





courtesy photo

This year, 2017, is an important year of anniversaries for the Seminole Tribe of Florida. It marks the 200th anniversary of the beginning of the Seminole Wars, in 1817. It is the 60th anniversary of federal recognition of the Seminole Tribe of Florida as a government and a business enterprise. During the year, this column will alternately explore key events of the so-called First Seminole War and highlight the great advances of the Tribe during the last 60 years. This month we asked Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. to reflect on how far the Tribe has come and what the future may hold for the Tribe.

What does the 60th Anniversary of the Tribe's organization and federal recognition mean to you?

This milestone that we are celebrating brings a ton of pride to all Seminoles and especially my family since my grandfather William "Bill" Osceola, worked tirelessly to see that our tribe was not eradicated as the Government hoped to achieve with their termination agenda.

As the Chairman of the Tribe what do you plan to achieve in your tenure?

My plans during my tenure are to ensure the Tribe's financial stability and growth for generations to come and to maintain our direct tribal service programs for every tribal member even those that have yet to be conceived. Creating fiscal responsibility and accountability are the cornerstone of my administration.

Where do you hope to see the Tribe in another 60 years and in another 200 years?

I know that our Tribe will continue to prosper and grow, as for the next 60 years or even 200 years, only time will tell. If we can continue to educate our youth to prepare them to take over and transition into new administrations smoothly we will never lose a step, and our Tribe will live on with no deadline of ending.

What of your ancestors' achievements are you most proud of?

All of our leaders that fought for our existence makes me proud, not just the ones that made sacrifices during our battle against removal, but those that made sacrifices along the way when obstacles have been placed in front of us.

What do you think has been the key to the Tribe's success today?

Putting the people first, never wavering in the face of adversity. Knowing that our culture and heritage provide the foundation for our strength and using that understanding and knowledge every day.

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