whitecloud voted no on the bill.

Current Second Chief Del Beaver has been a staunch critic of setting his position's term limits to three. He stated at the Saturday, Feb. 28, Regular Session that even if term limits for the second chief are set to three, he will not run for a third term. During the discussion at the Tuesday, March 24, Regular Session, Second Chief Beaver reiterated his stance on the bill.

"This bill is not needed, flat out," Second Chief Beaver said. "I have been a part of a lot of community meetings, I have been a part of a lot of community fellowship, I've

talked to a lot of people, and not one time have they said, 'You know what? We need to talk about adding a third term for the Chief and Second Chief.'"

An identical bill, NCA 26-037, was voted on at the Regular Session on Saturday, Feb. 28. It was sponsored by Representative Lucian Tiger III and failed by a vote of 9-6. The MCN Constitution currently sets the Principal Chief's term limits to two. Term limits for the Second Chief are not detailed. Second Chief Beaver remarked that when he ran for Second Chief in 2019, he believed the position was limited to two terms.

According to Second Chief Beaver, without consultation with citizens, it "breeds contempt and mistrust." Second Chief Beaver attempted to discuss another topic regarding the organization of a new constitutional convention, detailed in bill NCA 26-051, which failed to pass during the Monday, March 23, Business,

Council to three. Rep. Hufft remarked that citizens have expressed interest in voting on term limits for the executive branch.

"If the Council stops this (NCA 26-048), then we are denying people the chance to vote for it. If you don't like it, then vote 'no'. Or you can vote 'yes'. That's your voice at that point in time," Rep. Hufft said during the discussion.

Representative Sandra Golden and Rep. Tiger concurred.

"Currently, as our constitution reads, there are no term limits for Second Chief. It gives citizens the opportunity to establish term limits for Second Chief. If the amendment for council members (NCA 26-038) for three terms, 12 years, passes, everything would be consistent across the board," Rep. Tiger said.

Rep. Phillips, the bill's sponsor, explained that he reintroduced the bill to give voters the opportunity to

"When you don't allow people to speak, that's where distrust come in of our elected officials. That's why we have voter apathy,"
-Second Chief Beaver

Finance, and Justice committee meeting. However, a point of order was made that the issues were separate matters. Second Chief Beaver countered that it was unfair not to discuss the constitutional convention in relation to the discussion on executive branch term limits.

Representative Robert Hufft said the purpose of the amendment is to be consistent with the legislative branch. Currently, a National Council term limit law, NCA 26-038, is scheduled to appear on the Saturday, May 30, Special Election ballot. If approved by $\frac{2}{3}$ of voters, that bill will set the term limit for the National

limit all elected positions nationwide to three terms. He said he has spoken to citizens who have praised and criticized the bill.

Mvskoke Media reached out to Rep. Phillips for comment on future bills that could set new term limits for the executive branch. Rep. Phillips did not respond before this article was published.

Both NCA 26-037 and NCA 26-048 detailed that if changes to term limits had been adopted by the legislature and approved by voters, they would take effect in January 2028.

STROBLE PETITION FOR WRIT OF CERTIORARI DENIED

U.S. SUPREME COURT DENIES REQUEST TO REVIEW TAX DISPUTE

BY JERRAD MOORE

WASHINGTON – The United States Supreme Court will not hear Mvskoke citizen Alicia Stroble's appeal in her income tax case. As previously reported, Stroble filed a petition for writ of certiorari with the high court on Sept. 29, 2025.

Stroble sought to have her Oklahoma Supreme Court decision reheard. The Oklahoma Supreme Court had found that the McGirt decision did not apply to civil cases and denied that Stroble was exempt from Oklahoma state income taxes under an Oklahoma tax code exemption for tribal employees.

Mvskoke Media received the following statement from Principal Chief David Hill:

We had hoped the U.S. Supreme Court would step in to address an egregiously wrong Oklahoma Supreme Court decision that disregards decades of settled federal law. While the Court declined review, this matter is far from resolved.

Federal law governing state taxation of Indians is clear and has been reaffirmed repeatedly over time. When a state court ignores that law, it undermines legal certainty and invites confusion and conflict. That is not acceptable for tribal citizens, and it is not acceptable for the State of Oklahoma.

We are reviewing all available options, including seeking a remedy in federal court. The Muscogee (Creek) Nation will continue to stand up for its citizens and for the principle that the law applies equally—regardless of political agendas.

Recent attempts by Governor Kevin Stitt to characterize these long-established legal protections as a "racial preference" are simply false. The United States Supreme Court has made it abundantly clear that tribal citizenship is a political classification, not a racial one. Tribal nations are diverse, with citizens of many races and backgrounds. What unites our citizens is citizenship in a sovereign tribal nation, not race.

The State of Oklahoma's ongoing pattern of selectively complying with settled law poses a danger to all Oklahomans. The rule of law cannot be optional.

SENATE INTRODUCES AMENDMENT TO STRENGTHEN INDIGENOUS CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION

BY BRADEN HARPER

WASHINGTON – A new federal bill amending a law to prevent abuse and neglect for Indigenous children was introduced in the U.S. Senate on Tuesday, March 24. S.4179, or the American Indian and Alaska Native Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (AI/AN CAPTA), was sponsored by Senator Lisa Murkowski and was cosponsored by Senator Elizabeth Warren. It seeks to amend the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act by requiring "equitable distribution to Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations, and for other purposes."

As previously reported, the amended bill will address inequities Indigenous children face by providing more funding to Tribal law enforcement agencies and crime victim services. It will require that Tribes be considered in the criteria for equitable distribution of federal prevention grants.

In a public statement, Senator Murkowski stressed that the change in allocated funds is crucial to combating issues disproportionately faced by children in Indigenous communities.

"Protecting children must always be a top priority, but across the nation we continue to see the repercussions of underinvestment in the systems designed to keep Native children safe and healthy. Alaska Native children are disproportionately impacted by abuse, neglect, and trauma – experiences that can shape the course of their entire lives. As federal programs that support vulnerable communities continue to face uncertainty, this legislation is as important as ever," Senator Murkowski said. "This legislation will help make sure prevention funding reaches Tribal communities so families can access culturally appropriate services and children can grow up safe, supported, and connected to their communities."

The bill was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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

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

MUSCOGEE MUSINGS

WITH PRINCIPAL CHIEF HILL

Hesci! Stonkon follakcv?

2026 is steaming ahead and getting away from us. It feels like we just got started, and now here we are in April heading towards May, and another big summer here at the Muscogee Nation right in front of us! It's exciting, but it's good to take the time to reflect when time moves so quickly.

I hope everyone had a safe and Happy Easter weekend with their families and loved ones. As Mvskoke people, our traditions and customs run deep in ceremony and in faith. I'm proud that our people have such strong beliefs, whether at the grounds, at the church, or both. The feeling you get at each one is a good thing. It's a sense of community, it's a responsibility to something greater than ourselves, and it all drives us to live a good life and to leave a proper legacy of love and fellowship for our families and for our Nation.

I love reporting to you all that our Nation continues to be in the midst of the greatest era of growth we have ever seen in the history of modern tribal government. Every other week it seems we are turning dirt or cutting ribbons. The brand-new Citizen Services Building at our Capitol headquarters here in Okmulgee will be complete in just a matter of weeks, and we placed the final beam on our new Muscogee Nation Courthouse with a topping-out ceremony signaling its progress. Things look a lot different around here, and we promised that it would. Prosperity and progress mean movement. Every single day, we're thinking of ways to push the ball down the field and get a little bit further than we were the day before. Our commitment is just as strong now as when we started, and we have a lot of things to complete in the next two years, so it's going to be fun to see it all come together.

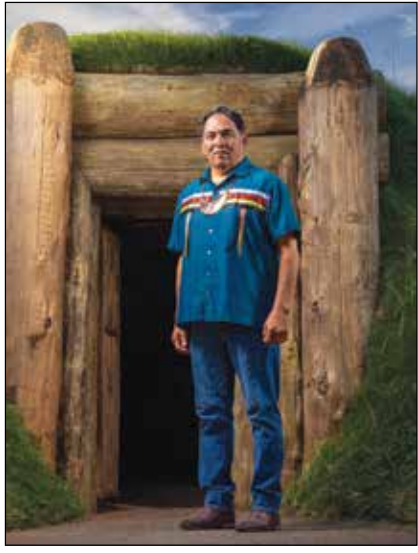
We made our annual trip back to the homelands to commemorate the 212th Anniversary of the Battle of Horseshoe Bend. For many, returning to the homelands is something that you don't do, but as Principal Chief, I feel like it's imperative that we are there as a Nation each year to help tell the true history. I think it's important that people see that we are still here, and that we still believe in our ways, like Chief Menawa and the over 800 Mvskoke men, women, and children who were killed there. Those Red Stick Warriors (Upper Creeks) stood against assimilation and stood up for the survival of our language and traditions. The Lower Creek had adopted Anglo culture, sided with Jackson, owned slaves...all things that stripped them of their Mvskoke, and made them Americans with no identity of their own. We still struggle to stand up for ourselves against this very history today. I believe Secretary of Culture & Humanities Raelynn Butler may have said it best, "it's important that the spirits of our ancestors that are still here on this hallowed ground, hear their language still being spoken, still see the signs of traditional customs, and feel the assurance that what they all died for didn't die with them, but carried on." If you've never been to our commemoration, I implore you to make a plan and go with us next year. It's our Arlington National Cemetery, it's our Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, it's our sacred reminder of a great price that was paid so that we would stand firm in who we STILL are, today.

I want to remind everyone that we have a big party coming up, the 50th Birthday of the Muscogee Nation Festival! It's going to be a great time this year, so start making your plans to attend now. We will have some big announcements and details coming in the next few weeks.

Also, it's springtime in Indian territory, and that can mean some wicked skies. Please stay weather-aware and tuned to social media and our website if any needs arise during times of emergency.

Until next time, take care of yourselves, and each other.

MVTO,
Chief Hill



MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION

Office of Environmental Services

FRIDAY, APRIL 24, 2026	FRIDAY, MAY 1, 2026
Recycle Collection Event	Community Clean-Up Event

Free Document Shredding from 10 A.M. – 1 P.M.
 Due to the limited capacity of the shredding truck, it will be first come, first served, and you must stay with your documents while they are being shredded.
NO books, 3-ring binders, large clips, or magazines

Free Electronic Recycling from 9 A.M. - 3 P.M.
 TVs, monitors, cell phones, small appliances, and other electronics for safe and responsible recycling

Other Items Accepted

- White goods such as washers, dryers, refrigerators/freezers
ALL DOORS MUST BE REMOVED
- Automobile batteries and alkaline batteries
NO LITHIUM BATTERIES
- Automobile Tires
NO AGRICULTURAL TIRES
- Cardboard, paper, plastics #1 & 2, and aluminum cans

DO NOT bring any hazardous materials

Hazardous waste includes paint, medications, glues, fluorescent bulbs, and chemicals such as pesticides, cleaners, and insect repellants. These types of items will not be accepted at this event.

Registration will be at the MCN Tribal Executive Building Canopy at 12:30 P.M.

Routes to be determined
 Crews will clean from 1 P.M. to 3 P.M.
 Gloves, bags, vests, hand sanitizer, and bottled water will be provided to volunteers

Afterwards, volunteers will meet at the MCN Recycling Center for fellowship, cookout, t-shirts and prizes!

MCN RECYCLING CENTER
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 OKMULGEE, OK 74447
 FOR MORE INFO
 CONTACT: 918-549-2580

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CALLING FOR

GRADUATE PROFILES

The Mvskoke News is highlighting the 2026 Muscogee (Creek) Nation graduates in the June 15 edition. Graduates eligible to be featured must be Muscogee (Creek) Nation citizens and graduating from a high school, college, or technical school.

Provide a digital photo, the graduate's full name, program, and a 150-word (limit) bio to info@mvskokemedia.com. Graduate profile submissions will be accepted until Thursday, May 30, at 5:00 p.m. (CST). If you do not receive a confirmation email, please call 918-732-7720 to verify that your profile has been received.

Profiles will be edited for Associated Press style, structure, grammar, spelling, length and punctuation.

LATE PROFILES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

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OU REPORT SHEDS LIGHT ON THE BARRIERS TO CANCER CARE FOR TRIBAL CITIZENS

GRACE FOX SHARES FINDINGS AND POLICY SUGGESTIONS



Grace Fox is a Tribal Health Care Policy Analyst. (Image Credit: Travis Caperton)

BY BRADEN HARPER

NORMAN – According to the Centers for Disease Control, cancer rates among Native American and Indigenous populations have higher mortality rates compared with other groups. The two most common types of cancer are lung and stomach cancer. External factors contributing to these rates include a lack of insurance, lower household incomes, and rural areas where comprehensive health care is out of reach for residents. A service many Tribal citizens rely on is the Indian Health Service's (IHS) Purchased/Referred Care (PRC) program, formerly known as Contract Health Services.

A report on the PRC's effectiveness in treating cancer rates among Indigenous populations was released by the University of Oklahoma Native

Nations Center for Tribal Policy Research. The author of the report, Tribal Healthcare Policy Analyst Grace Fox (Seminole), spoke with Mvskoke Media's Live Wire on Friday, March 20, sharing her findings and the policy options for consideration.

"We're not only focusing on Tribal communities, we're also providing solutions that are geared toward Tribal leaders," Fox said. "What can we do? How can we help our citizens live their healthiest, happiest lives?"

PRC ensures continual access for Tribal citizens to healthcare that may not be delivered or accessible at IHS clinics or Tribal clinics. It's under the federal trust responsibility to provide care for Native American and Tribal citizens here in the United States.

For Fox, the research is personal. She has seen up close how cancer affects loved ones and the responsibility of being a care-

taker. When her mother was diagnosed with cancer, she was stunned by the little research done on cancer treatment for Tribal citizens. Fox remarked that the research she does now is fulfilling both professionally and personally.

Research on the PRC was pulled from publicly accessible records, and the research is presented in a format for policymaker analysis. Fox explained that this means that the solutions to the issues outlined in the research can one day become law. Fox's research stressed that the PRC is important because it may be the only treatment path moving forward for many Tribal citizens diagnosed with cancer.

"Purchased and Referred care was created to ensure continuous delivery of care. That is especially important when looking at cancer because Native Americans and Alaskan Natives face higher cancer incidence rates, higher mortality, later diagnoses, and an overall heavier cancer burden." Fox said.

Fox expounded that many

round-trip two to three times a week can be challenging. Other barriers include insurance coverage that does not cover treatment costs and historical mistrust of healthcare institutions.

Solutions

Fox's research proposes that Tribal governments take authority through self-determination by funding their own cancer treatment facilities. It also proposes that Tribes take the initiative to seek partnerships with other Tribes, Tribal nonprofits, and universities to elevate treatment access for all Tribal citizens.

Teleoncology is a treatment method that appeared in Fox's research. According to the National Library of Medicine, teleoncology is the application of telemedicine to oncology. This applies to all stages of treatment, including diagnosis, treatment, and supportive care. This can combat disparities in lower-income countries and high-income countries with

Tribes need to continuously address the number of vacant IHS positions.

The Muscogee (Creek) Nation is addressing the need for comprehensive healthcare in rural areas on the Reservation. The Nation broke ground on two new developments in Sapulpa and Holdenville this year. Soon, Tribal citizens in these communities will no longer have to travel as far to receive contract health services. A release from the MCN Department of Health states these facilities will "foster collaboration among healthcare professionals, strengthen care coordination, improve patient outcomes, and enhance the overall patient experience."

Fox encourages Tribal citizens to be informed about healthcare services, either provided by their Tribe or the federal government. This means knowing your risks and getting screened if you qualify.

"If you're qualified, get screened," Fox said. "Check your local guidelines and talk to your physician about screening

"Being informed, being educated and being an advocate for yourself and your family and your Tribal community is what is going to last not just for you, but the seven generations to come."

IHS clinics do not offer life-saving cancer treatment services. This includes screenings, chemotherapy, and surgery. Through the PRC, Tribal citizens are referred to cancer treatment facilities that are typically found in urban metropolitan areas. However, this can create barriers. For citizens living in rural areas far from a cancer treatment center, making a

low-income areas. These areas are typically remote or rural. Fox proposed that teleoncology could be implemented in satellite health care facilities.

The last major solution proposed by Fox's research is sovereignty-driven federal engagement. Fox stresses that it is important for Tribes to intentionally advocate for IHS funding. One issue Fox believes

for different kinds of cancers, especially if you have a genetic component, and environmental or lived factors. We want you around."

Fox's next report will be published in June. For those who want to learn more about the OU Native Nations Center for Tribal Policy Research and their work, visit ou.edu/nativenation-center.

MCN CVS STRANGULATION PREVENTION TRAINING CAN HELP WITH FUTURE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CASES

BY SHAYLN PROCTOR

JENKS – The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Center for Victim Services (CVS) had a prevention training with the Training Institute on Strangulation Prevention. The two-day session was held on April 6-7 and 8-9, with an additional judicial session held on April 10. The goal of the training sessions is to help identify, investigate, and prosecute domestic violence strangulation cases.

The training is designed for judges, court personnel, and court staff. As well as any professional handling sexual assault, domestic violence, child abuse, elder abuse, or human trafficking, such as law enforcement, prosecutors, medical providers, paramedics, advocates, psychologists and civil legal attorneys.

MCN CVS Training Coordinator Marline Mattox feels great that her program provides this type of training. She was a social worker for 30 years before coming to CVS and has done this training herself. Mattox thinks it is one of the best trainings she has ever attended.

The training sessions began because domestic violence strangulations have multiple repercussions. MCN CVS is trying to target every audience that deals with domestic violence as much as they can. This program aims to provide more information and knowledge about strangulation.

Mattox stated that a victim can be strangled and then die years later because of the damage done to the arteries in their neck. Without proper care and the proper imaging scans when it does occur, no one can really

see the damage it has caused.

"People who strangle, there's so much information. People that strangle, they're very dangerous people. It creates a higher level of risk for the individual, for the victim if they have been strangled. So there's been a huge movement to get this training out there with the effects of what strangulation does," Mattox said.

According to the Training Institute on Strangulation Prevention, "One in four women will experience intimate partner violence in their lifetime. Of women at high risk, up to 68% will experience near-fatal strangulation by their partner. 97% are strangled manually (with hands). 38% report losing consciousness. 35% are strangled during sexual assault or abuse. 70% believe they were going to die. Homicide likelihood increases by 750% for victims who have been previously strangled, compared to victims who have never been strangled."

Mattox explained that there are many ways to be strangled, such as by the forearm, pressed into the bed, pressed against an object with someone's hand, or someone's body, and similar actions.

"We know that a lot of times when we're speaking with victims, it's about how we speak with the victim and what we say. When we say, 'Have you been strangled?' they say 'No I wasn't strangled,' when in fact they were because we don't understand the different ways people are strangled," Mattox said.

She also points out that without proper terminology when speaking to a victim, they might not understand they have been

strangled, which can later affect the case.

"If you're not using the right words or words that they can use and understand, then you're having a difficulty because you don't know if your victim has been injured or not. So we're going to bring that piece into it," Mattox said.

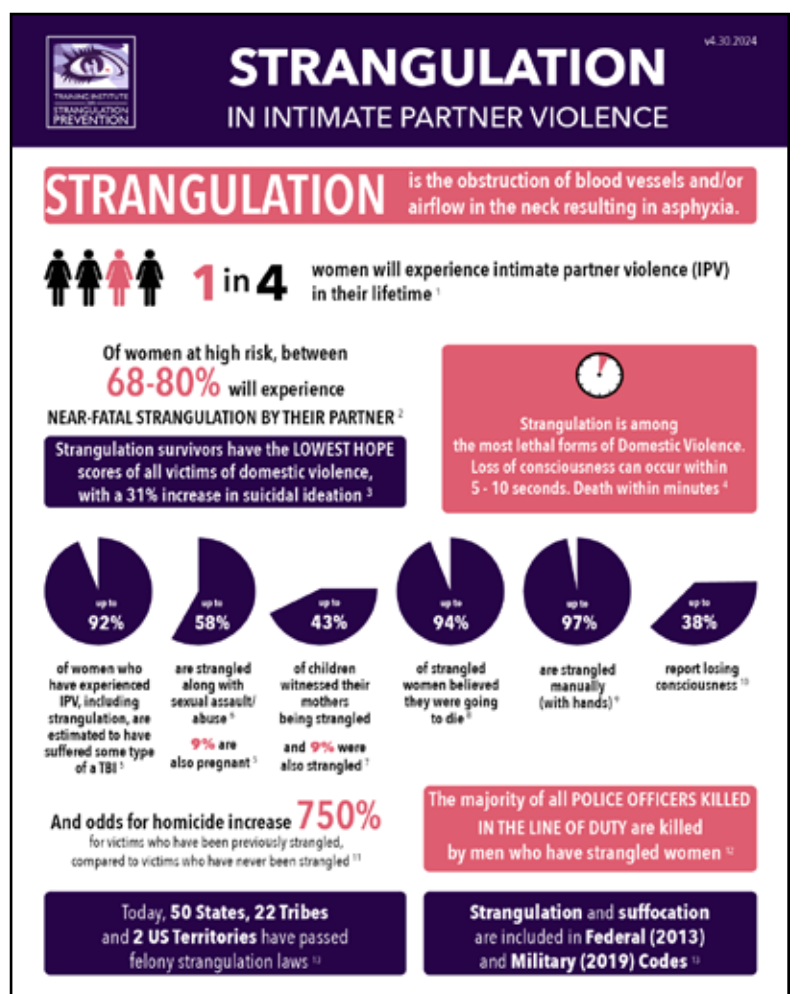
The training also taught participants about other signs of strangulation. Mattox explained that there are times when no external marks are visible, but petechiae may appear in the throat.

When hidden injuries go unnoticed, they can have long-term health consequences. According to the Training Institute on Strangulation Prevention, "The lack of external injuries and the lack of medical training among domestic violence professionals have led to the minimization of this type of violence, exposing victims to potential serious health consequences, further violence, and even death."

"Not only has strangulation been overlooked in the medical literature, but many states still do not adequately address this violence in their criminal statutes, policies, or responses."

During the training, Casey Gwinn, Gael Strack, and Joe Bianco from the Alliance for Hope International's Strangulation Prevention program spoke to individuals. "They have been working in this field for many years, trying to bring it to the forefront, and they've changed a lot of lives," Mattox said.

The trainings were closed due to capacity; however, MCN CVS will make this information



(Image Credit: Training Institute for Strangulation Prevention)

available to the entire community living within the Nation, so everyone can access it. For those unable to attend, CVS is planning a fall training session.

Mattox believes that these sessions will help them in the long run. During the judicial training, for judges and anyone who accompanies them, MCN CVS aims to help the judicial system better understand strangulation and its ramifications. For example, if they are in the courtroom, they'll have a deeper insight into how those cases are assessed, Mattox explained.

"It provides education out

here on our reservation that we may not have at all. It helps us create a movement within the Center for Victim Services to have that information out there, keep it in the forefront of people's minds. Let them know that domestic violence does happen, we need to address it immediately. If our victims have been hurt, then we are going to do what we can to get them the help they need or give them the choices to receive the help they want," Mattox said.

For information about the session, you can contact MCN CVS at 918-732-7979.

CMN STUDENT CROWNED MS. AIHEC

EVANNA FLORES WILL FOCUS ON JOM PROGRAMS AND MENTAL HEALTH DURING HER REIGN

BY SHAYLN PROCTOR

BISMARCK, ND. – Evanna Flores (Mvskoke) is a student at the College of the Muscogee Nation and the newly crowned 2026 Ms. AIHEC (American Indian Higher Education Consortium), which was held in Bismarck, North Dakota, on March 16. The contest took place during the 2026 AIHEC Student Conference, an annual event for Tribal college students, faculty, and staff that hosts competitions in academic, cultural, and artistic disciplines.

Flores spoke to Mvskoke Media about her experience, her plans for her platform, and her educational journey.

Flores is a college graduate, but returned to school at CMN for their Mvskoke language classes. The return motivated her to run for Ms. AIHEC- during the competition, her introduction was in the Mvskoke language, and she spoke about her traditions and her tribe.

“From my experience, it was very meaningful and eye-opening to just even have the opportunity to run because we’re talking about all Tribal colleges in the country,” Flores said.

What she enjoyed most about the competition was meeting people at the conference and hearing their stories from their perspective. While running for Ms. AIHEC, she also got to know the fellow contestants.

Flores’ experience was positive, and everyone was very encouraging. She explained that if someone didn’t win, they were happy for the winner.

During the announcement of the crown, she misheard

the speaker and thought Ms. AIHEC had been announced; however, it was for Mr. AIHEC. So Flores was clapping and texting her friend that she didn’t win but was happy either way to have this experience. That is when the announcer called her name for Ms. AIHEC.

“My mouth was wide open, and I looked at Dr. Colton Wood, who is an instructor here at the college, and he was shocked too. I just ran up there in excitement, and the former Ms. AIHEC gave me a hug on stage, and she crowned me. It was such a joyful moment and something I’ll always hold dear to me. I feel like it’s opened so many doors already and opportunities,” Flores said.

Her experience has also made her consider running for Miss Muscogee (Creek) Nation.

Flores’s duties and role as Ms. AIHEC, according to her understanding right now, are to promote higher education within the Muscogee Reservation and other reservations, and to take opportunities to speak to other tribal colleges. She wants to be able to tell them how important it is to put your education first. “So in this role I’ve been able to connect with others like in tribal colleges and share my story and focus on issues that matter within education and mental health,” Flores said.

“I have already planned to work with the JOM program all across Oklahoma and reach out to other schools in the country, promoting higher education within native communities and schools, also talk about mental health awareness. Because



Evanna Flores, Ms. 2026-2027 AIHEC (Image Courtesy: Evanna Flores)

people have always struggled with drug and alcohol abuse, and so sometimes they don’t feel the need or that they can go further or drop out of school.”

Flores hopes, during her time as Ms. AIHEC, to develop pride in her Nation, grow her professionalism in speaking to people, build more connections, get to know citizens, and speak on stage. After her role as Ms. AIHEC concludes, she would still like to continue representing and advocating for people in higher education, or to help in any way with mental health.

Flores finished her Associate in Science in Allied Health Science at the Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology. In July, she plans to start at the Green Country Technology Center for Practical Nursing (LPN), then bridge at OSU-IT for Nursing. Flores said that she is currently in patient registration at the Medical Center in Okmulgee.

OP-ED



First Methodist Church, Tulsa. (Image Credit: J.D. Colbert)

BY J.D. COLBERT

Tulsa’s best-kept secret may be that its first mayor was Acee (aka Archie) Yahola, who was Mekko of the Locv Pokv tribal town. Or perhaps the biggest unknown to Tulsans is that the name Tulsa derives from the Mvskoke word Tvlvhassee, meaning Old Town. Tulsa’s deep and rich Mvskoke roots have been minimized for far too long. Most Tulsans would say, for example, that the town’s first historical mention was in 1882, with the arrival of the railroad. Or they may point to 1898 when Tulsa was officially incorporated. They are shocked to learn that the first historical mention of Tulsa/Tvlvhassee was nearly 500 years ago in 1540 by De Soto. So even in 1540, Tvlvhassee was known as “Old Town”.

Mekko Yahola led the Locv Pokv tribal town on the Trail of Tears in the fall of 1836. They began their forced death march from present-day Loachapoka, AL. They were in one of five major detachments that fall in the systematic ethnic cleansings of 20,000 Creeks from the Southeast U.S. The Locv Pokv were forced marched 650 miles, which took about two months. After their arrival at Ft. Gibson, Mekko Yahola led the tribal town up the Arkansas River, where they settled in the area we today call Tulsa.

The site where the Locv Pokv decided to rebuild their tribal town offered numerous advantages. It was up on a hill, which afforded a 360-degree view surrounding them. Water was plentiful in the nearby Arkansas River. Fish and game abounded. However, I am convinced that the sight of the Council Oak tree was taken as an omen of good fortune and the deciding factor in the decision to rebuild there. In the homelands, the Locv Pokv had settled around another tree called the Great Council Oak tree. I’ve seen old photos of the Great Council Oak tree, and it bears a striking resemblance to the Council Oak tree. These two oak trees framed the beginning and end of the elegy we know today as the Trail of Tears.

As the esteemed historian Angie Debo has written, the Locv Pokv rebuilt their tribal town with remarkable exactness to what it looked like in the homelands. Under the leadership of Mekko Yahola, the tribal town blossomed. The Council Oak tree stood at the southeastern corner of the town square. The cuko polokse, the roundhouse (also called the hothouse) was located at the northwest corner of the town square. Ironically, the circular University Club Tower now stands in the same spot. Cultivated communal cornfields were located nearby. For the Locv Pokv life returned to some sense of normalcy in these alien lands.

Mekko Yahola built his cabin nearby and just to the north of the Council Oak. A January 5, 1992, story in the Tulsa World reports that his water well was discovered during construction activity at the southeast corner of 12th Street and Boulder Avenue. The water well was ten feet deep and lined with limestone. This would also confirm Debo’s statement that Mekko Yahola’s house was “just southwest of the bend in Main Street.” Mekko Yahola walked on in 1850 during a smallpox epidemic. He was buried near his home, which stood between 11th and 12th streets along Boulder Ave. That is the present location of the First Methodist Church.

In addition to Debo, the Indian Pioneer Papers (IPP) oral history collection appears to confirm that Mekko Yahola is buried beneath the First Methodist Church buildings. The IPP consists of hundreds of first-person interviews conducted in the 1930s. These elders had lived in Indian Territory prior to Oklahoma statehood in 1907. Many of these interviews centered on the “founding” of Tulsa.

Of note is a particular interview with D.O. Giles on June 30, 1937. During that interview, he talks about abandoned cemeteries in Tulsa. Mr. Giles stated, “Then there was one at what is known as Twelfth and Boulder where the Stanley-McCune Funeral Home is...there was quite a scope of graves at Twelfth and Boulder, not more than a fourth of them were moved.”

First Methodist Church began excavation work for its new cathedral at 1115 S. Boulder in 1921. In 1924, the Stanley-McCune funeral home was built next door at 1127 S. Boulder. These are the sites that historical references inform us were the location of Mekko Yahola’s burial place and the early graveyard for the Locv Pokv. Tulsa has literally buried this history. It would seem a good and appropriate step to honor the First Mayor of Tulsa and the Locv Pokv with a historical marker. Tulsa’s deep and rich Mvskoke roots have been minimized for far too long.

MVSKOKE VOTERS

Vote YES on May 30th to replace Muscogee with the traditional spelling of Mvskoke and eliminate the word Creek.

Interpreters and Chiefs adopted the Mvskoke 19-character alphabet in 1853, with the National Council conforming to the same with NCA 25-109, dated May 21, 2025, as follows: **ACEFHILMNOPRSTUVWY**

Delete the word, Creek. Early explorers could not pronounce names of tribal towns; thus, they used ‘Creek’ to refer to their settlements located near creeks and rivers.

On August 12, 2025, language speakers unanimously consented for Mvskoke, saying, “the Mvskoke word is powerful and meaningful.”

Notable programs currently utilizing the spelling Mvskoke:

- Mvskoke District
- Mvskoke Dome
- Mvskoke Recreation Department
- Mvskoke Media
- Mvskoke Nation Honor Guard
- Mvskoke Language Program
- Mvskoke Art Market
- Mvskoke Senior Group (Muscogee Indian Community)
- Mvskoke Nation Basketball Invitational
- Mvskoke Nation Youth Services
- Mvskoke Riders
- Mvskoke Nation Youth Council
- Mvskoke Waters Gallery
- Mvskoke Royalty

Mvto for your consideration and vote YES!

Paid for by Thomas Yahola, Vcule, Uetvmkv Community member

ADVERTISE WITH US.



BY BRADEN HARPER

OKMULGEE—The Muscookee (Creek) Nation National Council held a Regular Session in person on Tuesday, March 24, at the Mound Building.

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

TR 26-014 A tribal resolution of the Muscookee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to submit a grant application to the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration Youth Build 2025 Grant for the benefit of the Employment and Training Department. Representative Lora Harjo-King sponsored the legislation, which was adopted into law by a vote of 15-0.

If ETA receives the grant, \$1,023,238 will be used for the Youth Build 2025 Project. The Nation will provide a leveraged resource match of \$102,257 per year for three years. There was no discussion on this law.

TR 26-015 A tribal resolution of the Muscookee (Creek) Nation approving the update of the Muscookee (Creek) Nation Long Range Transportation Plan with the addition of the routes listed as Attachment “B” - MCN NTTFI 2026. Representative Cody Phillips sponsored the legislation, which was adopted into law by a vote of 15-0.

According to the law, the plan is in compliance with 25 CFR Part 170. There was no discussion on this law.

TR 26-016 A tribal resolution of the Muscookee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a separate memorandum of understanding with two Oklahoma cities for the maintenance of roadways and associated rights-of-way constructed or improved by the Muscookee (Creek) Nation Tribal Transportation Program. Rep. Phillips sponsored the bill, which was adopted into law by a vote of 15-0.

According to the law, the routes are located in Jenks and Tulsa. There was no discussion on this law.

TR 26-017 A tribal resolution of the Muscookee (Creek) Nation supporting the addition of new routes, as identified in attachment “B” - MCN NTTFI 2026, to the Nation’s existing National Tribal Transportation Facility Inventory and requesting the Bureau of Indian Affairs add these new routes to the Nation’s National Tribal Transportation Facility Inventory. Rep. Phillips sponsored the bill, which was adopted into law by a vote of 15-0.

According to the law, the added routes are the same as those mentioned in law TR 26-015. There was no discussion on this law.

TR 26-018 A tribal resolution of the Muscookee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Prin-

icipal Chief to execute an institutional investment management agency agreement with BOK Financial for the benefit of the College of the Muscookee Nation. Rep. Harjo-King sponsored the bill, which was adopted into law by a vote of 15-0.

According to the bill, CMN seeks to generate passive income with an institutional investment portfolio. There was no discussion on this law.

TR 26-019 A tribal resolution of the Muscookee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to submit a grant application to the office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation, for the Riverline Infrastructure Development Project. Representative Galen Cloud sponsored the bill, which was adopted into law by a vote of 15-0.

According to the law, the Nation meets the eligibility criteria set forth in 24 CFR 1003.5. The Nation will apply for the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant Program. If the Nation is selected for the \$25,000,000 grant, it will provide a leveraged resource match of \$9,740,023. There was no discussion on this law.

TR 26-020 A tribal resolution of the Muscookee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a real estate contract for property located in Tulsa County, Oklahoma. Representative Darrell Proctor sponsored the bill, which was adopted into law by a vote of 15-0.

Under the law, the 0.442-acre property will be used by the MCN Department of Health. There was no discussion on this law.

NCA 26-039 A law of the Muscookee (Creek) Nation authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the United States Department of Agriculture for the benefit of the Food Distribution Program. Rep. Proctor sponsored the bill, which was adopted into law by a vote of 15-0.

According to the law, the \$210,000 grant will be used to “disseminate culturally relevant nutrition education resources that encourage American Indians/Alaskan Natives to learn basic nutrition, food safety, meal planning, and healthy living.” There was no discussion on this law.

NCA 26-040 A law of the Muscookee (Creek) Nation amending MCNCA Title 20, Chapter 1 entitled “Administrative Management”. Rep. Proctor sponsored the bill, which failed to become law by a vote of 0-15.

If the bill had been adopted, it would have placed the Senior Services Department under the Department of Community and Human Services. During the discussion, Rep. Proctor explained that some citizens had voiced

concerns about removing the requirement that the MCN Senior Services Department Manager be an MCN citizen. Representative Sandra Golden remarked that the inclusion of the qualification was unnecessary because there are already laws that require the Tribe to give employment preference to MCN citizens.

NCA 26-042 A law of the Muscookee (Creek) Nation authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for the benefit of the Muscookee (Creek) Nation Geospatial Department. Representative Dode Barnett sponsored the legislation, which was adopted into law 15-0.

According to the law, the \$1,986,408 grant will be used to conduct eligible assessment-related activities authorized by CERCLA 104(k)(2) within the MCN Reservation boundaries. There was no discussion on this law.

NCA 26-043 A law of the Muscookee (Creek) Nation appropriating funds to the Nation’s Environmental Services Department for the purchase of equipment. Rep. Barnett sponsored the legislation, which was cosponsored by Speaker Randall Hicks. It was adopted into law by a vote of 15-0.

According to the law, \$300,000 will be appropriated to purchase equipment from Rodebush Septic Service. The funding source is the General Tax and License fund account. There was no discussion on this law.

NCA 26-044 A law of the Muscookee (Creek) Nation appropriating funds to create the Environmental Services - Septic Services Program. Rep. Barnett sponsored the bill, which was adopted into law by a vote of 15-0.

According to the law, \$128,610 will be used to create the MCN Septic Services program. It will be placed under the supervision of the Environmental Services Department. It will provide septic services during the Festival and for Ceremonial Grounds, churches, community cleanups, and funeral needs for MCN citizens. The funding source is the General Tax and License Fund Account. There was no discussion on this law.

NCA 26-045 A law of the Muscookee (Creek) Nation creating a new law by adding MCNCA Title 14, § 4-636 entitled “Unlawful Possession of Firearms or weapons by a Minor.” Rep. Lowe sponsored the bill, which was adopted into law by a vote of 15-0.

According to the law, it will make it unlawful for minors to possess firearms. It will also make it unlawful for a parent or guardian to permit a minor to possess a firearm. Those found guilty of breaking this law will be charged with a misdemeanor. During the discus-

TERMS LEGISLATION FAILS, LAW TARGETING FIREARM POSSESSION BY MINORS PASSES

MCN OUTDOOR RECEIVES \$2.7M FOR DIGITAL BILLBOARD SERVICE

sion on the bill at the Monday, March 23 Business, Finance, and Justice (BFJ) committee meeting, Attorney General Geri Wisner said there is a need for this law because her office is seeing more cases of juveniles committing violent crimes with firearms on the Muskoke Reservation. There was no discussion on this law during the regular session.

NCA 26-046 A law of the Muscookee (Creek) Nation approving and authorizing the Principal Chief to execute and file the articles of organization with the Office of the Secretary of the Nation to form “MCN Outdoor, LLC” under the Muscookee (Creek) Nation Limited Liability Company Act and approving the operation agreement for “MCN Outdoor, LLC”. Representative James Factor sponsored the bill, which was adopted into law by a vote of 15-0.

According to the law, it will establish a tribal-owned digital billboard company. It will “create a sustainable revenue stream through direct advertising sales, improved lease structures, and the installation of modern digital billboards capable of commanding premium rates.”

During the Monday, March 23, BFJ committee meeting, Secretary of Commerce Timothy Harjo discussed how the company will generate income for the Nation. “It will allow a way to broadcast messages to the community while benefiting the Nation. Not only the Reservation community, but the non Indian community that resides within the Reservation,” Harjo said. There was no discussion on this law during the regular session.

NCA 26-047 A law of the Muscookee (Creek) Nation appropriating funds to MCN Outdoor, LLC. Rep. Factor sponsored the bill, which was adopted into law by a vote of 15-0.

According to the law, \$2,786,164 will be used for the limited liability company detailed in NCA 26-046. There was no discussion on this law.

NCA 26-048 A law of the Muscookee (Creek) Nation amending Article V Section 1 (a) and (c) of the Constitution of the Muscookee (Creek) Nation. Rep. Phillips sponsored the legislation, which failed to become adopted into law by a vote of 8-7. The bill required a 2/3 vote of the Full Council. Rep. Barnett, Representative Mary Crawford, Rep. Factor, Rep. Harjo-King, Representative Charles McHenry, Representative Thomasene Osborn, and Representative Robyn Whitecloud voted no on the bill. *For detailed coverage, see page 2.*

NCA 26-049 A law of the Muscookee (Creek) Nation authorizing the expenditure of third-party funds to be used toward the purchase of property located in Tulsa County,

Oklahoma. Rep. Proctor sponsored the bill, which was adopted into law by a vote of 15-0.

According to the law, the property will cost \$1,529,000 to purchase. This will cover the title insurance, title opinions, surveys, environmental studies and applicable taxes. There was no discussion on this law.

NCA 26-050 A law of the Muscookee (Creek) Nation authorizing an appropriation for improvements located at the Omniplex. Rep. Lowe sponsored the legislation, which was adopted into law by a vote of 15-0.

According to the law, \$645,775 will be used to enhance the functionality of the Omniplex facility, improve public safety, expand revenue opportunities, and elevate the overall experience for athletes, spectators, and community members. The funding source was identified as the Capital Improvements Fund Account. There was no discussion on this law.

NCA 26-052 A law of the Muscookee (Creek) Nation amending NCA 13-200 (A law of the Muscookee (Creek) Nation approving and authorizing the Principal Chief to execute and file the articles of organization with the Office of the Secretary of the Nation to form “OneFire Holding Company, LLC” under the Muscookee (Creek) Nation Limited Liability Company Act and approving the operating agreement for “OneFire Holding Company, LLC”) as amended by NCA 14-080 and NCA 14-178 and NCA 18-121, NCA 20-007, NCA 21-109, and NCA 23-095. Rep. Lowe sponsored the bill, which was adopted into law by a vote of 15-0.

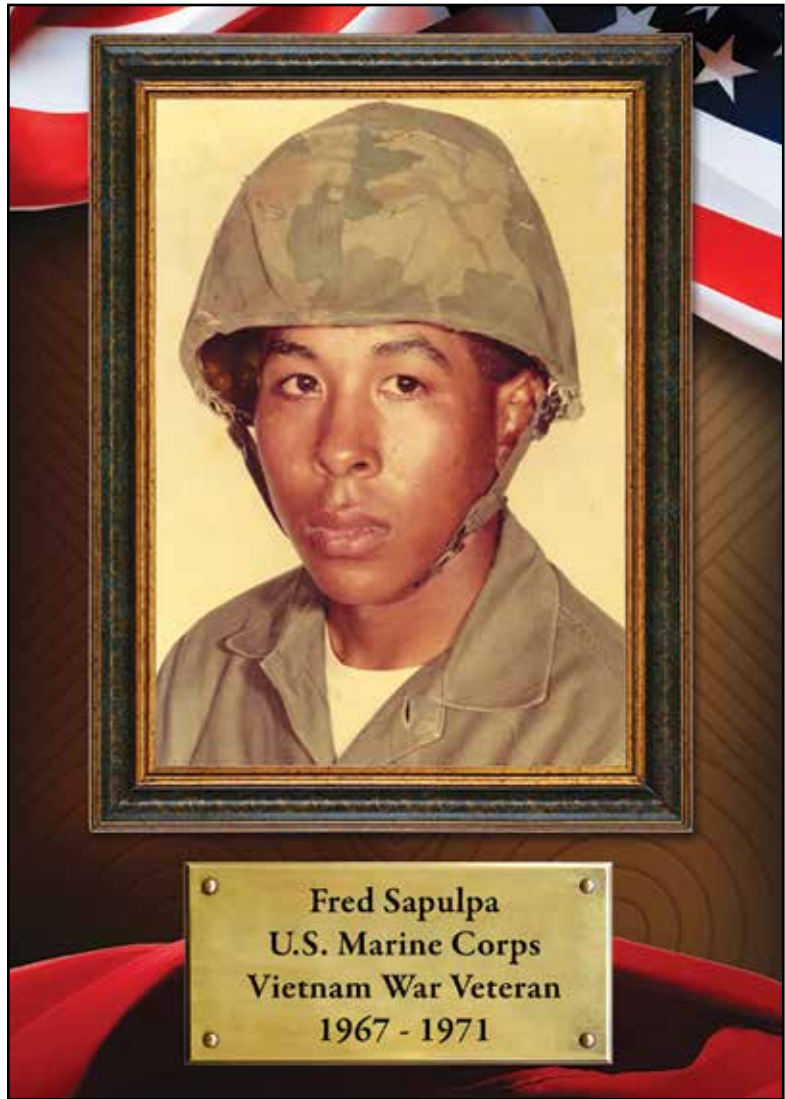
According to the law, it will add a section five titled “Exemptions/Non-Applicability.” Section five states that OneFire is exempt from the provisions of Title 37, § 3-101 and § 3-102 of the Muscookee (Creek) Nation Code. It will add a fifth member to the OneFire board, which will be the MCN Commerce Secretary. There was no discussion on this law.

NCA 26-053 A law of the Muscookee (Creek) Nation appropriating funds for legal fees to OneFire Holding Company, LLC. Rep. Lowe sponsored the bill, which was adopted into law by a vote of 15-0.

According to the law, \$350,000 will be used to support legal counsel relating to “the protection of the Muscookee (Creek) Nation’s reservation in taxation matters connected to the River Walk Crossing Property, OneFire Holding, and its subsidiaries.” There was no discussion on this law.

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

VETERANS SPOTLIGHT



The Muscogee Nation Veterans Affairs Services Office is proud to honor Fred Sapulpa for his dedicated service to the U.S. Marine Corps, the United States, and the Muscogee Nation. Fred honorably served from 1967 to 1971 and is a recipient of several honors: Combat Action Ribbon, Navy Presidential Unit Citation, Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal (2nd Award), National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal with 3 Bronze Star Devices, and Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal with Device.

Mvto Mr. Sapulpa for your selfless service to your country and your community.

The Veterans Spotlight is submitted by the MCN VASO.

MVTO FOR YOUR SELFLESS SERVICE!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

Mvskoke Matriarchy Exhibit
Mvskoke Waters Gallery
Curated by Carly Treece and Shelley Patrick
Tuesday, April 7 thru Saturday, Aug. 1
500 Riverwalk Terrace, Suite 115, Jenks

OPUNVKV KERREYAT IPUNKERREPVV
Monthly Mvskoke Language Circle
Hanna Indian Community
Friday, April 17, 12 - 4 P.M.
402692 E. Rd., Hanna

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

OU Spring Football Game
Discounted tickets for Tribal citizens
Saturday, April 18 at 12:00 p.m.
To purchase:
ouath.at/MuscogeeFB26
405-325-6283

Yoga at Jenks Riverwalk
Community Wellness Spring Series
Tuesdays, 6 p.m. thru May 9
300 Riverwalk Terrace, Jenks
Near the Riverwalk Stage

Elder's Meeting
Okmulgee Elder Nutrition Center
Wednesday, May 6, 9:30 a.m.
2900 N. Osage Pl., Okmulgee

Coffee and Donuts
Veteran Affairs Services Office
Thursday, May 14, 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.
1006 Bear Lane, Okmulgee

Health Shelf Donation Drive
College of Muscogee Nation Health & Wellness seeks 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
For more information, contact 918-549-2800

Diabetes Undone!
How to fight back against diabetes and even beat it- group support, expert advice, and cooking demos
Thursdays, March 12 through April 30, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
Light meal following
College of the Muscogee Nation, Student Center Rm 108
For information, contact Thor Shaffer 405-706-7460

2026 Mvskoke Language Camp
June 8-12
Camp Applications by May 1, 5 p.m.
Questions, 918-304-3362
www.mvskokeopunvkv.com

New Day Discovery Bibles
Native New Day Bible Studies 30-lesson series done by correspondence. Illustrated guides, written for Native people, by Native people. Discover Bible School P.O. Box 14208 Tulsa, OK. 74159-1208.

WILD ONION DINNERS
Seminole Hitchita Church
Saturday, April 18, 11 a.m.- run out \$15/plate
Dine in or Carry out
11450 N 361 Rd, Seminole

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

IN MEMORIAM

Jefferson Daniel Miles, a dedicated electrician and respected veteran, passed away on March 27, 2026, in Grove, Oklahoma. Born on November 13, 1935, in Shawnee, Oklahoma, Jefferson lived a life defined by unwavering commitment, hard work, and devotion to his family and country.

Jefferson's early years were shaped in Shawnee, where he was born into a large family. He was preceded in death by nine siblings, a testament to a family legacy now upheld by those who carry forward his memory. His service to his nation was marked by his time in the Army, where he demonstrated the same steadfast dedication that would characterize every aspect of his life.

Professionally, Jefferson made his mark as an electrician, a craft that suited his nature perfectly. Those who



Jefferson Daniel Miles

knew him often remarked that he was the embodiment of diligence—the phrase “all he did was work” aptly captures his approach to life and labor. His work ethic not only defined his career but also provided a foundation for the support and care of his loved ones.

Jefferson's family was central to his life. He is survived by his sons, Hank Miles and his wife, Theresa, and Jefferson Daniel Miles, Jr., and his life partner, Roberta Black. Jefferson's legacy continues through his cherished grandchildren: Jesse Diotte, Craig Miles, Jordan Miles, Makenzie Miles, Josh Purvis, and Charity Miles, as well as numerous great-grandchildren. He is preceded in death by his parents, siblings, and daughters Deborah Pendergraft and Hope Beesley.

Jefferson Daniel Miles leaves behind an enduring example of dedication and perseverance, a man who honored both his work and his family with equal measure. His life stands as a testament to the virtues of hard work and loyalty, qualities that will continue to inspire those who loved him.



Randall Glen Deere

Randall Glen Deere, 74, of Tulsa, Oklahoma, passed away, leaving behind a legacy of creativity, kindness, and extraordinary talent that will be deeply missed. Born and raised in Tulsa to Herman and Margie (Gartman) Deere, Randy grew up with a bright spirit, a creative mind, and a heart that welcomed everyone in. He graduated from Central High School in 1969 and went on to study jewelry design in Kansas City, beginning a lifelong career that became not only his livelihood, but his art.

Randy was an extraordinarily gifted jeweler, known for creating breathtaking, one-of-a-kind pieces that reflected both skill

and soul. His hands crafted masterpieces, but it was his imagination- sharp, vibrant, and limitless -that set him apart. Throughout his life, he owned a jewelry store and worked at others, touching countless customers who trusted him with their most meaningful moments.

More than his artistry in jewelry, Randy was a true creator in every aspect of life. A natural-born musician, he played the piano, violin, cello, and banjo-often composing as he played, guiding melodies by ear in a way that felt effortless and magical. His talent was something he shared freely, filling rooms with music that spoke straight to the heart.

Randy lived joyfully and with deep curiosity. He loved the peacefulness of Grand Lake, the challenge of a good round of golf, and the delight of a great book. He hand-drew birthday cards with such detail and playfulness that they became cherished keepsakes. He adored Harry Potter, enjoyed a good video game (especially when it let him bond with the grandkids-Zelda being their favorite), and carried a remarkable sense of humor. He remained warm-spirited and positive, with an outlook that made life lighter for those around him.

Above all else, Randy loved

his family. He was a devoted father to Miranda Deere (Liam) and Callie Killian (Chris), a loving partner to Lecia Hite, and a proud grandfather who cherished Myles Killian, Jaxson Killian, Alexis Sehorn, Gavin Sehorn, Micah Sehorn, Emmit Sehorn, Nola Gorrell White, Parker Gorrell, Brynn Gorrell, Cort Strom, Maegan Rae, and John Gorrell. His grandchildren were his joy, and he delighted in every moment with them.

Randy is also survived by his mother, Margie Deere, his siblings Dale Alan Deere (Rebecca) and Teresa Newton (Bill), his best friends Randy Thomas, Jimo smith, Gary Davis, Greg Jennings and Dayton Girdner and a large, loving extended family of cousins, aunts, uncles, and countless friends who will forever feel the gift of having known him.

He is preceded in death by his father, Herman Deere, and by his beloved son, Adrian Deere.

Randy will be remembered for his talent, his kindness, his creativity, and the laughter he brought so easily into the world. His absence leaves an immeasurable void, but his light- bright, joyful, and comforting -will continue to shine through the many lives he touched.

Mary Elizabeth (Freeman) Arkeketa (Hokte) was born on October 30, 1931, in Pawhuska, OK and journeyed on to her heavenly home on January 30, 2026, in Sand Springs, OK at the age of 94 years old. Mary was the daughter of Jess and Margaret (Alexander) Freeman and the eldest of eight children. She was a proud citizen of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and brought her children up around her family and culture.

Growing up Mary attended Indian boarding school at Wheelock Academy in Oklahoma and Haskell Institute in Kansas. Mary graduated from Haskell Institute in 1949 and went on to attend nursing school at St. John's School of Nursing, graduating December 1952 as a Registered Nurse (RN). While working at St. John's, she met her husband Benjamin Arkeketa an Otoe-Missouria tribal member, and they married in June of 1954.

Mary worked with the Indian Health Service and the State of Oklahoma as an RN. She retired from the State and became an active community member and volunteer with her church and organizations. Mary was an active member of Tulsa Creek Indian Community Center and the Center was considered her



Mary Elizabeth (Freeman) Arkeketa (Hokte)

second home by her family, the kitchen is named in her honor; she was a member of the Otoe War Mothers Organization and the oldest member; she was a member of St. Patrick's Church which she attended for over fifty years until she was not able to attend regularly.

During her lifetime, Mary was bestowed many honors from different organizations such as Tulsa Indian Affairs Commission, Oklahoma Federation of Indian Women, Catholic Church, and an AARP honored Indian Elder. Her greatest joys were her children and grandchildren and being the loving

companion to her husband Ben of forty-seven years together.

Mary was preceded in death by her husband, Benjamin Arkeketa; parents Jess and Margaret Freeman; her brothers Richard Freeman (Betty), Patrick Freeman (Vera), Ted Freeman (Susan), sister, Donna Faye Martin (Rusty). Her daughters Ginger Arkeketa and Jenise Arkeketa and grandson Beau David Walker. She is survived by her daughters: Susan Arkeketa, Annette Arkeketa-Rendon, Kim Arkeketa; brothers John Freeman (Betty), Jess Freeman Jr. (Ruth), William Freeman (SueAnn); grandchildren; John Arkeketa (Sarah), Jennifer Farris (Dusty), Benjamin Levi West (Bianca), Jacob Arkeketa, Cody Harjo, Kyle Hubbarth, and Jessica Arkeketa. She had 9 great grandchildren, 3 great-great grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

Pallbearers are: Jason Freeman, Mitchell (Kvcv) Freeman, Everett Farris, Brandon Peak, Mike Kihega, and Benjamin Levi West. Honorary Pallbearers are: Patrick Freeman, Eric Freeman, Scott Freeman, Michael Freeman, Don Tiger, Jim Grant, Ted Grant, Lester Harragara, Gary (Chink) Whitecloud.

