



**BIG CYPRESS** — About 100 Big Cypress employees were treated to a day of fun, bingo and a leisurely lunch Nov. 7 as a thank you for the work they did related to Hurricane Irma, which barreled through the reservation in September.

“I want them to know how important they are,” said Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger. “Every company deserves employees like we have. This is a small appreciation for what they do for the Tribe and we want them to feel like part of the family.”

Tribal leaders thanked the employees for their dedication and hard work.

“Thanks for coming out after the hurricane,” said Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank. “We needed a lot of help out here. You provided it and we are grateful for that. I think you all did an outstanding job. Shonabisha.”

President Mitchell Cypress thanked the employees, many of whom left their families to help the BC community, and said he was grateful for their dedication.

“A lot of you stood toe-to-toe, shoulder-to-shoulder. It made me very proud to be your boss-man,” Councilman Tiger said. “You all stood up and made me look good; I couldn’t ask for anything better. You make me very proud to be a representative in this community.”

After 25 years of service to the Tribe, SPD Chief and Executive Director of Public Safety Will Latchford knows the BC employees will step up whenever something goes wrong.

“You probably take care of this community better than any other in the Tribe,” he said. “The ownership you take for the people out here is tremendous. I applaud each one of you and I believe that’s a great asset. This storm brought out the best in you. Council, Board and the community saw you step up to the plate. It confirmed they have the best employees a government can have.”

After a few games of bingo, complete with gifts, employees enjoyed a barbeque lunch and some good-natured competition in the form of a wacky obstacle course. Teams from four departments tried to stifle their laughter as they competed in the relay race.

“We put together the obstacle course for a fun day, so have a good time, have a blast and let’s see who walks away with the trophy,” Councilman Tiger said. “You won’t find any other company in the U.S. that does what we do for our employees.”

Stations in the relay race included rolling a large tire, high-step running through eight tires on the ground, a log carry, pushing a riding lawn mower, a wheelbarrow run, wet and wild crawl under fake barbed wire, balancing an egg on a spoon while walking quickly over palm fans, and a dead golf cart push. The heat, sun and fire ants weren’t counted as obstacles.

Before the race, the four teams strategized and decided who would do which task. The winning team was the Recreation Department’s Team Rec with a record-setting time of 52.90 seconds to complete the course. THPO’s team, the Ellen’s Degenerates, took second place with 102.89 seconds. Cattle and Range’s team, the Non-Conformists, came in third with 107.85 seconds and the BC Council’s team, the Shysters, was last with 112.64 seconds.

Team Rec will proudly display the trophy in their office at the Herman L. Osceola Gym until someone else claims the win at the employee fun day next year.



BC fun day 2



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