

The **Seminole** *Voice of the Unconquered* **Tribune**
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Big Cypress Reservation hosts 2012 4-H Show and Sale

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — The Tribal youth showed up and showed out at this year's 4-H Show and Sale in Big Cypress.

From March 29-31, Tribal youth from Big Cypress, Brighton and Immokalee brought out their heifers, steer and swine at the Junior Cypress Rodeo Arena for the conclusion of the 2011-2012 Seminole 4-H season.

"This is something that's really important to the Tribe," said Polly Hayes, Seminole Indian 4-H coordinator for Big Cypress, Brighton and Immokalee. "It teaches the kids a level of responsibility, as well as how to keep records and how to feed their animals."

For the first time since 2005, the event was held on the Big Cypress Reservation; it was held at the Brighton Reservation's 4-H Barn for the past six years.

Big Cypress 4-H director Toi Andrews said she was excited about being this year's host.

"We fought long and hard to have it here in Big Cypress," she said. "With the help of Councilman Mondo Tiger, we were able to get the Show and Sale here. I'm very pleased that we pulled it off."

After weighing in their livestock on March 29, Tribal youth got ready for the main event, where a year's worth of hard work paid off in big dividends.

On March 30, event ringmaster Norman Bowers appeared at the arena's show barn, assisting each of the 100 4-H Show entrants in the yearling heifer, 2-year-old bred, steer and swine categories of competition.

In all, 59 of those entrants came from Brighton, 27 came from Immokalee and 14 came from Big Cypress. All five yearling heifer entrants came from Brighton, with the lone 2-year-old entrant and winner, Cyrus Smedley, coming from Brighton as well.

Hayes said all steers had to weigh at least 1,000 pounds to qualify for the 4-H Show and Sale. With 31 entrants in four classes of steer, the lightest steer weighed in at 1,007 pounds, while the largest one, 1,463 pounds, earned this year's Grand Champion Steer status for Brighton's Kiylier Baker, the fourth-class steer



Brighton's Morgan Yates, left, is crowned the 4-H Show and Sale's Yearling Heifers Grand Champion as Jr. Miss Florida Seminole Jaryaca Baker presents the honor on March 30.

Naji Tobias

winner.

At 1,245 pounds, Kalgary Johns' steer, the fourth-class steer runner-up, was crowned the Reserve Grand Champion Steer, giving the Brighton Reservation a clean sweep of the top two steer honors.

Meanwhile, out of 63 entrants in nine classes of swine, the lightest hog weighed 230 pounds, while the largest hog, coming from Brighton's Aidan Tommie, weighed 323 pounds in the ninth-class swine

category.

However, it was the second heaviest hog, 295 pounds in the ninth-class swine category, that garnered a Grand Champion Swine honor for Big Cypress' Jahniyah Henry. Immokalee's Caleb Billie, who placed first out of the seven seventh-class swine entrants, was crowned this year's Reserve Grand Champion Swine for his 272-pound swine.

♦ See 4-H on page 4A



Travis R. Billie

Participants of the 16th annual Junior Cypress Rodeo and Cattle Drive steer more than 200 cows across the Big Cypress Reservation on March 17.

Annual Junior Cypress Cattle Drive and Rodeo

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Cowboys and ranchers mounted their horses and steered more than 200 cows across the Big Cypress Reservation last month on an 8-mile journey for the 16th annual Junior Cypress Cattle Drive.

The March 17 event featured cattle from the Immokalee Reservation's Seminole Ranch, as well as wagons, buggies, swamp buggies and mules. The Big Cypress Tribal Council and Board offices sponsored the drive.

This year's honorary trail boss was the late Willie Frank, a Tribal pioneer and grandfather of Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank. Willie was a longtime elected official who developed much of the BC land from what used to be tomato fields and — before that — underwater swamplands.

"There used to be Brahman cattle on the land here," said former Chairman Mitchell Cypress, nephew of the late Junior Cypress. "We had to fight the government and the diseases that would

harm the cattle. But Willie Frank and Junior Cypress found a way to form a cattle program out of it."

Big Cypress Tribal senior Moses Jumper Jr. kicked off the cattle drive as the trail official.

Jumper — a cattleman who raises Cracker horses in Big Cypress — helped form the Junior Cypress Cattle Drive in 1997.

Jumper said that he, Paul Bowers Sr. and Richard Bowers Jr. took their inspiration from the Florida Cattle Drive that took place in the '90s, re-enacting the old cattle drives that happened in northern and central Florida years ago.

"We got together one day and said, 'Hey, we've got a great history of cattle and horses,'" Jumper said. "A lot of people don't understand the significance of the cattle and horses that play a part in our Tribal history and tradition."

Natives often bartered cattle with immigrants, and they traded cattle with Spaniards as far back as the 1600s, he said.

♦ See CATTLE DRIVE on page 5A



Peter B. Gallagher

Easter babies Janyiah Motlow Hubbard and Curtis Motlow Jr. celebrate their first Easter in Tampa on April 6. See how each Seminole Reservation celebrated Easter on pages 8-9A.

Thousands rock Tampa Hard Rock job fair

BY PETER B. GALLAGHER
Special Projects Reporter

TAMPA — The first job seeker showed up at 2:30 a.m. First in line at the appointed State Fairgrounds exhibition hall, early bird Yvette Dube was followed by more than a thousand others hoping to successfully apply for more than 400 available jobs at the nearby Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino.

In fact, so many people showed up on April 16 that Hard Rock officials unlocked the vast hall's front doors early, then began sending people away by 10 a.m.

"We could only process 1,000 people in one day. That was our plan. It was very exciting," said Tampa Hard Rock public relations manager Gina Morales. More than 3,000 people registered early to fill 400 positions, including chefs, bartenders, servers, cashiers, technicians and "openings in every department."

The new hires are necessary to support a \$75 million expansion to the Hard Rock complex, the second of three expansions in the casino's master plan. Increasing its work force to 3,500, the expanded Tampa Hard Rock will open in June as one of the 10 largest casinos in the country, with 220,000 square feet of casino floor space for 5,000 slot machines and 105 gaming tables. More than 1,300 parking spaces are also being added.

On day one of the job fair, 185 people were hired, including first-in-line Dube, who said, "My persistency paid off. I'm now a productive member of society. I am employable." That's no small accomplishment in Florida, where unemployment sits at 9.4 percent.

Those who didn't make it through

the door on April 16 were asked to return during the next few days until all 400 jobs were taken.

Single company job fairs such as the one staged by Hard Rock are extremely rare, said Tampa Hard Rock recruitment manager Carole Thompson.

"This isn't 50 different companies with tables and displays and stacks of application," she said. "We are interviewing, testing and giving out real jobs for one of the best companies to work for in the world."

Hard Rock staff wore bright red "AWESOME!" T-shirts. Giant banners screamed slogans such as "Register to rock!" And, of course, classic rock 'n' roll music, interspersed with announcements, blared from speakers everywhere. TV cameras waited in the lobby where successful applicants walked out.

"Very well organized and very exciting!" Hard Rock's Morales said.

Claire Petion could not hide her big smile as she ended her five hours of interviews and waiting with the prize she sought: a job as a pastry chef working for famed Chef Alon Gontowski, who was crowned the winner of Food Network's *Sweet Genius* TV show last month.

"I have wanted to work for Hard Rock ever since I got out of culinary school in 2006," Petion said. "And to work with Chef Alon — how great is that?"

Hard Rock's Thompson said that, on the average, she gets a dozen inquiries about pastry chef jobs every week, as well as applications for many other positions.

"There are so many highly qualified applicants," Morales said. "And most of them have always wanted to be a part of the Hard Rock family."

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recognized by community
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Historic Florida Wildlife Corridor Expedition treks through Seminole Country

BY PETER B. GALLAGHER
Special Projects Reporter

BRIGHTON — Lorene Gopher strolled about her “kitchen” beneath the large cookfire chickee in her backyard, not far from the main road through the Brighton Reservation. She gave the boiling swamp cabbage a stir with a long spoon, nudged the pair of roasting gopher turtles — upside down and still in their shells — over the flames and furrowed her brow at the cooking stew beef and the pork cracklings. She watched with a smile as fellow Tribal members Nancy Shore, Jenny Shore and Martha Jones made a mountain of frybread, some of it “pumpkin, the sweet kind,” Lorene noted.

Suddenly, Lorene looked up, and there they were.

Photojournalist Carlton Ward Jr., filmmaker Elam Stoltzfus and bear biologist Joe Guthrie came walking into the chickee.

“Those are the guys who are walkin’ cross Florida,” she smiled. “My son told me we ought to have a traditional meal for them, and it’s almost ready.”

With a piece of pumpkin bread squeezed in one hand, Ward aimed his camera at the scene. Calling themselves the Florida Wildlife Corridor Expedition, the three wilderness enthusiasts, along with conservationist Mallory Lykes Dimmitt, trekked from Flamingo at the southern tip of the Florida peninsula to the Okefenokee area just north of the Florida line — 1,000 miles in 100 days.

The travelers educated Floridians about the dire need for wildlife corridors to facilitate the natural migrations of animals in a state that averages 353.4 inhabitants per square mile. They documented the trip through photography, video streams, radio reports, daily updates on social media and digital networks, and a host of activities for reporters, landowners, celebrities, conservationists, politicians and other guests.

They are committed to connecting the remaining natural lands, waterways, working farms and ranches, public and private parklands, river systems and greenways — natural and God-made — from the Everglades to southern Georgia. The Seminole Tribe of Florida land holdings, particularly the 81,972-square-mile Big Cypress Reservation and the 57,090-square-mile Brighton Reservation, provide major linkages for this system.

“We are very excited about visiting the Seminoles,” said Stoltzfus, who shot a two-hour public television documentary on the expedition. “They control vast areas of wilderness habitat absolutely necessary for wildlife to use. They have been great stewards of their lands and live in harmony with the panthers and bears, bobcats and deer. We can learn a lot from the Indians.”



I first heard the term “wildlife corridor” in the mid-1980s when I began hanging around a very captivating University of Florida professor named Larry Harris. Loud, bombastic, full of curse words, epithets and precious pearls of original wisdom, Harris was the veritable guru of the Florida environmental movement, the world expert on wildlife issues in a changing world. His actual job was a professor in the University of Florida School of Forest Resources and Conservation — a job I presumed was created just for him. His wildly popular classes, open to all majors by design, were held in an auditorium and were attended by thousands of students. His free time was spent as a trusted adviser to governors, senators, wildlife managers, rangers, biologists, surveyors, cattlemen and the

characters who track Florida panthers. Not one for decorum or brown-nosing, Harris said exactly what he thought, even when he was 35 years ahead of his time and few could grasp what he was talking about.

Most who crossed paths with Harris consider him a genius. He was the first person I ever heard talk about global warming. Everything he said made complete and utter sense. Yet in many cases, Harris was the first person to say it. Once on a Walt Disney World-sponsored Swamp Camp event, he camped out in the Disney Wilderness Preserve with a group of dignitaries including Chairman James E. Billie. Chairman Billie talked about hurricanes and how the medicine man managed to lead everyone away from the raging winds and rain. Amazingly, no Seminole Indians are known to have perished in any hurricane.

“It was the drop in barometric pressure,” Chairman Billie said. “He could feel it on the hairs of his arms. He knew it was time to get out.”

Harris shook his head up and down with a wide smile. He leaned over and whispered to me, “Smart man. I knew it. I knew he was gonna say that.”

His 1984 book *The Fragmented Forest* is the bible of biogeography and biotic diversity, a classic that explained — then changed forever — the way people thought about and practiced wildlife conservation. He called for the integration of habitat fragmentation with landscape ecology and reserve design.

The name “Larry Harris” became permanently attached as an expert to any discussion of habitat fragmentation, landscape ecology, rising sea levels and of course, wildlife corridors. It was Harris who coined the phrase, and it was he who convinced wildlife officials to build animal crossings under Alligator Alley, SR29 and other roads that bisect known panther habitats — arguably the most successful wildlife conservation decision in Florida history.

In the spring of 1987, with the assistance of Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) biologist Charlie Cook, of Lakeland, and the nonprofit Save the Florida Panther organization, Harris secured a large, captive-born male panther and, as cars and trucks buzzed by, had the animal videotaped strolling through an I-4 traffic underpass.

“The road builders say animals won’t go through underpasses, that the noise will scare them,” Harris said. “Here’s proof they are wrong.”

Former Gov. Bob Graham used the video in his victorious race for the Senate that very year, campaigning with the promise to make the underpasses a critical part of the ongoing Alligator Alley reconstruction plans. It worked. Taxpayers put up \$20 million to build 36 underpasses, and road-kill-littered “bloody 84,” the top killer of panthers, has not marked a panther death since the crossings were completed.

“If the Florida panther keeps dating his sisters and his mother, if he can’t make it north to mix it up with the healthy gals from neighborhoods that stretch all the way to Texas, he’s gonna get tiny, get all sorts of disease, his immune system will be shot all to hell, his tail will grow crooked and he (won’t be able to reproduce),” Harris once told me.

“Got to connect all those neighborhoods; Let those genes run all the way from the Everglades to the Georgia line, under the roads, across the rivers, around the towns, through the wilderness to grandmother’s house we go!”

I can actually hear him now, roaring like a madman, waving his arms while arguing theory, and then, when he is in incredulous mid-description about what will happen when Florida sea levels rise 1 foot and

millions of people flee for the rural Florida inlands, he’ll aim his forefinger just above his ear, pull an imaginary trigger and slump his head downward as if forever silenced — flamboyant Harris’ unique way to show his frustration and impatience with the rest of the world to occupy his special brainwave.



The Florida Wildlife Corridor Expedition made two stops on Seminole lands: on Feb. 5 at 2,200-acre Billie Swamp Safari on the Big Cypress Reservation and on Feb. 16 at Brighton. They heard Tribal poet laureate and veteran cattleman Moses Jumper Jr. recite his classic poem, *Indian Cowboy Dreams*. They visited Brighton’s Pemaaytv Emahaky Charter School. They spoke to numerous Tribal cattlemen, old-timers who remember the wild cattle, the Florida Scrub cattle — no ticks, no worms, no flies.

And, with ranchers all around South Florida complaining about panther predation on their herds, none of the Seminole cowboys found the wild Florida panther a problem.

“You might lose a calf or two in a year,” Tribal member Willie Johns said. “No big deal.”

Speaking with Tribal leaders, team members learned that the Seminole Tribe has long supported wildlife recovery efforts. More than 20 years ago, the Tribal Council passed resolutions protecting the Florida panther and establishing a gopher tortoise preserve on Tribal lands. For many years, the Tribe has been the only landowner in the Big Cypress area to allow unlimited access to research biologists with the Florida Panther Recovery Team. At the Big Cypress event, President Tony Sanchez Jr. gave an eloquent description of the Seminole Tribe’s close connection with Mother Nature and Her animals, promising to establish and maintain an official “Florida panther corridor in honor of Carlton and the team.”

The main goal of Florida panther recovery is to protect remaining large landscapes and functional corridors to assist in re-establishing a northern Florida panther population. Another goal is to connect the four major bear populations across Florida.

“The Seminole Tribe plays an important role, a critical role in the protection of wildlife and wild places in this region of Florida,” bear biologist Guthrie said. “This has been very inspiring. We can all learn a lot from the Seminole people.”

Too often, Big Government has ignored the Indians’ wishes in dealing with wilderness issues. Lady Bird Johnson wanted rural Snake Road to feature numerous curves, in spite of the danger. The Harney Pond provided excellent drinking water for Seminoles in the area until pumping changed the water table.

“Why, the (U.S. Army) Corps (of Engineers) went in and illegally removed 58 of our burial sites. We bury our dead above the ground,” Johns said. “We complained, and then the Corps said, ‘Well, what d’ya want us to do?’

“I said, ‘Put ‘em back where you got ‘em!’”

They didn’t.

“The private rancher is not the bad guy. People generally don’t realize that these ranches are havens for wildlife,” said Guthrie, who said numerous private landowners paddled, rode horses and bikes or just jogged along with the expedition as it traveled through Florida’s greenways, finally ending on April 25 at the headwaters of the Suwannee River in the Okefenokee wilderness.



In the mid- to late-’80s, Walt Disney World animal curator Cook worried that his company’s development plans might include wildlands within the precious Reedy Creek watershed just southeast of the Magic Kingdom. In a creative response to what he considered a growing threat, he instigated a series of unusual camping expeditions in and around the area.

Cook, another visionary in the mold of Harris, wanted to promote the concept of environmental land preservation to Disney executives as a necessary component of their ambitious future development plans. He and I worked for hours designing assemblages of particular people and activities to further the central cause: the protection of Reedy Creek and its watershed corridor.

Within four years, Cook and Disney sponsored 13 overnight expeditions, each with an eclectic group of participants including wildlife biologists, architects, journalists, teachers, students, developers, artists and zoologists. Also in attendance were high-level Disney managers and dignitaries like Suncoast Seabird Sanctuary founder Ralph Heath, wildlife artist Ernie Simmons, folk artist Tom Gaskins, panther researchers Dave Maehr and Melody Roelke and even Harris.

Chairman Billie attended the first Swamp Camp, as the eco-events were called, and blazed the original trail to the



Peter B. Gallagher

From left, photojournalist Carlton Ward Jr., bear biologist Joe Guthrie and filmmaker Elam Stoltzfus prepare to depart from Big Cypress Reservation after visiting with Tribal members on Feb. 5.

campsite through a thick pop ash swamp; Independent Bobby Billie and family attended a subsequent camp.

Around 200 people, including members of the Audubon and Sierra clubs, hiked and canoed through swamps and prairies to a campsite, where a fire was built, food was prepared and hours of discussion and exploration ensued. Musicians such as Florida state fiddle champs Elan Chalford and Wayne Martin provided entertainment.

State environmentalists agree that Cook’s Swamp Camp project was a direct progenitor to Disney’s April 1994 purchase of the 8,500-acre Walker Ranch, a pristine corridor property at the headwaters of the Kissimmee River and home to the Southeast’s largest collection of American bald eagles. As mitigation to wetlands issues in other developments, Disney turned over the property to the Nature Conservancy, along with \$40 million to create the Disney Wilderness Preserve. A key component of the massive, ongoing Everglades restoration project, the preserve is bordered by the new Florida town of Poinciana and is open to the public. The Florida Wildlife Corridor Expedition rode horses 17 miles through the old ranch for a press event midway through their trek across the state.

“Dr. Larry Harris and the Disney Swamp Camps — that is where it all began,” Cook said. “At the time, I’m not sure we knew exactly where we were going, but we knew what needed to be done. We knew large parcels of land must be preserved... and connected.”



In the spring of 1986, a 195-pound male black bear from Big Cypress embarked on an astounding journey through southwestern Florida. Captured as a nuisance animal in a rural area, the bear was equipped with a radio collar, released where he was found and recaptured 100 miles north of his former range.

For 11 weeks, the bear wandered more than 200 miles under the gaze of scientists. He traveled a northerly course through six counties, crossed eight major highways and nearly a dozen other roadways, swam the Caloosahatchee River and crossed numerous canals, fences and farmlands. As he moved along abandoned railroad tracks and skirted densely populated suburbs — even loitering and observing the fireworks near a large Fourth of July outdoor picnic — he negotiated bee yards, turkey pens and numerous roadside garbage containers. Ultimately, he had to be recaptured by state wildlife personnel near Lake Placid.

“The young southern Florida male had moved about as we would expect any bear to do. He moved to find food, he moved to locate cover. As a young male, he may have been moving to emigrate — a difficult task considering the fragmented habitats of the eastern United States — or he may have moved to reproduce, to share southern Florida genetic material with an uncollared central Florida female he encountered just before he was removed from the wild. Forces yet to be understood by biologists stimulated the bear to move, and he went even though there was no logical path to follow.”

Those are the beginning paragraphs of *New Initiatives for Wildlife Conservation: The Need for Movement Corridors*, published by Defenders of Wildlife in March 1989, written by Harris and myself. He called me up late one night and ordered me to come immediately to Gainesville.

“I have a writing project for you,” is all he would say. “Should take one or two days.”

Although I didn’t realize it at the

time, the full week I spent at Harris’ house changed my life. It started when I asked him why his front yard was all black.

“Experimental prescribed burn,” he said with no further explanation.

After the roaring and arms waving was over, after the late-night brainstorming sessions were history and the moaning and groaning and ringing phones stopped, after the Dumpster was filled with paper wads, I was amazed at the document we produced. Straight from Harris’ amazing mind, it makes a convincing, comprehensive case for wilderness linkages — the very message the Florida Wildlife Corridor Expedition is carrying more than 25 years later.

“Everybody in the wildlife corridor world has read that,” said team member Guthrie, who documented another bear years later that roamed more than 500 miles in two months.

Here is how it ends:

“We need more than big linkages between big areas for big mammals; we also need citizens and administrators who understand the need for movement at all scales. Fencerows connecting woodlots and abandoned acres are just as important to mid-western wildlife as streamside buffers are to western mountain species. Greenways accommodating linear, outdoor recreation such as jogging, bicycling, horseback riding, canoeing and cross-country skiing can be as useful for wildlife as they are for people.

“We need not just analysis, but application; not just policies, but practical programs; not just individual actions, but integrated action. We do not need to set the United States aside as a tribute to the past; we need to develop new linkages that will function in the future.”

In a eulogy to Harris, who died Aug. 15, 2010 of complications from a lung transplant and heart valve replacement surgery, Kenneth Dodd listed his many accomplishments, noting, “His efforts to promote natural resource conservation have consistently been based on, and strengthened by, a foundation of sound scientific principles.”

Animals move. So do great ideas. From Harris’ dream to 1,000 miles in 100 days, the Florida Wildlife Corridor Expedition is raising the bar for wildlife conservation.



Peter B. Gallagher

Photojournalist Carlton Ward Jr. snaps a photo of Tribal members with pumpkin bread in hand.



Peter B. Gallagher

Florida Wildlife Corridor Expedition members gather with Tribal members under a chickee on the Brighton Reservation. The Feb. 16 stop was part of a 100-day journey spanning 1,000 miles.

The Seminole Tribune is a member of the Native American Journalists Association.

Letters/e-mails to the editor must be signed and may be edited for publication.

Subscription rate is \$35 per year by mail. Make checks payable to The Seminole Tribune, 3560 N. State Rd. 7, Hollywood, FL 33021
Phone: 954-985-5702
Fax: 954-965-2937
Or subscribe online at www.SeminoleTribune.org

The following deadlines apply to all submissions to The Seminole Tribune:

Issue: May 25, 2012
Deadline: May 9, 2012
•
Issue: June 29, 2012
Deadline: June 13, 2012
•
Issue: July 27, 2012
Deadline: July 11, 2012

Please note: Submissions that come past deadline will be posted in the following issue.

Advertising:
Advertising rates along with sizes and other information may be downloaded from the Internet at:
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Postmaster:
Please send address changes to
The Seminole Tribune
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Hollywood, FL 33021

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Community

A

Tribal member trapshooting champion Marcellus Osceola Sr.

BY KATHRYN STOLARZ
Copy Editor

TAMPA — He stepped up to the line in his blue jeans, plaid shirt and Seminole Tribe hat, loaded his Perazzi shotgun and yelled, "Pull!" As an orange clay target shot out of a machine at 42 mph, the 66-year-old's bullet flew out at 1,145 feet per second, smashing the target to smithereens. His body jolted as he absorbed the impact from the kick.

It was another hit for Marcellus Osceola Sr. — one of thousands he's made in his successful trapshooting career of more than 30 years.

"You can't imagine how much tension it builds up," he said in between rounds at the Amateur Trapshooting Association's Southern Grand in Odessa on March 16. "Just your nerves, you know."

Osceola, a trapshooting champion, has ranked among the top 50 in the world and was inducted into the Seminole Sports Hall of Fame in 2004. At this year's Southern Grand, he was the in-state high overall winner of the tournament and the in-state high all around winner in the Veterans category, breaking 1,210 out of 1,300 targets.

Trapshooting is known to be expensive, especially for someone like Osceola who competes in several tournaments a year. Participants have to pay entry fees, buy tons of shells and often travel great distances to compete — so room, board, flight and rental car costs add up quickly. But Osceola has help with all that now.

For the first year, Seminole Sports Management is sponsoring the Hollywood Tribal senior.

"I think it's long overdue," said Hollywood Councilman Marcellus Osceola Jr., who was one of the first Tribal athletes to be sponsored by the program when he was playing golf in 2009-2010. "I think it's a great test to our program to show our youth, if not some of our elders, that no matter how old you are or how young you are, you can go out there and find something to compete in if you desire."

The Tribe's sports program helps Tribal members improve their semi-professional rankings within their sports and can help them achieve professional status. After overhearing that the Tribe was looking for a senior to sponsor, Osceola inquired, and the Tribe had found their man.

"The Tribe is behind me," he said. "It makes me want to win more. Maybe the



Hollywood Tribal member Marcellus Osceola Sr. poses with a portion of his trapshooting trophies.

Kathryn Stolarz

kids will see it and want to shoot, and I could teach them."

Seminole Sports Management currently sponsors eight semi-professional Tribal athletes in four sports: trapshooting, rodeo, golf and fishing. Andrew J. Bowers, the event and sponsorship coordinator for Seminole Sports Management, said there's a lack of Native American participation in collegiate and professional sports, but the program aims to change that.

"I think it's very important that we keep promoting our Natives throughout Indian Country and throughout the world," Councilman Osceola said.

The program also helps get the Tribe's name out to new places. Sponsored athletes sport the Tribe's logo on hats, shirts, bags and even boats during competition.

"It reaches markets the casino doesn't tap into," Bowers said.

Osceola's trapshooting career began in about 1979, shortly after he pioneered the sale of discount cigarettes on Seminole Reservations and started the first smoke shop. Osceola wandered over to the Winchester Gun Club one day, and manager Marvin Flores encouraged him to compete after watching him shoot. He's since travelled across the country, winning several state titles, zone trophies and national trophies.

"I always enjoyed this sport because it's part of my life," he said. "I made a lot of great friends, met a lot of people."

In 1980, during his second year participating in trapshooting, Osceola helped break a world record. His squad of five men hit 998 out of 1,000 consecutive shots, surpassing the previous record of 997; he hit all 200 of his shots.

"When you break 'em all, that's the best," he said. The record's since been beaten by one shot.

That same year, he broke all 100 targets in both the doubles and the handicap division, and he broke all 200 targets in the singles division. He also placed third overall in the 1983 Grand American Trapshooting Championship.

"He's got a talent for it and the determination to win," said friend and fellow squad shooter Tom Wilkinson.

Now competing in the Veterans division (ages 65-70), Osceola continues to rack in the wins. Currently, he is ranked second in the Veterans Team for the Florida Trapshooter's Association.

While Osceola is known for his shooting skills, he's also known for his good sense of humor.

"He's always got a funny story to tell you about his trip," Bowers said.

After Osceola's recent competition at the Spring Grand American tournament in Tucson, Ariz., he chuckled with Bowers about his old age and his shoulder starting to bother him from all his years of shooting. But he still won the tournament's Doubles Championship in the Veterans division.

"It's only a game," Osceola said. "But I hate losin'."

For Osceola, shooting is a family affair. He taught all four of his sons how to shoot as well as daughters Marissa Osceola and Michelle Osceola. Some of his sons still practice with him at the Big Cypress Reservation, Winchester Gun Club and Markham Park.

"They all shot good at one time," he said.

Currently, son Bill Osceola competes on his father's squad with him. Bill was the Class AA Winner in the Preliminary Doubles in both the Southern Grand and the Florida State Shoot last month.

Son Raymond Osceola enjoys shooting just for practice, while son Gregory Osceola took it to competition, having made the Junior All-American Team in 2005 and 2006 and having placed as the Southern Zone High All Around Champion in 2006.

Councilman Osceola had his time at the range as well, having won a few events at the Las Vegas and Ohio State shoots; he was also the overall winner of the 1,300-target Winter Chain Shoot in West Palm Beach a handful of years ago. Although he said he doesn't have time to shoot anymore with his job in Tribal government, he's thankful that his dad has the sport as a lifelong hobby.

"He needs that like he needs air to breathe," said Councilman Osceola, who compares his father's talent to that of Billy Mills, the Native American Olympic gold medalist runner.

The veteran trapshooter said the sport is one that's been worth passing on.

"It teaches you how to compete," he said. "It teaches you the fundamentals of safety with a gun. It's good."

When he isn't trapshooting, Osceola is serving the Tribe as a land use commissioner and a gaming commissioner. He also runs his own material waste disposal company on the Hollywood Reservation.



Photo courtesy of Betty Luckey

The First Indian Baptist Church of Brighton celebrated "Wonder Johns Appreciation Day" on March 25.

The Rev. Wonder Johns 'Pastor Emeritus'

SUBMITTED BY BETTY LUCKEY
Contributor

BRIGHTON — On March 25, First Indian Baptist Church of Brighton celebrated "Wonder Johns Appreciation Day." The church was filled with people from the community and from other reservations and churches. Tribal leaders, church members and pastors, community leaders and family members expressed gratitude to the Rev. Wonder Johns, a Tribal elder, as an important influence on their lives.

Johns' granddaughter, Alyssa Willie, sang a solo dedicated to him and showed videos and photographs taken of him from his younger days until now. The presentation was accompanied by the song *Thank You for Giving to the Lord*. The video will soon be available to access on the Internet.

Paul Buxton of Buxton-Seawinds Funeral Home and the Rev. Joe Bishop praised him as a man of God and expressed appreciation for his friendship of many years. An engraved plaque and certificate were given to him by the Rev. Matthew Tiger and Deacon Gary Sampson, followed

by remarks from former Chairman Richard Bowers and Councilman Andrew J. Bowers Jr. He was recognized by many for his excellence in leadership and is described as a man of vision. Johns was instrumental in the early development and management of the Seminole Tribe and the Brighton community, as well as the churches.

Johns stated that it is God who gets all the glory for giving him the guidance and wisdom to serve and to accomplish what was done.

He said, "God has always had first place in my heart." He also credited the members of the church and people of the community for their involvement and support through the years.

First Indian Baptist Church voted to bestow the title of "Pastor Emeritus" upon Johns, a title given to a former pastor of the church who is retired but still actively serves the congregation as a church member. This title is a way churches have to thank a pastor for his faithful, loving and sacrificial service while he was pastor.

Johns is a teacher of the Holy Bible and is Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

♦ See **JOHNS** on page 4A

Forever Changed: La Florida, 1513-1821 exhibit now open



Photo courtesy of the Museum of Florida History

The Museum of Florida History's *La Florida* exhibit reminds visitors that when the Europeans arrived almost 500 years ago, Florida was already home to several Native American Tribes.

BY PETER B. GALLAGHER
Special Projects Reporter

TALLAHASSEE — Phase One of the new *Forever Changed: La Florida, 1513-1821* exhibit opened at the Museum of Florida History last month, highlighting an important, but often overlooked era in state history.

The exhibit aims to show that when Europeans came ashore almost 500 years ago, Florida was already home to large and diverse groups of Native people, such as the Calusa, Apalachee, Timucua and other ancestors of today's Seminole Indians.

Other focuses of the large exhibit include an overview of Spanish exploration and the interactions between European, African and Indian cultures that occurred in Florida in 1513 and later. Next year will mark the 500th anniversary of explorer Juan Ponce de Leon's visit to the land he named La Florida.

Information about the lifestyles and material culture of the Native people is presented in the exhibit's "Land of Many Cultures" section, featuring more than 50 original American Indian artifacts from approximately 1000-1500 A.D. Additionally, there are several reproduction objects, such as copper repoussé breastplates and carved wooden

masks, that interpret the rich culture of Florida's first people and represent all regions of Florida.

The long-distance trade that existed 800-1,000 years ago is highlighted by non-local trade materials, such as greenstone and copper. Visitors will see a variety of ceramic vessels, as well as shell, bone and stone objects.

Jeana Brunson, director of the Museum of Florida History, made a surprise visit to the Tampa Seminole Easter party at the Lakeland property on April 6. While talking with Tribal Cultural director Herbert Jim about the traveling Seminole elder trips he helps coordinate, Brunson extended a personal invitation to Seminoles to visit Phase One of the Museum's brand new *La Florida* exhibit.

"We would be honored to have Seminole people see this exhibit," said Brunson, a 25-year Museum staffer who has been director for 10 years. "We would love to know what you think about it."

In addition to text panels, maps and photographs, there are a number of elements with which visitors can interact. A palm-fiber net, made using the same techniques the Key Marco Indians used, is on display, and visitors can also try their

♦ See **LA FLORIDA** on page 4A

Florida Governor visits Seminole Tribe of Florida



Brett Daly

Florida Gov. Rick Scott paid a visit to Tribal Headquarters on March 29, where he met with President Tony Sanchez Jr. and General Counsel Jim Shore. The leaders discussed business, terms in office and Seminole culture. During the visit, Gov. Scott also assured President Sanchez he would keep the lines of communication open between the State and the Tribe.

Tribal youth prepare livestock for 4-H Show and Sale

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Inside the Big Cypress Rodeo Arena, Kamani Smith brushed his swine during the Seminole Indian 4-H Show and Sale on March 31.

The 10-year-old Tribal youth, an Okeechobee resident from the Brighton Reservation, spent the last two months raising his pig for the end of the 2011-2012 Seminole Indian 4-H season.

With the 4-H Sale in sight, Smith wanted to make sure his swine, Fugitive, was presented in an acceptable manner for a potential buyer to take notice.

Minutes before it was Smith's time to



Naji Tobias

Hollywood Board Rep. Chris Osceola buys a hog from Tribal youth Kamani Smith at the 4-H Show and Sale on March 31.

sell off his breed, he gave an account of how it all started.

"On the day we got my hog, we were loading her up to my grandmother's (Tribal member Grace Mary Koontz) house," Smith said. "When we got there, we were holding up the board to get her in. My aunt wasn't paying attention to Fugitive, and she dropped the board. We had to chase Fugitive outside the house for an hour."

Smith said he was happy to see his hog get back to safety, thanks to the efforts of his uncle, Robert Youngblood, who picked Fugitive up by her hind legs and marched her back to the hog pen.

From that point on, Smith went to work, spending many days feeding the swine, giving her water and walking her on a regular basis to prepare for a successful showing at this year's 4-H Show and Sale.

Smith, whose fifth-class swine placed fourth out of eight contestants in his category at the 4-H Show a day earlier, said his goal for the March 31 sale was to "command her around" the barn and garner a big sale for all his efforts.

"I want to be able to lead her around with my cane," Smith said.

Smith's training efforts paid off, as he later took Fugitive to the barn and exercised his skills, leading her around for potential buyers to see. Once Smith's time around the barn with Fugitive was up — it lasted about five minutes — Hollywood Board Rep. Chris Osceola decided to buy Smith's hog.

"It's a good-quality hog," Rep. Osceola said.

Rep. Osceola, who got his exposure in the Tribe's 4-H program as a youngster through Big Cypress Tribal senior Moses Jumper Jr., talked about the efforts the 4-Hers put into raising their swine, steers and heifers in preparation for this year's show.

"Some of these kids had tears in their eyes as they watched their animals walk away," Rep. Osceola said. "[But] they get rewarded at the end with someone

purchasing their animals."

Meanwhile, Seminole Gaming Chief Executive Officer Jim Allen came out to the show for the first time. He said he was astonished at the sale.

"This is a great day for the Tribe," said Allen, who brought about 20 Seminole Gaming management employees to the show with him. "We came out here to support the young ones and have some fun at the function. It's really neat for me to see the true roots of the Tribe taking place."

Tribal President Tony Sanchez Jr. had his first opportunity to tour the show. As President Sanchez walked through the show barn and out to the arena, he watched the Tribal youth tend to their animals.

"I'm happy just to see the dedication from the kids," President Sanchez said. "They put forth a real effort in raising some fine animals here. It's a great thing for them to see the fruits of their labor."

Immokalee Tribal members and cousins Alphonso Alvarado and Aaron Alvarado were two of the 132 4-H participants, including Big Cypress, Brighton and Immokalee Tribal youth, who saw their efforts pay off.

During the show on March 30, both Alphonso's first-class steer and Aaron's third-class steer came in first place out of eight contestants in their respective categories.

Alphonso said he raised his Brangus steer, which weighed 1,044 pounds on weigh-in day on March 29.

"It's a very nice steer," Alphonso said. "It felt amazing to accomplish this on my first try. It was a lot of hard work training him."

Alphonso said he started raising the steer last April at the Immokalee Seminole Ranch, where he spent many days grooming and feeding the male steer.

"He started at about 600 pounds," Alphonso said. "We gave him corn and weight gainer to gain weight. I trained him to walk, even though he was stubborn with



Naji Tobias

From left, Immokalee's Alphonso Alvarado and his cousin Aaron Alvarado enjoy a moment with Aaron's father, Roy Alvarado Sr., and President Tony Sanchez Jr. after their 4-H Show and Sale wins.

me at times."

Prior to the show, 4-Hers had to participate in a series of 4-H hog and steer weigh-ins that took place throughout the 2011-2012 season.

"It was very hard to try to get him to a simple weight," Alphonso said. "I had to train him seven days a week, even on the weekends. It took a whole lot of dedication to get him to where I wanted him to be at."

Aaron's mother, Mary Lou Alvarado, from Immokalee, said Aaron made great progress raising his steer. It started out at about 500 pounds when he got him in July 2011 and weighed 1,001 pounds at the show.

"Aaron went out there to the Immokalee Ranch every day to give him show master feed, give him water and walk him around," Mary Lou said. "Aaron spent a lot of time working on his steer's showmanship. He had to learn to handle his steer and walk it with a nice cut and finish. I'm very proud of him for what he put into it."

Aaron said he was happy to see himself and his cousin fare well at the event.

"It was a good competition between us both," Aaron said. "It's very nice to get to do something like this. We've been working very hard on this, and we're glad it paid off for us."

4-H

From page 1A

"The 4-H youth learn responsibility through the animals," said Andrews, who participated in the Tribe's 4-H program as a 7-year-old. "I believe that the discipline and responsibilities they learn from raising their animals are brought into their adult life."

Several of the 100 entrants qualified for a chance to earn showmanship honors. Several Brighton Tribal 4-H youth came out on top in their respective categories: Kalgary Johns, intermediate steer; Chastity Harmon, intermediate swine; and Lois Billie, senior swine.

Tribal 4-H youth Jack Aguilar and Jillian Rodriguez placed first in their respective categories, junior steer and junior swine, and were the top two showmanship entrants from Immokalee.

"The showmanship class is all about how a child handles their animal in the show ring," Andrews said. "They have to be able to move the animal around the show ring with control and be able to use their show sticks, which is their equipment, in the appropriate way."

To round out the 4-H Show, 33 additional young Tribal members participated in the Small Animal Club.

The 4-H Sale, which took place on March 31, attracted dozens of Tribal members from multiple reservations, including Hollywood.

Many attendees left highly pleased with the 4-Hers' livestock, having purchased the most animals at the sale in five years, Andrews said.

Hayes said next year's 4-H Show and Sale will return to Brighton.

"It's good to have a change of scenery, as many of the kids enjoyed coming to Big Cypress this year," Hayes said. "It was a good experience for our kids in Brighton to get away from their hometown and experience something different."



Naji Tobias

Brighton's Janessa Nunez tends to her hog at the 4-H Sale on March 31.



Naji Tobias

Jaylen Baker, left, and Blake Baker compete against six others in the second class steers category of the 4-H Show on March 30.



Naji Tobias

Brighton's Lahna Baker brings out her third-class steer for the 4-H Sale on March 31.



Naji Tobias

Seminole Sr. Rodeo Queen Erena Billie, left, and Jr. Miss Florida Seminole Jaryaca Baker are all smiles with 4-H Show and Sale entrant Blevyns Jumper and his grandfather, Moses Jumper Jr., during the 4-H Sale on March 31 in Big Cypress.



Naji Tobias

Brighton's Tyra Baker struts her second-class steer around the 4-H Show's barn in her quest to impress the judges at the March 30 event.

JOHNS

From page 3A

Johns was the first Indian moderator for the Big Lake Baptist Association and was the first Indian to be on the State Nominating Committee of the Florida Baptist Convention. He also was in the Army and is one of the Tribe's honored Seminole Veterans.

Johns and his wife, Mary, led the Brighton congregation beginning in 1996, after serving as pastor in Hollywood at First Seminole Baptist Church.

He stepped down in late 2009 for health reasons, and the Rev. Matthew Tiger became pastor. Johns is 77 years old.

It was noted that when former Chairman Mitchell Cypress initiated the Seminole Tribe Intercessory Prayer Gatherings, he asked Johns to help coordinate the program, which continues today with several gatherings a year. The prayer events have proven to be a successful catalyst that has drawn together Tribal members from all different walks of faith to come together with concerns and prayer requests.

The church service was followed by a reception to honor Johns and Mary with a luncheon in the fellowship hall.

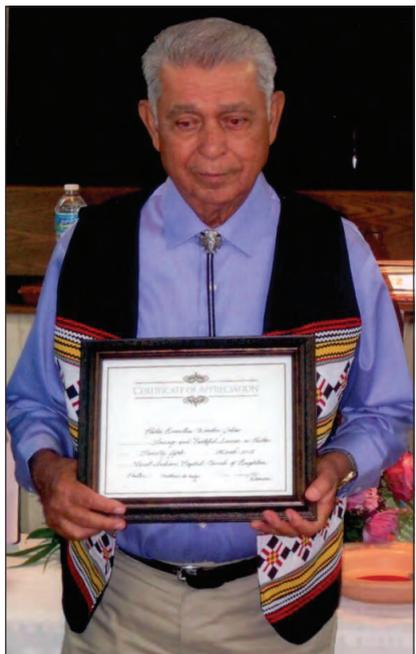


Photo courtesy of Betty Luckey

Pastor Wonder Johns gets recognized at the First Indian Baptist Church of Brighton.

LA FLORIDA

From page 3A

hands at weaving. A three-dimensional diorama shows what a farming village in northern Florida may have looked like more than 500 years ago. Two computer stations provide more information, as well as a fun quiz.

The main visual element in the exhibit is an 18-foot-high thatched structure representing a Timucua family's dwelling. The Timucua people, composed of dozens of different Tribes who all spoke dialects of the Timucua language, lived in northeastern Florida and along the St. Johns River. Visitors can enter the dwelling, listen to a descriptive audio program and view a mural inside.

In the "Meeting of the Cultures" section, there is a full-size figure representing Chief Sauriwa, a Timucua-speaking leader who lived near present-day Jacksonville in the 1560s. A display of a reproduction bow and arrow, sharks teeth club and spear throwers are additional highlights.

Planning is underway for Phase Two of the exhibit, which will highlight the years from 1565-1821. The Museum hopes to have the exhibit completed by the end of 2013.

The Museum offers tours and educational programs to school groups throughout the year. For more information, visit www.museumoffloridahistory.com.



Photo courtesy of the Museum of Florida History

The La Florida exhibit features many interactive pieces, such as this large hut that visitors can walk into to get a feel for the ancient Tribal people's dwellings in Florida.

Hollywood Hard Rock employee recognized for Winterfest involvement

BY KATHRYN STOLARZ
Copy Editor

HOLLYWOOD — The 1000+ Club recently honored Hollywood Hard Rock employee Susan Renneisen as one of 13 Women of the Year for her involvement with Winterfest.

Winterfest is a not-for-profit organization that puts on the annual Seminole Hard Rock Winterfest Boat Parade, which the Seminole Hard Rock has sponsored the past seven years.

The 1000+ Club, a Broward County nonprofit committed to supporting cancer research, education and patient services, honored the nominees for their charitable work at a Women of the Year luncheon on April 4 at the Marriott Harbor Beach Resort in Fort Lauderdale.

“Susan rocks Broward County with her involvement in numerous charitable organizations, making a difference in the lives of so many,” said Debbie Dolchin, 1000+ Club president.

Renneisen is in her ninth year as Hollywood Seminole Hard Rock’s director of special events and community relations liaison. In addition to serving as an executive committee board member of Winterfest, she sits on the boards of the Russell Life Skills and Reading Foundation; the Ann Storck Center; and the Art and Culture Center of Hollywood.

“I always take pride in representing the Seminole Hard Rock,” she said. “I have been able to not only touch the community through Winterfest, but my involvement in several other charities and community events were brought to me by my involvement with Winterfest.”

For instance, through Winterfest she learned about the Ann Storck Center and came up with the idea for Hard Rock to donate musical instruments to the center for artists to decorate and sell. After the December 2010 Winner’s Way Parking Garage opening, Hard Rock donated 2,400 smashed guitars to the center, where artists jazzed up the fragments with glitter and jewels to sell at various festivals, including the Winterfest Boat Parade’s Black Tie Auction.

Incorporated in 1988, Winterfest has grown from a local celebration into an internationally known holiday festival, attracting more than 1 million spectators to the Fort Lauderdale area, according to Winterfest’s website. The 2012 event will take place on Dec. 15.

“It brings the community together in so many different ways,” Renneisen said.

Several Winterfest board members and Hard Rock employees attended the 1000+ Club luncheon to support Renneisen, who received a 1000+ Club gold medallion she plans to wear at future community events.

“So many of the other women give so



Photo courtesy of Susan Renneisen

Honoree Susan Renneisen poses at the 1000+ Club’s Women of the Year luncheon.

much of their time to an amazing variety of causes that it was a tremendous honor to be part of such a prestigious group,” she said.



Naji Tobias

Afhackee fifth-grade student Carlos Romero, left, and fourth-grade student Miki Cypress slide down the ice slide.

Big Cypress celebrates Winter Fun Day

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Winter Fun Day provided an array of entertainment for the Big Cypress community on March 21.

Tribal members and employees took to the fields at the Big Cypress Rodeo Grounds for a day of fun and games. Tribal members of all ages enjoyed

several activities, including bingo, a chili cook-off and a frybread cooking contest.

The Big Cypress Councilman’s Office sponsored the event, aiming to bring out a sense of camaraderie among community members and Tribal departments.

More than 15 of the reservation’s departments set up booths at the event to show Tribal members the variety of services they offer.



Naji Tobias

Afhackee third-grade student Sontino Billie shoots for a bull’s-eye on the BC Wildlife Department’s dart board.

Hollywood Tribal member celebrates life

BY TRAVIS R. BILLIE
Contributing Writer

HOLLYWOOD — Patrick Doctor Sr., a member of Big Town Clan, celebrated his 54th birthday on March 17, which also happened to be St. Patrick’s Day. He was surprised by his wife, Anna, with a party at the Hollywood Softball Field that included a live band, a mechanical bull, a bounce house and pony rides.

“Money is nothing,” he said. “It’s the heart that counts.”

Almost three years ago, Doctor was hospitalized for being hit in the head with a lead pipe. He stayed in a coma for a month and a half before waking up in a hospital bed, not knowing the extent of his stay or his injuries. After relearning how to walk and talk, he went to a treatment facility for alcohol abuse. All the while, doctors were looking for a nursing home to put him in, thinking he wouldn’t live a normal life.

“The doctors said I was going to be a vegetable, but I came back,” he said. “The Great Spirit helped me out.”

His mother gave him a pendant with the words “Miracles Happen.” Proving that they do, Doctor spends his time lifting weights, working at Seminole Okalee Indian Village, helping his wife around the house and doing as much as he can for his mother.

“I take care of mom ‘cause she took care of me,” he said.

With two years and five months of sobriety, Doctor said he likes being alive today and enjoys living life sober. He spends his spare time going to the movies and concerts. He’s also taken trips to Jamaica, Mexico and Las Vegas, as well as a trip on a cruise ship that supports substance-abuse recovery, attending meetings all the while.

“If I use, I’ll be gone,” he said. “I feel better when I go to meetings.”

Family has been a big part of Doctor’s road to recovery.

“When I see my granddaughter it makes me stronger,” he said. “My wife is my heart, eyes and ears, ‘cause I got one bad eye and one bad ear.”

Plans for next year’s birthday are big, said Doctor’s wife, who said he is a miracle.



Photo courtesy of Patrick Doctor Sr.

Patrick Doctor Sr. celebrated his 54th birthday on March 17 with family and friends.



Travis R. Billie

Cattle Drive participants steer livestock on an 8-mile trek across the Big Cypress Reservation on March 17.

◆ CATTLE DRIVE

From page 1A

“Raising cattle is one of the first businesses that the Tribe got into,” he said. “Back when I was growing up, my dad, my grandfather and my relatives would go back into these areas here and hunt the cattle.”

The Big Cypress Reservation contains more than 55,000 acres of land, with approximately 75 percent of it located in the Everglades, Jumper said.

“We used to have cattle round-ups on the reservation,” Jumper said. “We went as far as we could to hunt them down.”

Rep. Frank introduced several Tribal members and leaders at the cattle drive’s midpoint, where they addressed the crowd at Big Cypress Tribal senior Mary

Jene Koenes’ pasture.

For Big Cypress Tribal senior Esther Buster, it was an emotional day.

“I’m glad that y’all all came out,” Buster said, as she tried to fight back tears. “It’s kind of hard for me right now... We dedicate this cattle drive to the one that passed away, Roger Smith from Brighton.” Buster is the daughter of the late Junior Cypress and the late Ida Frank Cypress.

Tribal President Tony Sanchez Jr. recognized the hard work of the event organizers and said he felt honored to attend an event honoring those who have played a significant role within the Seminole Tribe.

Immokalee Board Liaison Dorothy Yzaguirre, who participated in the cattle drive for the first time, was instrumental in helping the Immokalee Seminole Ranch

provide steer and cattle for the event.

“It’s quite an experience,” Liaison Yzaguirre said. “I don’t think I’ve ever taken part in anything like this before.”

Carol Cypress, aunt of Rep. Frank, has quite a family history with cattle. Her father, Willie Frank, worked with cows until he was in his 80s, when Rep. Frank took over. Cypress’ sisters, Ethel and Nancy, also helped with the cows, while she preferred cooking for the cowboys.

“One of things [my father] used to talk about was that it was easy to take care of the cattle,” she said. “We had no trouble from the outside world back then, but he told me it was going to get harder to own cows. We’re not in our own little world anymore, so I think it’s harder for us to own cows now.”



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Tribal member Sam Tommie and his daughter, Lorelei Tommie, steer their horses at the 16th annual Cattle Drive on March 17.



Naji Tobias

In the Cattle Drive’s Kids’ Rodeo, Big Cypress Tribal youth Jalee Wilcox completes the barrel racing event in 30.406 seconds.

Veterans’ discounts under fire

A note from Stephen Bowers:

In my capacity as the recently elected president of the Florida Seminole Veterans Foundation, Inc. and Chairman of the United South and Eastern Tribes Veteran Affairs Committee, I work with many issues dealing with veteran affairs. Several veterans have approached me about the “V” designation on veterans’ driver’s licenses.

The “V” designation is offered through the driver’s license bureau, Department of Motor Vehicles. The “V” designation documents the owner of the driver’s license as a veteran. Many stores used to provide veterans’ discounts if you showed a driver’s license with a “V,” VA medical card or discharge papers. If you tried to receive this “V” designation, you will find out it’s almost as tough as getting your driver’s license in the first place.

I recently read an article in the *Sun Sentinel* that clarifies why veterans are not getting the discount from Home Depot or Lowe’s, Sears and other outlets that offered the discount. Simply put, there are a whole lot of veterans. The amount of veterans has grown.

Now the stores that offer the discounts are limiting the discount to active duty personnel, reservists, retired career veterans with at least 20 years of service and service-connected disabled veterans, plus their immediate family members.

As mentioned in the reprinted article that follows, the decision to only offer discounts to this select group leaves out three-fourths of Florida’s 1.65 million Veterans who served in World War II, Vietnam and Korea. This is in the State of Florida, which has the nation’s third largest number of Veterans.

BY DIANE C. LADE
Sun Sentinel

HOLLYWOOD — Veterans’ discounts abound on patriotic holidays, and some businesses offer price breaks every day to South Floridians who served their country.

But these daily deals usually go to a select group: active duty military personnel, reservists, retired career veterans with at least 20 years service, and service-connected disabled vets, plus their immediate family members.

That leaves out about three-fourths of Florida’s 1.65 million veterans, many of whom served several years in conflicts such as World War II, Vietnam and Korea. The exclusion can lead to confusion and frustration in a state with the nation’s third largest number of veterans.

“It can be a fairly sensitive topic,”

said Steve Murray, a retired Air Force officer and spokesman with the Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs in Tallahassee.

Brad Coombs said he’s regularly enjoyed a veterans’ discount at the Davie Home Depot near his house, flashing his VA health-care card to get 10 percent off his purchases.

But on his most recent visit, he was surprised when employees told him they “didn’t accept that kind of card any more,” said Coombs, 78, who was drafted and served for two years in the 1950s.

Home Depot spokesman Stephen Holmes said the store always has given 10 percent off to all veterans on patriotic holidays. The program expanded to every day — but only for active duty, career and disabled vets and reservist guards — in November 2010.

But Holmes said many stores had been confused about the new policy. Employees received special training late last year, he said, and were given fliers identifying exactly which military ID cards would be accepted.

More than 350 comments have been posted on Home Depot’s blog, The Apron, (ext.homedepot.com/community/blog) about the change — some veterans complaining about the exclusion.

Home improvement store Lowe’s has the same veterans policy as Home Depot, said spokeswoman Jaclyn Pardini. But the company has dodged the outrage, perhaps because Lowe’s for many years has given discounts to certain veterans along with holiday discounts to all.

Murray, from the Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs, said he used to hear daily from deal-seeking veterans complaining that merchants weren’t accepting their discharge papers, American Legion cards or other ID. Those calls have dropped some, Murray said, since the state last July began allowing veterans to apply for a driver’s licenses branded with a blue “v.”

About 35,000 veterans are carrying those driving permits, and state licensing officials sent notices to retail and restaurant associations about the licenses. But there is nothing in law mandating that businesses accept it and, by itself, won’t meet the requirements for most daily discounts.

The Seminole Tribune was given permission to reprint this article, which originally appeared on Page 1D of the Sun Sentinel on March 28, 2012.



Health

Big Cypress takes part in National Walking Day

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Norma Tommie stood outside the Big Cypress Reservation's Frank Billie Tribal Field Office on April 4, National Walking Day, stretching to prepare for her walk.

Normally, Tommie works out four to five days per week at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium's fitness center with her trainer, Big Cypress Tribal member Cathy Cypress. But Tommie and Cypress, who have been working out together for five months, decided to change up their workout routine.

"I usually work out in the gym, but now this gives me a better opportunity to take care of myself," Tommie said.

Cypress agreed. "We do a lot of our workouts inside, so I figured it would be a good break to go outside," Cypress said. "It's just refreshing sometimes."

The two were among 15 Tribal members and employees who took part in National Walking Day. The event is celebrated annually on the first Wednesday of April.

The American Heart Association (AHA) sponsors National Walking Day, encouraging employees nationwide to take 30 minutes out of their day to raise awareness of the importance of physical activity on a daily basis.

The AHA, which suggests that organizations begin the 30-minute walk at noon, aims to push workers toward healthier lifestyles. The Tribe's Health Department did their best to bring that message to the Tribal community.

"We're encouraging all employees to exercise and be happier people when they work," Cypress said. "I feel that it relieves stress."

Family Services Outreach Coordinator Tara Robbins was all smiles as she prepared to take on the walk.

"I have been out of my exercising routine for a while," Robbins said. "I'm trying to get focused and back into it, so it's been a while. I'm grateful for the opportunity to take part in this."

After a series of stretching exercises, the National Walking Day participants began their route, which started outside the Frank Billie Tribal Field Office and continued through a small portion of Josie Billie Highway to reach the Big Cypress Fitness Trail.

In the heat, the participants walked a full lap around the trail, which was one-third of a mile long.

The 30-minute walk concluded when they returned to the Field Office.

"I haven't walked in a while," Big Cypress Health Clinic manager Renee Tigertail said. "It just gives you energy once you exercise. It feels good to have been a part of this walk."

Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger also participated in the event.

"The walk was awesome," said Councilman Tiger, who added that he would like to host weekly workouts for Tribal members and employees in the near future. "There wasn't enough oxygen for me to suck up the air today. I need to do this more often."

Fitness trainer Tommie explained the all-around benefits of exercise.

"Any exercise is good for you," Tommie said. "It relaxes your mind, your body and your spiritual well-being. It does your body well."

Big Cypress Tribal member and Walking Program Coordinator Edna McDuffie, who came up with idea for the Big Cypress event, said getting fit is important.

"We did this as a reminder for us to keep moving," McDuffie said. She plans to make this an annual event.



Tribal employee Brenda Bordogna and Councilman Mondo Tiger get moving on National Walking Day.

Naji Tobias

"We just need to exercise so our body knows that we're working with it to take care of ourselves."

According to the AHA, heart disease is America's No. 1 killer, but by exercising for at least 30 minutes per day, individuals reduce their risk of having the deadly disease.

Studies have shown that the benefits of walking

and physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day can also help reduce the risk of obesity, diabetes and cancer; improve blood pressure and blood sugar levels; and enhance mental well-being.

For more information on National Walking Day and the AHA, visit www.startwalkingnow.org.

♦ See more HEALTH photos on page 7A

Losing weight and gaining perspective: Lessons I learned



Before and after: On left, Tribal member Jarrid Smith weighed 300 pounds in 2007. On right, Smith lost 94 pounds by making healthy lifestyle changes; he weighs 206 pounds today.

SUBMITTED BY JARRID SMITH
Tribal Member

In December 2007 I weighed 300 pounds, roughly the size of three sixth-graders. I'm tall – 6 feet, 2 3/4 inches, but I round up to 6 feet, 3 inches if anyone asks – so my body frame held the weight well. I'd just completed my senior year at Florida Atlantic University (FAU), leaving with a bachelor's degree and memories of playing football.

It was during that 2007 football season at FAU that I was struck with Bell's palsy, a neurological virus that paralyzes muscles in the face. I went to sleep two nights before a game with a strange sensation on my tongue, and when I awoke I'd lost control of the left side of my face. I met with our team doctor the next day, described my symptoms, and the first words out of his mouth were "Bell's palsy."

The doctor informed me that there was no cure for the virus, no pill to take or fluid to ingest. He told me the virus had to run its course and eventually, after a month or two, I would begin to regain control of my face. After doing my own research, I also learned, grimly, that some Bell's palsy victims never fully regain total control of their facial muscles.

I played in that game the day after learning I had Bell's palsy. Our team equipment manager outfitted my helmet with a protective eye visor because I couldn't close my left eye completely. That game was a surreal experience; I distinctly recall colliding with an opposing player and, whereas normally my eyes would close involuntarily before contact, now I saw it all through my left eye. The initial effects of Bell's palsy didn't stop me from playing, and I thought this virus wouldn't be a big thing. I was wrong.

In the days that followed my diagnosis, I started to experience and understand the long-term psychological effects of the virus. Because I couldn't control the muscles in my face, smiling, frowning and even spitting became impossible. I wasn't able to show any emotion, and this fact quickly ate away my self-image. I shunned simple enjoyments, like watching a funny TV show or chewing gum, for fear that people would see something was wrong with me.

The ancient Roman philosopher Cicero wrote, "The face is a picture of the mind..." If you were to see me when I had Bell's palsy, then you would have thought I didn't have a thing on my mind. However, that couldn't be further from the truth. The truth was that I was in pain from not being able to show any emotion.

A little more than a month after the paralysis began, feeling began to return to my face and I slowly regained control. Although the virus only affected me physically for a short time, the true change went on in my head. The experience was traumatic. Imagine fearing that you would never be able to smile again, and you'll begin to know what I felt.

Prior to the virus, I didn't place too much emphasis on my long-term outlook on life. I was 22 years old at the time, and I lived like it, focused on the present. I most often ate the foods that tasted best. They were full of fried flavor and came through a drive-through window. I played football. I exercised and lifted weights four to five days a week.

When the virus' effects began to fade and my smile started to return, I made myself a promise – to make sure I did as much as I could of whatever made me smile.

Bell's palsy was a blessing to me. It served as an attitude adjuster and provided me with a catalyst to make several lifelong changes.

The most important things to me are my love for God, my commitment to family and my sacrifice for the community – these are the things that make me smile the most. I realized that for me to fulfill my promise and to have the greatest positive impact on the things I care about the most, I would have to be present. Continuing the lifestyle that I held in 2007 would no doubt have resulted in numerous health illnesses through the years, diminishing my ability to live life to the fullest.

To make any changes in your life, whether it's for health, financial or personal reasons, there first has to be a shift in the way you see things. Do you value faith? Is family central to your life? What is your place in our community? Don't worry if you don't have an immediate answer for these questions, but do consider them. Also consider, what do you do to live those values?

I now weigh 206 pounds, so I like to tell people I've lost the weight of a whole sixth-grader. Yes, I exercise. Yes, I attempt to always make nutritious food choices. Yes, I'll find myself eating cookies every once in a while.

What helps me persevere, what maintains my determination, what has gotten me to the point I'm at weight and health wise, is the promise I made all those years ago. Don't wait for Bell's palsy. Allow my story to be a catalyst to make changes in your life.



Big Cypress Seminole Pathways participants pose for a group photo.

Photo courtesy of Brenda Bordogna

Seminole Pathways III teaches nutrition, exercise

SUBMITTED BY BRENDA BORDOGNA
Health Education Coordinator

BIG CYPRESS — Seminole Pathways III, sponsored by Big Cypress Health Department, began in the fall of 2011 with biweekly cooking classes taught by Big Cypress nutritionists. The classes focused on modifying favorite recipes to make them healthier by lowering fat and sugar content and raising fiber content.

The spring program began with the 10-Day Heart Health Challenge. During the 10 days, participants were asked to meet challenges like trying fruits they had never eaten before, working with local trainers to try new exercises, talking to health educators about quitting smoking and going to the clinic to set up heart checkups.

During this time, a pedometer contest was also started, and participants came into the office for weigh-ins and pedometers. Each week, participants tried to accumulate the most steps. A weekly Pathways III walk was held at various locations around the reservation. Each walk ended with a healthy lunch and a discussion with the BC nutritionist and health educator about topics like stress management, HIV, cholesterol, hypertension and diabetes.

Edna McDuffie and Almira Billie won the pedometer contest, while Jennifer Chadwick, Sheila Aquilar and Edna McDuffie won the most participation awards.

Keep an eye out for other fun and motivating health programs coming up from the Big Cypress Health Department.

Starving yourself thin?

• Paula Bowers-Sanchez

Does this sound familiar? I was talking with a friend last week who is desperately trying to lose weight. I asked what she was doing. She said she had a "plan." She skips breakfast, only has a salad or a small soup for lunch, then for dinner maybe a little more soup. OMG. Where's the protein? Where's the water? How are you making it through the day?

OK, so...yes, the scale will eventually show lower weight, but at such a price! She's basically starving herself!

When your calorie intake becomes significantly less than what you expend, your body goes into "starvation mode." It is a scientific fact that when your calorie count suddenly drops, but your activity level remains the same or higher, your body will compensate by reducing your metabolic rate. It simply refuses to let go of the fat. This explains why some people lose weight up to a certain point and then cannot lose any additional weight, no matter how

hard they try. You literally have to eat yourself thin, not starve yourself thin.

Think of it this way: Keep adding firewood to the fire to keep it burning. That means eating five to six small meals a day to keep your "furnace" working.

Don't forget to drink plenty of water, too. I usually drink at least 2 liters a day; I carry a water bottle with me everywhere I go. Start by trying to drink at least 1 liter. Replace your Coke, Pepsi or sweet tea at meal times with water. It gets to be a habit after a while, like brushing your teeth every day.

Remember, you only get one body, so take care of it.



May is National Barbecue Month

BY CHERYL MCDONNELL-CANAN
Environmental Health Inspector

People have barbecues all year long, but spring and summer are the most popular times to have one. While you may enjoy a piece of meat slathered in barbecue sauce, there could be tons of bacteria growing on your food, multiplying and causing foodborne illnesses.

The following tips will keep you healthy when barbecuing:

- When shopping for a barbecue, you should buy the meat last. Make sure to keep raw meat separate from your other food items. You can put packages of raw meat in separate plastic bags to keep meat juices from leaking onto other foods. This helps avoid possible cross-contamination and prevents the spread of foodborne illness. Always refrigerate perishable foods within one to two hours, especially in warm weather.

- At home, store raw meat in the refrigerator immediately after you return from the grocery store. Freeze raw poultry or ground beef that won't be used within one or two days. Freeze other meats within four or five days. Marinate meat in the refrigerator, not on the counter. If you want to save some marinade to baste cooked meat or to use as a dipping sauce, make sure to set some aside in the refrigerator that hasn't touched uncooked meat. Don't use leftover marinade that has been in contact with raw meat or uncooked food.

- When ready to thaw meat, do it in the

refrigerator for a slow, safe thawing, or put the meat in a sealed bag under running, cold water. You can also use the microwave on the defrost setting if you will cook the meat immediately. You should not thaw your meat on the counter, nor should you put frozen meat on the grill because it cooks unevenly.

- If you are having a barbecue away from home, keep your meat cold when transporting it. Use a cooler with ice packs for this. Keep the cooler out of direct sunlight and avoid opening it too often because this lets cold air out and warm air in. You may also want to use two coolers, one for drinks (as it may get opened more often) and another for food. Always remember to keep food out of the temperature danger zone of 40-140 degrees Fahrenheit because bacteria grow in this temperature range. After only two hours in this range, food can become dangerous.

- You should always start with a clean barbecue placed at least 10 feet away from other objects that can catch fire. Make sure you have plenty of utensils and platters to use. You should not use platters and utensils that have touched the raw meat. Make sure everything has its own platter and spoon or tongs.

- Cook your meat thoroughly and use a digital thermometer. Bacteria such as E. coli, Salmonella and Listeria can only be killed by heat. Raw meat must be cooked properly to avoid foodborne illness. Color alone does not reliably indicate that meat is safe to eat. Meat can turn brown before all the bacteria are killed.



Seminole Media Productions archive photo

To accurately read the digital thermometer, insert it through the thickest part of the meat.

- Finally, when barbecuing make sure children stay away from the grill at all times. You should also avoid wearing loose-fitting clothes because they catch on fire more easily. Never use gasoline or paint thinner to start the coals. When using starter fluid, you should soak the coals for a few minutes before lighting them. Do not pour more starter fluid on an already lit grill because you can cause a flashback, which may cause the container of starter fluid in your hand to catch fire and explode.



Brett Daly

Doris Osceola, right, hosts a documentary screening to celebrate the life of reggae legend Bob Marley in which Natalie Garrett, left, attends.

Doris Osceola hosts documentary screening

BY BRETT DALY
Senior Editor

HOLLYWOOD — To celebrate the life of reggae legend Bob Marley, Tribal member Doris Osceola hosted a documentary screening of *Bob Marley: The Making of a Legend* on April 5.

The film shows footage of Marley before he made it in the music industry. Esther Anderson, a Jamaican actress and friend of Osceola, compiled the film from videos she shot while traveling with Marley in the early '70s.

"It's made from footage I shot 37 years ago and lost," Anderson said. "We fashioned a film from what we got back."

With a large group of Tribal members interested in the life and music of Marley, Osceola decided to bring the fans together at her home. She set up dozens of chairs around her big-screen TV and brought in cooks to make authentic Jamaican food. Reggae music blared in the background prior to the screening.

"Everyone is getting together [for the film], so it's a good thing," said Osceola, who added that she has been a fan of Marley for 40 years. "If you're a Bob Marley fan, then it's for you."

Bob Marley: The Making of a Legend shows Anderson and

Marley traveling to the Caribbean Islands and to Kingston. It also shows footage of the Wailers' first rehearsal.

"This film is an amazing film because it shows footage before Bob was anybody," said Sheena Spirit, a singer who worked with Marley and lived in Jamaica for more than 25 years. "The purpose of this event is to come together from every Tribe and every nation to celebrate Bob Marley and the 'one love' spirit."

In addition to the documentary screening, Osceola has found other ways to keep the reggae influence alive. In October 2011, she helped establish a permanent exhibit for reggae legend Dennis Brown with co-organizer Debbie Allen at the Hollywood Hard Rock Hotel & Casino. The exhibit features authentic clothing and a signed picture of Brown in his honor.

Also, back in February, Osceola shared a bit of Seminole culture with Jamaica when she traveled to the country and delivered a hand-crafted Seminole doll and a copy of Seminole Media Productions' DVD of the Dennis Brown exhibit unveiling to Ionie Wright, executive secretary to the new Prime Minister of Jamaica, Portia Simpson Miller.

"Bob Marley is alive and well on the reservation," she said.



Brett Daly

Esther Anderson, left, mingles with guests during the April 5 documentary screening. Anderson compiled the film from videos she shot while traveling with Bob Marley in the '70s.

Former Council member faces charges

MIAMI — Wifredo A. Ferrer, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Florida, and José A. Gonzalez, Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation Division (IRS-CID), announced that defendant David Roger Cypress, of Clewiston, pled guilty, April 13, before United States District Judge Kathleen Williams to a one count Information.

The Information charged Cypress with filing a false 2007 United States federal income tax return, in violation of Title 26, United States Code, Section 7206(1).

Sentencing has been scheduled for Aug. 9. At sentencing, Cypress faces a statutory maximum sentence of three years in prison.

In addition to his plea of guilty to the criminal charge, as part of the plea agreement, Cypress agreed to pay restitution to the IRS, which includes tax, interest and penalties

-Excerpt from an United States Attorney's Office, Southern District of Florida April 13, 2012 press release.

Seminole Tribe of Florida Council convenes

BY CAMELLIA OSCEOLA
Editor in Chief

BRIGHTON — The Tribal Council convened on April 13 at the Veteran's Building on the Brighton Seminole Indian Reservation. Forty four items were passed, two were removed and one was tabled.

Tabled item:

- Ordinance: Seminole Tribal Code Adoption

Consent Agenda items passed include:

- Resolution: Release of Interest in a Homesite from Kayla Leigh Bowers – Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation

- Resolution: Release of Interest in a Homesite from Jimmie and Marie Osceola – Brighton Seminole Indian Reservation

- Resolution: Issuance of a Homesite Lease to Keyah Michelle Osceola – Brighton Seminole Indian Reservation

- Resolution: Release of Interest in a Homesite from Angela Susan Tiger – Hollywood Seminole Indian Reservation

- Resolution: Issuance of a Homesite Lease to Irene Tommie – Hollywood Seminole Indian Reservation

- Resolution: Issuance of a Homesite Lease to Kristen Sharese Billie – Hollywood Seminole Indian Reservation

- Resolution: Release of Interest in a Homesite from Kenny Joe Davis – Immokalee Seminole Indian Reservation

- Resolution: Release of Interest in a Homesite from Johnny Lee Jimmie – Immokalee Seminole Indian Reservation

- Resolution: Issuance of a Homesite Lease to Cassandra Marie Jimmie – Immokalee Seminole Indian Reservation

Regular Agenda items passed include:

- Resolution: Proclamation by the Seminole

Tribe of Florida of Police Week – This implements the observance of Police Week from May 13-19, 2012 in the Seminole Tribe of Florida to include activities and ceremonies Tribalwide. May 15, 2012 will be recognized as Police Officers' Memorial Day in the Seminole Tribe to remember those police officers who have lost their lives or who have been injured.

- Resolution: Proclamation by the Seminole Tribe of Florida of Emergency Medical Services Week – This implements the observance of Emergency Medical Services Week from May 20-26, 2012 in the Seminole Tribe of Florida to include activities and ceremonies Tribalwide. May 23, 2012 will be directed toward and devoted to children with safety and injury prevention being the focus. The theme for this week will be "EMS, more than a job; it's a calling."

How to commend an officer or employee

SUBMITTED BY WILLIAM R. LATCHFORD
Seminole Tribe Police Chief

Seminole Police Department.

Write a brief letter including:

- The name of the officer or employee.
- The date, time and location of the occurrence.
- The circumstances of the event you observed and/or were involved in.

The letter can be sent to any of the following Seminole Police Department addresses:

- Hollywood: 3101 North State Road 7, Hollywood, Fla. 33021
- Fort Pierce: 3300 Sallie Chupco Tommie Way, Fort Pierce, Fla. 34945
- Immokalee: 1110 South First St., Immokalee, Fla. 34142
- Brighton: 17251 Civic St. NE, Okeechobee, Fla. 34974
- Big Cypress: 30290 Josie Billie Highway, Clewiston, Fla. 33440 PMB #402

Should you prefer to make this commendation via phone, please call your local Seminole Police Department.

Our employees take great pride when they are recognized by our Tribal members as doing a phenomenal job. This in turn allows our officers to feel their efforts are strongly appreciated. Commendations encourage morale and also motivate employees to always improve their performance and the quality of service provided within our communities.

Please know you have the finest men and women in the law enforcement field employed by Seminole Police Department.

I thank you for allowing me to be the Police Chief in this noble profession, protecting and serving those within the Seminole Tribe of Florida.



Every day, 24 hours a day, the officers and employees of our department make a diligent effort to perform their duties in a courteous, competent and professional fashion. However, many go beyond the call of duty and exceed the public's expectations. Upon coming in contact with someone in our agency who provides phenomenal service, which reflects favorably on our police department, we encourage you to tell us about it. You can do so by providing the following information, in writing, to us at



Photo courtesy of Lt. Jorge Valdes

Seminole Tribe Fire Rescue's Lt. Jorge Valdes, left, and Lt. Juan Gomez participate in the Fight for Air Climb to benefit the American Lung Association in Florida.

Fire Rescue raises funds for American Lung Association

SUBMITTED BY LT. JORGE VALDES
Seminole Tribe Fire Rescue

MIAMI — On April 14, the American Lung Association in Florida hosted the Fight for Air Climb. This charitable event was held at Southeast Financial Center in downtown Miami. Lt. Juan Gomez and Lt. Jorge Valdes, representing Seminole Tribe Fire Rescue, climbed the 55-story building to the top and raised \$900 in donations. Along with brothers and sister from many other local departments, they experienced many of the challenges faced on a daily basis as firefighters. They look forward to representing their department with honor in future events.

HEALTH From page 6A



Naji Tobias

From left, Renee Tigertail, Mike Iglesias and Tara Robbins participate in National Walking Day on April 4 on the Big Cypress Reservation.



Naji Tobias

Tribal member and employee Celeste Billie stretches out her arms before her walk on National Walking Day.



Naji Tobias

Tribal member and employee Sheila Aguilar stretches during National Walking Day on April 4.

E a s t e r



Frances Fregoso

"Please open my egg!" says Evelyn Frank during Immokalee Preschool's Easter party.



Judy Weeks

Nancy Motlow juggles a handful of eggs during Immokalee's senior egg hunt.



Judy Weeks

Isis Rodriguez receives an Easter hug from mommy, Nikki Davis, at Immokalee's community Easter party.



Judy Weeks

Cecelia Pequeno assists her daughter Zoey Garcia with her first Easter egg hunt.



Frances Fregoso

Three- and 4-year-old Immokalee preschoolers square off at the starting line of the Easter egg hunt.



Judy Weeks

Elana Kendricks enjoys the Immokalee Easter dinner buffet from the hip of her mother, Bonnie Davis.



Brett Daly

Caryn Billie helps her daughter Shayna Roberts during the Trail Easter egg hunt.



Brett Daly

Trail senior Peggy Osceola holds great-grandson Riley during the senior party.



Brett Daly

Trail youth sprint toward the Easter eggs during the Community Easter celebration on March 24.



Brett Daly

Everyone gets in on the Easter hunt action at the Trail Community Easter party.



Brett Daly

Autumn Serena Osceola looks for eggs at the Trail Community Easter party.



Kathryn Stolarz

Eliska Slavik gets swept up by the Easter Bunny during the Naples Easter celebration.



Kathryn Stolarz

O.B. Osceola III has a laugh with the Easter Bunny at the Naples Easter party.



Kathryn Stolarz

AnnaMae Kelly shows off the eggs she collected during the Naples Easter egg hunt.



Kathryn Stolarz

Serena Zepeda, left, and Amelia Zepeda have fun on the tire swing at the Naples Easter party.



Kathryn Stolarz

Naples Tribal youth gather around the Easter Bunny after the egg hunt.



Rachel Buxton

Kinya Tommie poses with son Tyione Scott and niece Jada Marie Timothy at the Fort Pierce Easter dinner April 5.



Rachel Buxton

Bessie Tommie joins her Fort Pierce family for their Easter celebration April 5.



Rachel Buxton

Ma'Yana Stockton makes herself an Easter crown during Fort Pierce's Easter celebration April 5 at the ranch.



Rachel Buxton

Antillis Stockton Jr. shows off his prized egg April 5 at the Fort Pierce Easter celebration held at the ranch.



Rachel Buxton

Millenia Tommie tries to be quick as she races to find eggs during the Fort Pierce Easter egg hunt.



Peter B. Gallagher

Tampa's Ruby Motlow found just the right mixture for a pink-purple Easter egg.



Peter B. Gallagher

Linda Henry guides the youth to the best eggs at Tampa's Easter egg hunt.



Peter B. Gallagher

These best friends call themselves "Ebony and Ivory" at Tampa's Easter event.



Peter B. Gallagher

Little Kara Clay takes a break from egg hunting to admire her take in Tampa.



Peter B. Gallagher

Nigel Osceola grabs an egg to add to his basket during the Tampa Easter egg hunt.



Peter B. Gallagher

You are never too old to have fun at Easter; Peggy Cubus searches for eggs in Tampa.



Rachel Buxton

Billy Micco guesses the number of jelly beans at the Brighton senior Easter party.



Rachel Buxton

Stanley Rodrigues visits the Easter bunny during the Brighton community Easter party.



Rachel Buxton

Students take off in a race to collect the most eggs on April 5 at the Brighton Preschool Easter celebration.



Rachel Buxton

Brighton youth Kalissa Huff fixes her bunny ears during her search for eggs.



Rachel Buxton

Trisha Entry is pretty in pink for the Brighton community Easter celebration.



Miguel Freire

Youth Gabrielle Diaz says hello to the Easter Bunny with family at the Hollywood Preschool's Easter party.



Miguel Freire

Youth Mercedes Osceola-Hahn and her family get excited for Easter at the Hollywood Preschool's Easter event.



Miguel Freire

The Easter Bunny brings smiles to youth's faces at the Hollywood Preschool Easter party.



Miguel Freire

La'Toya Stewart has some Easter bonding time with her little ones in Hollywood.



Brett Daly

Elsie Jean Bowers enjoys the festivities at the Hollywood senior Easter party.



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Tribal youth show off their prizes from the reservation's Amazing Youth Race, which took place on April 11 at the Community Center.



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Tribal infant Little Tigertail at his findings during the Big Cypress Preschool's Easter egg hunt on April 5.



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Tribal senior Mable Jim counts up her eggs.



Naji Tobias

Tara Robbins, left, and her mother, Mary Robbins, enjoy each other during Big Cypress' Easter luncheon on April 5.



Naji Tobias

Top center, Renee Tigertail and her grandson, Haashe Wilcox, pose with, from left, her aunt, Alice Tigertail; her brother, Alfonso Tigertail; and Amos Mazzant during the Big Cypress Community's Easter luncheon on April 5.

Editorial

Keep your flame hook-chee high

• James E. Billie

Well, it's been two and a half months now since I had the stroke. I am now able to walk with the help of a cane, and I am vigorously working with therapy on my shoulder and hand to return to full function. Right now I have my arm strapped to my side and, hopefully, with therapy, I'll be back all normal again soon.

As you know, my profession was, and will always be, chickee builder and contractor. At my age, I had to stop wrestling alligators before I lost all my fingers! But my chickee business is still thriving, and based on my past experiences, I expect I will always have my chickee business going strong.

Talking about chickees, during the 68 years I've been on this earth, I've seen a few people burn down their chickee huts accidentally while cooking. In fact, the first time I ever heard of someone burning down a chickee hut, I was 12 years old. It was 1956, and one of the Billie families from Hollywood burned down their cooking chickee. My grandfather made a statement to me at the time: "The younger generation has absolutely no knowledge how to build a fire and cook under a chickee hut."

It was his understanding that young people had no respect for fire.

"When the younger generation builds fire, they build it too big, with tall flames," he said, instructing me. "If you ever build a fire in a chickee, the flames should go no higher than *hook-chee* (your buttocks). Any flames higher than that are a waste of fire and heat."

I never gave it much thought, but in 1982, I was now Chairman of the Seminole Tribe and hosting a reception at the Native Village. I hired Fred Osceola (who is deceased now) to cook up some barbecue for the party. I had a barbecue pit with a chickee top covered with palm leaves. I'm not sure if Fred had ever been told about the "Rules of Cooking under a Chickee."

He started the charcoal with lighter fluid, and the flames shot up 4-6 feet, which is higher than anyone's *hook-chee*! Needless to say, the tremendous heat caught the small chickee hut on fire and burned it down.

Here we were two hours before the party was supposed to start. We quickly restructured the roof with a tin top. In fact, this barbecue chickee hut still exists today at the Native Village. Fred Osceola and I were a little embarrassed by our mistake, but life goes on...

Then, just recently, the Housing Department called upon my services to build a chickee at one of the residences on the Brighton Seminole Indian Reservation.

They told me that one of the family members was building a fire under the chickee hut, and it caught fire and burned down. So we are in the process of rebuilding that chickee.

OK, so you might be wondering: Why this rhetoric about chickees burning down?

Well, the older generation had different rules about how to build a fire, and one of the most important ones was based on the fact that palm leaves are very flammable: You should never build a fire taller than your buttocks. The elders had a better, more descriptive term: *hook-chee high*. In other words, "The flame should never go higher than your *hook-chee*!" (In fact, even when you are building a fire to stay warm by, even in the open where there are no leaves above, the fire should never have a flame higher your *hook-chee*.)

Another important rule regarding chickees and fire: Women with long hair should tie it in a bun behind their heads and not allow it to hang down over their chests. Like palm leaves, hair is extremely flammable. There have been many reports over the past years of women getting their hair burned from cooking over a fire. It still happens. Even in recent times, I have seen young women cooking food, and their hair was in danger - in front of them instead of behind their heads.

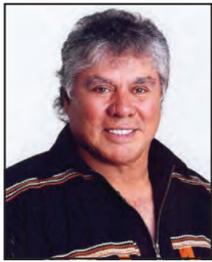
There is an old Indian legend that says, "*Fire is your brother. He will keep you warm and cook your food.*" Fire does its work for you, so you must respect the fire. Whether you are cooking deer meat or bologna, break off a piece and throw it to the fire; share it with your brother. If you are smoking, share a little tobacco with the fire; the fire will appreciate that.

It's amazing that when God made the earth, He made man and woman and all the animals to breathe air. Without air, man, woman and all the animals will die. That is the reason the Seminole Indians say, "*Fire is your brother.*" There can also be no fire without air.

I hope this little story helps anyone in the Tribe - or anyone on this earth - to learn how to build, control and respect fire. I hope everyone will remember what my grandpa said: "Always keep the flame *hook-chee high*!"

Sho-naa-bish.

James E. Billie is Chairman of the Seminole Tribe of Florida.



Change in Seminole Country

• Tony Sanchez Jr.

There are definite things that we are doing to streamline and evaluate each current enterprise of the Seminole Tribe of Florida. This is being done with an eye to making the particular venture more profitable, less expensive and as productive as possible for our Tribal citizens.

An example would be the former convenience store complex on the Brighton Seminole Indian Reservation. We are not only changing the appearance of the current buildings, inside and out, we are changing the way the products are presented. We are adding a Subway restaurant and improving customer service: upgrading the look and operation of the public restrooms. We are making arrangements to change the adjoining trailer park into an RV park, removing all the trailers as their leases are up.

We have taken a close look at the Brighton area and realize tourists and other travelers go off the beaten path looking for unique locations with unique amenities. Well, we got a casino down the street, we got Lake Okeechobee down the street, we got real cowboys, just to name a few. Those are very unique features, very special. With that in mind, we are changing the overall presentation of the store and the park to complement our unique world. We'll put in a little sitting area, a play area, barbecue area and make ourselves more inviting to all the RVs you see out there on the road around here.

The day will come very soon when you will walk into the Brighton convenience store and it will feel like you have walked into a 7-Eleven or Circle K. We'll use the best business practices and presentations that those large chains utilize. And why not? They work! There is a method to their madness. Plainly said, we are going to implement the proper policies, procedures and system to be successful.

I consider this sort of business improvement as one of my specialties. I expect these projects to succeed no less spectacularly than what I was able to accomplish during my tenure at the Immokalee Casino. It is a matter of understanding the possibilities and capitalizing on what we have, especially in terms of our advantages as American Indian business operators. We must recognize and pursue these advantages and utilize them to their fullest capacity.

For example, we are looking at reducing our costs by concentrating on the tax side of the ledger. Gas stations in Brighton and Hollywood should benefit from our tax advantage. It translates to more money at the end of the day. Another benefit we have not yet taken advantage of is our ability to sell beer 24/7, even offer it before noon on Sundays. Small deals perhaps, but it definitely increases the daily bottom line. It fits in with everything else we are doing and contributes to the successful business system we are trying to improve and maintain overall within the Tribe.

In fact, we are doing exactly what the Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc. was created to do - which is to operate as the economic development arm for the Seminole Tribe of Florida. And when we do it right, we declare a dividend for the Tribe and its members. That is what we do.

Things have changed. I know that many of our Tribal members realize this. We now operate our businesses as businesses. We are no longer just throwing money at failing enterprises. We are no longer doing business like a mom and pop organization. Now, we obviously have to spend money for these improvements, but in the end, we are aiming for it to translate into a bigger bottom line. We will continue to evaluate and evaluate to make sure it's working right. And we will go down the line, as I have said before, and look at everything one by one.

Take the grove at Big Cypress. I don't want to call it an eyesore, but I can call it non-producing. We are going to push those dead trees out. Six hundred acres of non-producing trees will be removed and the land prepared for a new agricultural project. I don't know what that is, whether we will replant orange trees or sugar cane, but I can tell you we are in the evaluation process right now, looking for what will give us the biggest return on our investment.

Many people think that all the Tribal Board of Directors have to deal with is cattle and cigarettes. Not true at all. We have citrus, c-stores, sugar cane, mining, etc. Since this new administration took office, we have partnered with a vineyard in Tuscany, Italy under a plan to market this fine wine to restaurants at casinos across our country. We have a media company that offers myriad services under one umbrella. And a construction company joint venture. I could go on...but there's work to be done.

A good businessman does not just sit back, revel in his successes and hope that he or she will continue to be successful. You have to have a plan and you have to constantly monitor and evaluate that plan. It's the only way to insure continued success. As the old saying goes, "No one is going to give you anything. You have to earn it."

As you know, we are developing personnel changes that allow us to provide enhanced support for current and future enterprises and improves our abilities to conduct due diligence on future projects. And it will all be done in-house, instead of outsourcing it, which is what we have done too much of in the past.

I am talking about the basic necessities we need as a business to operate successfully on a daily basis. This has been lacking at the Seminole Tribe of Florida for many years. I can assure you, future dividends will mark the result of what we are doing today. There has got to be a plan. Just plain hope don't work. With no plan, you go around in circles. Those days are over. There will be a method to our madness, and the ultimate goal is for Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc. to be a self-containing entity.

I think the people were ready for a change. I know that is why I am here. The people of the Seminole Tribe may not have known exactly what to expect, but they knew there was a definite need for change.

It takes a whole team for a business to be successful. I don't care if you are IBM, Apple, Donald Trump, no one person can make it happen. And there will always have to be someone's head on the chopping block. And I know that is me. I knew that when I signed up to do this job.

I will take the criticism. I don't take it personal. And, believe me, when the successes come in, you won't see me out there beating my chest. Because I know the credit goes to the team, all of us working together. THAT will make us successful. THAT will keep us in the black!

Sho-naa-bish.

Tony Sanchez Jr. is President of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc.



Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum acquires important glass lantern slide collection

BY JAMES H. POWELL
Associate Registrar

The history of photography is a fascinating story. We now have digital photos, but just 25 years ago, we only had snapshots and color slides. If we go back even earlier, we find a variety of photographic formats that have become obsolete.

Collecting and preserving these early examples when the photos have Seminole subjects is something the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum proudly does.

Earlier this year, the Museum purchased a collection of 42 glass lantern slides. Pictured to the right are two of the images. At left, a sepia-toned print of a slide shows a young Seminole man holding an otter. And on the right, the slide itself shows a Seminole man poling a long canoe. This photograph shows a well-defined canoe trail gently curving through the sawgrass from the direction of Charlie Osceola's camp.

Glass lantern slides are positive photographic images on a glass support. The slides are meant to be viewed as large-scale images projected onto a screen or wall via a glass lantern slide projector. These projectors evolved over time as the technology of the light source advanced, and they were in use from approximately 1850 to 1950. The large format allowed photographic images to be viewed in a group setting, and they ideally accompanied family vacation stories and academic lectures.

In addition to the two images to the right, the other slides in the collection show a wide range of Seminole portraits, landscapes and activities. When researching these slides, we discovered that many are

copies of photographs taken by Julian Dimock.

Dimock belonged to a wealthy and sport-loving family who spent much of their time in and around southwest Florida. Dimock pursued his interest in photography and created a wealth of images related to southwest Florida, tarpon fishing and most remarkably, the Seminole Tribe of Florida in the early 1900s. The original Dimock photographs belong to another museum, the American Museum of Natural History in New York, but because they are such an important record of Seminole history, we are happy to have copies of the photographs at Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki. Some of the other glass slides in the collection appear to be commercially produced and from a later period.

Be sure to watch for additional information on these and other glass lantern slides held by the Museum in upcoming Museum publications like our blog (www.ahthithiki.wordpress.com), as well as the Museum's Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Quarterly (AQ) magazine.

And be sure to mark your calendar for the Museum's upcoming major exhibit based on the photographs of Julian Dimock, which opens December 2012.

If you would like to view these slides, please call the Museum at 877-902-1113 or visit the Museum's website, www.ahthithiki.com, to make an appointment or just stop by the Museum.

As always, if you have any additional information on the photographs to the right, including the identity of the young man holding the otter, please contact the Museum to share your knowledge.

Thank you!



Identifying the **Pas**



Unidentified young man holds an otter.

Photo courtesy of Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki

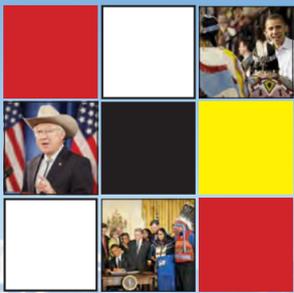


Charley Tommy poles a long canoe.

Photo courtesy of Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki

If you have additional information on these photographs, please contact the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum at 877-902-1113 to share your knowledge.

NATIONAL NATIVE NEWS



Cleveland AIM protests Chief Wahoo

CLEVELAND — For the 20th season in a row, the Cleveland American Indian Movement has formally protested the Cleveland Indians name and Chief Wahoo logo at the club's home opener April 5 at Progressive Field.

Robert Roche, executive director of Cleveland's American Indian Education Center and a Chirichau Apache Tribal citizen, said peaceful protestors received angry shouts of "Chief Wahoo Rules," "You killed Custer" or just "Shut up" among numerous taunts before the team's game against the Toronto Blue Jays. "If you stand here long enough," Roche told a local TV station, "you'll see that racism is alive and well in Cleveland."

Bob DiBiasio, spokesman for the Cleveland Indians, said the team respects the opinions of American Indians.

"We truly believe it is an individual perception issue," he said. "When people look at our logo we believe they think baseball. We have added a logo, the block C, recently in addition to the Wahoo logo and the script 'Indians.' Fans of the team have alternative ways to express their support."

"This behavior is exploitative, bigoted, racist and shameful," Cleveland AIM director Sundance said. "It makes fun of genocide and mocks mass murder. The logo is just the head of an Indian. That means he is an ex-Indian. This has been going on for more than 50 years. I hope it does not continue for another 50."

The Indians lost 7-4.

— *Indian Country TODAY Media Network*

Supreme Court refuses Seminole fuel tax case

TALLAHASSEE — The State Supreme Court has refused to hear an appeal by the Seminole Tribe of Florida in a dispute with the Department of Revenue (DR) about fuel taxes.

The Seminoles argued that as a sovereign nation, they should receive tax refunds for fuel used on Tribal lands after being purchased elsewhere.

In seeking to overturn a ruling last year by the 4th District Court of Appeal, the Tribe said the Indian Commerce Clause of the U.S. Constitution barred the State of Florida from taxing the fuel.

In a brief filed with the court, the DR claimed a long history of allowing refunds for fuel purchased on Tribal lands, regardless of where vehicles traveled, adding that the agency has also maintained a policy of refusing refunds for gas purchased off Tribal lands. The Supreme Court provided no explanation in declining to take up the case.

— *News Service of Florida*

Rock and Roll Hall inductees honored By Hard Rock



CLEVELAND — The Hard Rock Cafe in Tower City Center has recently opened a new exhibit celebrating the 2012 inductees into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Titled "Code Breakers of Rock and Roll," the exhibit includes memorabilia from the Red Hot Chili Peppers, Donovan, Laura Nyro, The Small Faces/Faces, Beastie Boys, The Crickets,

The Famous Flames, The Midnighters, The Comets, The Blue Caps, The Miracles, Freddie King, Don Kirshner, Cosimo Matassa, Tom Dowd, Glyn Johns and legendary rock 'n' roll journalist Jane Scott.

Among items on display are the "VW" necklace worn by Mike D of the Beastie Boys; a Gibson Les Paul guitar played by former Guns N' Roses rhythm guitarist Izzy Stradlin and a blue jump suit worn by Chad Smith of the Red Hot Chili Peppers. The items were gleaned from the more than 72,000 pieces of rock and roll memorabilia owned by Hard Rock.

— *Cleveland Plain Dealer*

Are the Mormons' Lamanites American Indians?

In the Book of Mormon, there is a group called the Lamanites — a non-believing people of Middle Eastern origin who lived in the Americas from about 600 B.C. onward. More specifically, the Hebrew family of Nehi made the journey, and then his sons, Laman and Nephi, split up and formed two rival societies, the Lamanites, who didn't believe in the God of Judaism (and later Christianity), and the Nephites, who did believe.

The question that Mormons have had a hard time answering is, "Are American Indians Lamanites?" Lamanites are clearly bad people in the Book of Mormon, and in a detail that is particularly difficult to explain, they are given dark skin as a sign of their wickedness. Is this really how Mormons view Native Americans?

Perhaps it's all just mythology from another faith

that need not be taken literally. And yet — have a look at these Lamanites from a series of Mormon action figures. Do these look like descendants of a Hebrew group who migrated to Turtle Island from the Middle East in 600 B.C.?

Or do they just look like Indians?



Product description from website: "Lamanite Warriors 'were lazy and idolatrous... wild and ferocious, believing in the false traditions of their fathers. They trusted in their own abilities and not in the strength of the Lord. The Book of Mormon tells that the heads of the Lamanites were shorn, they were naked, save it were skin which was girded about their loins... They were armed with bows, arrows, stones and slings... they had marked themselves with red in their foreheads after the manner of the Lamanites... these wicked warriors... reap their rewards according to their works, whether they were good or whether they were bad, to reap eternal happiness or eternal misery..."

— *Indian Country Today*

Lakota hunger strike against tar sands pipelines

EAGLE BUTTE, S.D. — Citizens of the proud Lakota Nation rose in protest recently to join a two-day (48-hour) hunger strike in opposition to all tar sands pipelines — particularly the controversial Keystone XL pipeline — they say will destroy precious water resources and ancestral lands in the U.S. and Canada.

Dozens of hunger strikers and supporters marched at a rally against tar sands oil mining operations and pipelines in an impoverished community on the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation, close to TransCanada's 1,700-mile proposed Keystone XL pipeline route to refineries in the Gulf.

Lakota Tribal members and their children also drove to a camp in the rugged hills near the Missouri River to fast in solidarity with a hunger strike at the Bella Bella Community School in British Columbia. Children at that school are protesting a plan to ship millions of barrels of oil through a potentially dangerous "Northern Gateway" pipeline that would pipe corrosive tar sands oil from Alberta to giant super tankers navigating Canada's treacherous Pacific coast.

The massive environmental devastation caused by tar sands mining in Canada and Big Oil's plan to ship it through the U.S. has united American Indians against proposals to build tar sands pipelines here in the U.S.

Veteran Lakota activist Debra White Plume said, "This pipeline is about rich people getting richer; this pipeline is about raping Mother Earth and feeding the machine."

"For us, this pipeline is genocide for us and the First Nations people in Canada. I think our Native nations will stay opposed to the Keystone XL pipeline and stay opposed to other pipelines that come through here because we understand that water is a gift from our Grandfather, it's a gift of life."

"Our leaders understand that, and they're not going to make a deal. It's a battle for our water; it's a battle for our children. These are our grandchildren at the hunger strike; we're really proud of them for going hungry for Mother Earth and for their elders who are doing this."

— *Indian Country Today*

Native Americans get Sellwood trees

PORTLAND, Ore. — Native Americans are harvesting trees and stripping bark on the hillside near the west end of the Sellwood Bridge.

And this is all part of their ancestral rights.

KOIN reported earlier this month that starting April 9 about 800 trees on Portland's west side would be removed to make way for construction of a new Sellwood Bridge. The trees are being taken from property owned by the city and Riverview Cemetery.

Now, thanks to a deal struck with Multnomah County, Oregon's Native Americans will be able to use the trees and the bark for medicine and Tribal artifacts. In short, they'll put the wood to good use — instead of letting it go to waste as the trees are cleared to make way for the bridge.

Members of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde are harvesting the yew trees and taking the bark from cedar trees. Eight hundred trees are being cleared to make room for the new bridge.

The Willamette Valley Treaty of 1855 gives Native Americans federal rights to harvest the trees in this area.

"It's not easy to get access to these kinds of materials," said Greg Archuleta, a descendent of the Clackamas Chinook who lived in the area of the bridge before they were relocated to Grand Ronde and became part of the Confederated Tribes. He said the wood resources will be used to make everything from baskets to canoes to ceremonial gifts and hats.

"It's really important, especially for our Tribal membership that lives up here in the Portland area," Archuleta said. "[It's a] very urban area, so it's not easy to get access to these kinds of materials."

It will take until 2015 to build the \$267 million bridge. The Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde will be closely watching the progress and using what they can harvest.

— *koinlocal6.com*

Museum launches Skateboard Culture in Native America

SAN DIEGO — Showing for the first time outside the Smithsonian Institution, *Ramp It Up: Skateboard Culture in Native America* begins its 12-city national tour at the San Diego Museum of Man (SDMoM) on April 28.

The public is invited to attend the opening day event, which will feature guided tours by exhibition curator Elizabeth Gordon and professional skateboarding demonstrations on the half pipe mini skate ramp, which has been designed and built by Spohn Ranch Skateparks. Opening festivities are included in the price of regular admission. The *Ramp It Up* exhibition will be on display until Sept. 9 at SDMoM.

The new exhibition features examples of skate decks from Native companies and contemporary artists and rare images and video of Native skaters. It showcases the work of visual artists Bunky Echo-Hawk (Yakama/Pawnee), Joe Yazzie (Navajo), Traci Rabbit (Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma) and Dustinn Craig (White Mountain Apache/Navajo). *Ramp It Up* also traces the history of skateboarding, from its origins in Native Hawaiian communities, to the Southern California surf culture, to the rest of the United States and beyond.

Throughout the four-month run of the exhibit, the mini-ramp will be open to the public at selected times.

— *PRWeb*

Genting scales back Miami resort plan

MIAMI — The Malaysian-based casino giant Genting has scaled back its massive development plans since lawmakers rejected a bid to legalize commercial casinos in Florida.

Genting's proposed \$3.8 billion gargantuan casino resort with 5,200 hotel rooms and 50 restaurants is now a proposal for a smaller hotel, a few condos and retail space on just a portion of the nearly 20 acres it acquired for \$500 million last year. Genting estimates the scaled-down project will take 20 years to build. Of course, if Florida lawmakers change course and approve casinos, watch how fast Genting slaps a casino together. Despite millions of dollars more spent on lobbyists and legislative influence, the "destination resorts" gaming bill was pulled.

— *GetGovernmentOutOfGambling.org*

Mississippi Tribal leader objects to wolf hunt

ST. PAUL, Minn. — A Mississippi American Indian leader objected to a wolf hunting season that appeared near passage in the Minnesota Legislature. She joined several Great Lakes-area Tribes in opposing wolf hunting and trapping proposals. Chairwoman Sandra Skinaway, of the Sandy Lake Band of Mississippi Chippewa, told a Minnesota Senate committee about her concerns, but said the issue flew under the radar and she missed testifying to a House committee.

"In the Anishinaabe creation story, we are taught that the wolf is a brother to original man (Anishinaabe) and the two traveled together throughout the earth naming everything," she testified. "Once this task was completed, the Creator told the wolf and original man that they now had to take separate paths but said that whatever happened to one would happen to the other and that each would be feared, respected and misunderstood by the people that would later join them on earth."

"Because of that relationship, the health and survival of the Anishinaabe people are tied to that of the wolf."

Federal officials removed the wolf from the federal endangered species list on Dec. 28. Minnesota officials immediately began considering a wolf season. Among supporters of a wolf season are farmers, who want to keep wolves from killing livestock.

Skinaway said she understands that, but animals die for many reasons, such as other animals killing them and cars hitting them. "The point is, the wolf is not the only species that kills domestic animals and should not be one of the reasons for a public killing of the wolf," she said.

— *Red Lake Net News*

Saginaw Chippewa Josephine Jackson crosses over

MOUNT PLEASANT, Mich. — Seminole Tribal members may remember Josephine Jackson, an economic leader with the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe and first NIGA secretary of the National Indian Gaming Association, who crossed over at the age of 76 last March 19.

She was part of a group of Chippewas who traveled to Florida in 1981 to see how the Seminole Tribe of Florida ran its bingo operation.



She used information collected from Chairman James Billie to improve economic development on the poverty-stricken Isabella Indian Reservation by designing a small Tribal gymnasium bingo operation that grew into the Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort in Mount Pleasant and the Saganing Eagles Landing Casino in Standish.

Josephine Jackson represented the Saginaw Chippewa Tribe of Michigan when the nation's top eight gaming Tribes gathered in Florida in 1985 for the protection of gaming on Indian lands — a historic event that resulted in the creation of the National Indian Gaming Association.

Chairman Ernie Stevens Jr. of the National Indian Gaming Association had this to say:

"We are deeply saddened by the loss of Josephine Jackson, who worked for many years on behalf of not only the Saginaw Chippewa Tribe of Michigan, but for the advancement of the Indian gaming industry, as we know it today. Josephine was part of those Tribal leaders that established the core principles and vision of NIGA that we continue to carry on."

She is survived by three children, 12 grandchildren and 23 great-grandchildren; two brothers and four sisters, as well as the Saginaw Chippewa people.

— *IndianZ.com*

Hard Rock enters Ohio racetrack joint venture



NORTHFIELD, Ohio — Hard Rock International announced that it has entered into a joint venture and related agreements to acquire equity in, develop and operate a Hard Rock Gaming and Entertainment Facility at one of the nation's premier harness racetracks in Northeast Ohio.

The proposed \$275 million project would include a Hard Rock-branded gaming center, premium steakhouse, Hard Rock Cafe, ongoing lineup of live music and iconic music memorabilia from Hard Rock's unmatched collection, as well as a center bar, buffet and conference and meeting space. The development is expected to generate approximately 1,000 permanent jobs, more than 1,000 construction jobs and countless jobs associated with local suppliers and vendors.

The Hard Rock Gaming and Entertainment Facility would be developed as part of the current Northfield Park Racetrack; the joint venture with Hard Rock will enable the racetrack to enhance its current entertainment programming, including more than 200 live racing events each year.

"We are thrilled to be working with Milstein Entertainment and the Northfield Park team on this project," said Jim Allen, Chairman of Hard Rock International.

"We look forward to bringing the renowned Hard Rock brand to Northfield Park, as the Hard Rock Gaming and Entertainment Facility would be a state-of-the-art venue, providing world-class entertainment experiences that are unique to the region to complement the local community and its surroundings."

This proposed project is subject to the satisfaction of certain conditions, including a successful resolution of the pending litigation in Ohio regarding video lottery terminals.

— *wsj.com*

Ruel wants more Natives on TV

TABLEQUAH, Okla. — An ensemble cast of nerds form the nucleus of one of TV's most successful comedies, *The Big Bang Theory*.

Although one of the actors portrays an East Indian science buff, none of the actors are American Indian. That's something Jim Ruel would like to see change.

"Native Americans don't get on TV very often or in the media very often," Ruel said on April 13, during the 40th annual Symposium on the American Indian at Northeastern State University.

Ruel's speech, "Indiginerd — A Presentation on Indigenous Nerds," was sponsored by the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES). Among the audience for Ruel's message was a group of students from Sequoyah High School.

"One thing you don't see on TV is Indian nerds," Ruel said. "It would be nice to have [Indian] characters on TV shows who aren't stoic or overly romantic."

While studying electrical engineering at Stanford University, Ruel was active in AISES and has worked with the organization since then. His most current project, filmed the week before his Symposium experience, was recording the ideas of American Indian scientists around the country. He showed a rough cut of part of that documentary during the speech.

Two scientists he interviewed work for NASA's jet propulsion labs. One has her doctorate and is controlling the satellite exploring Saturn. Another is working on the mechanics for the Mars rover.

Ruel's mother is a fullblood Ojibwe, while his father is Caucasian.

— *Tahlequah Daily Press*



2 SEMINOLE 10 PRINCESS 2 PAGEANT

Applications can be picked up on May 1, 2012 from Wanda Bowers in the Secretary's office or Charlotte Burgess on the Brighton Reservation or any Tribal Office reception desk. Must turn in completed application by deadline June 25, 2012 at 5:00 pm to Wanda Bowers in the Secretary's office. Orientation is July 25 at 2:00 pm Hollywood Executive Building. Pageant is July 28, 2012. Community Dinner is at 4:00 pm in the lobby of the Hollywood Executive Building.



2nd Annual
Seminole Okalee Indian Village

SCHEDULE

MAY 11 & 12, 2012 FRIDAY & SATURDAY

ADMISSION:
 \$10.00 - ADULTS (13 - 54)
 \$8.00 - SENIORS (55 - OLDER)
 \$6.00 - KIDS (5 - 12)
 FREE - KIDS (4 - YOUNGER)

Free to Seminole & Miccosukee Tribal members, STOF & Casino Employees with I.D. at gate.

**FRIDAY & SATURDAY AT 8:00 PM
 OKALEE INDIAN VILLAGE AMPHITHEATER
 ALLIGATOR WRESTLING COMPETITION
 fawonline.com**

Located in the Seminole Paradise at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino. On US 441 & Stirling Road. Hollywood, Florida

POW WOW MAY 11-13, 2012

**SEMINOLE HARD ROCK LIVE!
 POW WOW COMPETITION
 WILDLIFE/SNAKE SHOW
 NATIVE AMERICAN VENDORS
 FOOD, ARTS & CRAFTS**

- 10:00 AM Gates Open
- 11:00 AM Wildlife & Snake Shows & Alligator Wrestling Show (At OIV Amphitheater)
- 12:00 PM Grand Entry (At Hard Rock Live)
- 12:30 PM Pow-wow Begins
- 2:30 PM Pow-wow Ends
- 3:00 PM Dinner Break
- 3:30 PM Wildlife & Snake Shows & Alligator Wrestling Show (At OIV Amphitheater)
- 3:30 PM Darlene Evans - KISS Country (FRIDAY ONLY)
- 5:30 PM In Front of Okalee Indian Village
- 5:00 PM Grand Entry (At Hard Rock Live)
- 5:30 PM Pow-wow Contest Begins
- 7:00 PM Pow-wow Contest Ends
- 7:10 PM Pow-wow Special
- 8:00 PM Alligator Wrestling Competition Begins (At OIV Amphitheater)

MAY 13, 2012 - SUNDAY

- 10:00 AM Gates Open
- 11:00 AM Wildlife & Snake Shows & Alligator Wrestling Show (At OIV Amphitheater)
- 12:00 PM Grand Entry (At Hard Rock Live)
- 12:30 PM Pow-wow Begins
- 2:30 PM Pow-wow Ends
- 3:00 PM Pow-wow Special
- 4:00 PM Announce the Winners
- 5:00 PM Good Night!! See you next year!

*Happy Mother's Day!
 One free admission to mothers with the purchase of an admission on Mother's Day!*



GENERAL INFORMATION
 JENNIFER OSCEOLA
 954.797.5582
VENDOR/BOOTH INFORMATION
 PATRICE MORGAN
 954.797.5438



Education

B



Najli Tobias

Ahfachkee Culture teachers Jeannette Cypress, left, and Tabitha Cook, right, dress up as clowns at the BC Fitness Trail, with Ahfachkee students Dasani Cypress, Ryanne Pratt and Dayra Koenes at the Ahfachkee School's Third Quarter Awards Ceremony on March 30.

Ahfachkee celebrates students at Third Quarter Awards Ceremony

BY NAJLI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — For the Ahfachkee School's Third Quarter Awards Ceremony, principal Lucy Dafoe wanted to do something different this time around.

She enlisted her staff to brainstorm ideas that were outside of the box. When all was said and done, the March 30 awards presentation featured sumo wrestling matches pitting students against each other.

The event took place at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium.

"This is the first time we have left campus," Dafoe said. "Usually, we take care of it on campus, but we wanted to make sure that we don't become passive as we recognize our students. We wanted to change it up a little bit and make them feel like they're getting rewarded for their efforts."

The sumo wrestling competition, with

sumo suits provided by the Big Cypress Reservation's Boys & Girls Club, was followed by a lunch celebration at the Big Cypress Fitness Trail. Students and staff participated in several outdoor activities that included model boat races, face painting, bubbles, hopscotch, checkers, hula hoops, kites and Frisbees.

"It seemed like they were really enjoying themselves and the awards they were going to receive," said Tribal member Jarrid Smith, stepfather of pre-kindergarten award recipient Eric Green Jr. "The kids were definitely into it."

It was the first awards presentation of its kind at Ahfachkee.

During a PowerPoint presentation, the academic awards recipients were revealed in the categories of grades, citizenship, attendance, punctuality, reading, culture and E-la-pon-ke.

"As parents, it's good to see this happening," Smith said. "It takes the

involvement of everybody — teachers, students and parents — to make it happen."

Ahfachkee second-grade student Daleen Osceola's mother, Jessica Billie, also attended. She said she was happy to see her daughter and all her peers having an out-of-school experience of this magnitude.

"It feels good to see them having fun out there," Billie said. "It opens everything up and gives them something to look forward to when they're doing well."

Tribal member Carol Osceola, mother of third-grade student Brandi Osceola, ninth-grade student Kaitlin Osceola and 11th-grade student Bradley Osceola, said she was proud of her children's success in the classroom.

"I know they've come a long way," she said. "They've improved a lot. I keep up with them every day, and it has paid off."

♦ See more AWARDS photos on page 2B

Ahfachkee School students place at National Science Fair in New Mexico



Photo courtesy of Valerie Whiteside

Ahfachkee students stand proud at the 25th annual National American Indian Science and Engineering Fair in Albuquerque in late March.

SUBMITTED BY VALERIE WHITESIDE
Ahfachkee School

ALBUQUERQUE — After winning first place at the annual Ahfachkee School Science Fair last November, six students traveled to Albuquerque from March 21-25 to compete in the 25th annual National American Indian Science and Engineering Fair (NAISEF).

Taylor Pratt, 12th grade; Nena Waggerby, ninth grade; Kaitlin Osceola, ninth grade; Nashoba Gonzalez seventh grade; Ryanne Pratt, sixth grade; and AnnaBelle WhiteShield, sixth grade; represented Ahfachkee School, their families and their Tribe at the event.

The first day, students set up their projects and worked diligently to pass a rigorous safety and violations check with the guidance of Ahfachkee teacher Vicky Rudolph. Once completed, students were welcomed at an opening ceremony on Thursday evening that featured keynote

speaker Everett Chavez, a longtime American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) member and the current superintendent of Santa Fe Indian School.

On the second day, students remained by their projects as three regular judges and a number of special awards judges interviewed them. That evening, students enjoyed the annual AISES dance and relaxed from their day of interviews.

The third day concluded the event with an awards ceremony that was streamed live on the AISES website, allowing even more parents to watch their children receive awards.

This year, students earned the following awards at NAISEF: Ryanne Pratt, third place in chemistry; Taylor Pratt, second place in plant sciences; Nashoba Gonzalez, first place in plant sciences; Kaitlin Osceola, first place in engineering; materials and bio-engineering; Nena Waggerby, first place in chemistry. Waggerby also earned a special award from the American Chemical

Society for excellence in a project featuring chemistry.

Grand award winners at the NAISEF level are invited to move on to the International INTEL Science Fair held each May in California. The students are currently working toward qualifying and hope to attend.

Chaperoned by Vicky Rudolph and Valerie Whiteside, the students were also able to weave in visits to several sights in Albuquerque, including dinner and shopping in Old Town, visiting the University of New Mexico, eating lunch along Route 66/Central Avenue, touring the National Museum of Nuclear Science and History, riding the Sandia Tram to Sandia Peak and, for some, seeing snow for the first time.

The students thanked Vicki Pratt, a parent and former staff member, for helping them put their projects together last fall. They also thanked Rudolph for helping them finalize their projects.

Pemayetv Emahakv students excel during third quarter



Rachel Buxton

Principal Brian Greseth presents kindergartner Nena Youngblood with an award for her outstanding effort at Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School's Third Quarter Awards Ceremony on April 13.

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Freelance Writer

BRIGHTON — Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School students' efforts continue to pay off. Kindergarten through eighth-grade students were recognized for their academic achievements for the third quarter on April 13.

"I feel the students are chugging right along with their academics," principal Brian Greseth said. "We are seeing many students earning higher grades."

Culture awards were given out to students who showed achievement in Creek language and Seminole arts and crafts classes. Students also received awards for effort, improvement, citizenship and GPA.

"The content does get more difficult as the year and years go on," Greseth said. "Many of the students with improved grades have decided to give the extra effort."

Physical education teachers Chris Goodwin and Pam Matthews also handed out awards to the upperclassmen for their accomplishments in P.E. classes.

Body composition was assessed after nine weeks of weight lifting, running and other physical activity, and the middle school students who had the highest increase in their fat-free mass (FFM) measurements received certificates.

"We are seeing great improvement," Goodwin said.

Students from third, fourth and fifth

grades participated in the national P.E. Central Challenge and received certificates based on the number of challenges they completed. Several fifth-grade students received Gold Awards for completing all six challenges.

The younger students received awards for their literary achievements.

"We have introduced a couple of new programs this year that seem to be assisting the students, parents and teachers," Greseth said.

For one such program, the 100 Step Challenge, students took books home to read with their parents. They completed one step for every 15 minutes of reading they did. Another new program, Literacy First, assists teachers in creating strategies to help fill gaps in students' reading.

"You students are reading more and more and are getting smarter and smarter," said reading coach Pamela Hudson during the awards presentation. "I'm so proud of you."

Greseth encouraged students to continue working hard during the last quarter and offered advice to students preparing for the FCAT. He said the three main factors for testing are endurance, motivation and skills.

"You have the skills, so make sure you have the endurance and motivation," he said.

♦ See more AWARDS photos on page 2B

Library celebrates Easter with Big Cypress youth



Photo courtesy of Gretchen DeBree

The Easter Bunny, library aide Claudia Doctor, Lana Payne and a group of children gather at the Willie Frank Library on April 4. Payne read *The Resurrection* to students in anticipation of Easter Sunday. The Easter bunny paid an impromptu visit to the library and stayed for the story.

◆ AWARDS photos from page 1B



Naji Tobias

During the Ahfachkee School's Third Quarter Awards Ceremony, acting sumo wrestler Dylan "The Train" Thomas and Ryan "The Rhinoceros" Cypress face off in a best-of-three exhibition series, with referee Dominique Troadec, right, looking on at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium on March 30.



Rachel Buxton

Third-grade boys show off their academic Silver Awards for receiving an A/B average at the Charter School's Awards Ceremony.



Naji Tobias

From left, Big Cypress Tribal mother Carol Osceola celebrates with her three children, Ahfachkee third-grade student Brandi Osceola, Ahfachkee ninth-grade student Kaitlin Osceola and Ahfachkee 11th-grade student Bradley Osceola. Together they earned 13 academic awards at the Ahfachkee School's Third Quarter Awards Ceremony on March 30.



Rachel Buxton

Destiny Elliott, left, and Aubee Billie stand proud as the only third-grade students to complete the 100 Book Challenge at the Charter School's Awards Ceremony.



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Tribal member Jessica Billie, left, her daughter, Ahfachkee second-grade student Daleen Osceola and Alexander Melgar, Daleen's father, spend some quality time at the Big Cypress Fitness Trail during Ahfachkee School's Third Quarter Awards Ceremony on March 30. Daleen won three awards: Citizenship, Councilman's Honor Roll and E-la-pon-ke (Culture).

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Announcements

Congratulations



Janice Osceola

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Memorials

In loving memory of Devin Mindy Cypress-Kimble on April 22

Every single day that passes, I find myself still in disbelief. I miss you and your smile and your laughter, too. Your unconditional love always got me through the good and bad times. I never knew life could be so empty without you.

My memories of you, I will always treasure and keep inside my heart. Dev...I love and miss you so much; the pain hurts so much. I know you would be so proud of me 'cause you were about the only one who believed in me. You always saw something in me that I didn't.

I just want and need you to know I'm waiting for the day we cross paths again. Until then, I will miss you. Thanks for always being you. I LOVE YOU, DEV.

Love your cousin,
Carolee Anderson
Fooshe 4- life

Tribune Announcement Submission Form

Attention Seminole Tribal members: If you would like to submit an announcement (birthday, new baby, marriage, etc.) or story idea to *The Seminole Tribune*, please fill out the information provided below. Please print clearly.

MESSAGE: _____

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Please include your mailing address if photos are to be returned.

Birthdays



Happy 3rd birthday to our son Clayson Layne Osceola

May God bless you with many more to come. We love you so much. God bless you.
Love,
Dad, Mom & Jetta

(Parents: Adam and Brittany Osceola)

Happy Birthday, Amos Billie, May 5

Thanks for always being there for us, your family. You will always be "our rock."
Love,
Ty, Stevie, Aaliyah, Mom, Jerilyn

Happy Birthday, April Mary Ann, April 2 & Jerilyn Traci, April 17

Dear daughters of mine,
We love ya'll deeply, always unconditionally, forever and completely! Happy Birthday and lots of happiness, success and love throughout the coming years.

April: Take care of the new baby. He is very precious. And we thank the Lord every day that you are still with us. Lots of success on your recovery.

Jer: Lots of success in going back to school. Study hard, and you will accomplish much in your schooling.

Both of ya'll grew into beautiful women. Be thankful every day for what you have, and live one day at a time.

We love ya'll with all of our hearts!

Love,
Aaliyah, Stevie, Ty, Mom, Dad

(Parents: Alfreda Muskett and Amos Billie)



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Sports

C



Naji Tobias

A group moment occurs after the Ahfachkee versus Charter School baseball game finishes on April 3, with players, coaches and Tribal leadership from both Big Cypress and Brighton showing a sign of Seminole unity and pride.

Ahfachkee and Charter School face off on the orange diamond

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — Ahfachkee School and Pemaaytv Emahaky Charter School squared off for the first time in FHSAA history on April 3 at the Brighton Reservation's Ollie Jones Memorial Park.

The Charter School's head softball coach and athletic director Darryl Allen came up with the idea for the schools to play each other.

"It's such a great opportunity to take these two schools and put them together," Allen said. "We wanted to make the game competitive, yet still friendly at the same time. It's absolutely unbelievable."

The matchups turned out to be the home and season finales for both Brighton teams. Both teams' eighth-grade players and their parents were honored for their contributions in a special pre-game ceremony.

"It's a heartwarming moment," Allen said. "You spend time with these kids. You work with them. You sweat with them. You cry with them. You do everything with them. When you're sending them off, you're sending them on to growth. You're sending them on to continue their excellence at being young women and young men."

Allen said his girls' softball team was thrilled to play Ahfachkee.

"We're young, but we're battle tested," Allen said. "When you're battle tested, you're capable of anything. It all comes down to what you're willing to put into it."

Brighton Councilman Andrew J. Bowers Jr. said the occasion will be a day to remember.

"It's sure something new for us," Councilman Bowers said. "I'm sure we're going to remember who won and who lost this game. We'll also use the friendly competition as a way to bring more unity within our Tribe."

Baseball: Charter School wins shut-out game over Ahfachkee

The Charter School Seminoles' first-year coach Harry Tewksbury said his team came into the game on a mission to protect the home turf.

"The game against Ahfachkee was hyped around here and made the atmosphere here very exciting," he said. "We didn't want to lose at home for one, and we didn't want to lose to them. We weren't sure what we were going to see against them, so we put our best pitcher (Elijah Finney) on the mound to start the game."

Tyrus Billie was Ahfachkee's starting pitcher for the game.

"They had a lefty on the mound, and we hadn't seen that all season," Tewksbury said. "Their pitcher did pretty well. We just hit the ball a little better than he pitched."

Cleckler agreed. "I thought Tyrus Billie had a good outing, even though the score didn't reflect that," Cleckler said, attributing some of Ahfachkee's challenges to struggles among their defense.

Finney, who recorded six strikeouts in two innings

of work, was replaced by relief pitcher Zach Hudson in the third inning for the Charter School.

In the game's final three innings, Hudson had seven strikeouts and allowed only one walk to close it out in five innings.

"Zach has pitched in the past, but not at all this season for us," Tewksbury said. "He did a wonderful job for us out there on the mound."

The Charter School's defense was sound, with no errors in the game, and Cleckler said he was impressed with the Charter School's overall game.

"For a young team, I was impressed with Pemaaytv's defensive fundamentals and aggressive play on offense," Cleckler said of the Charter School, whose entire batting lineup recorded at least one hit in the game. "Their coaching staff seemed to be a good group of individuals who are teachers of the game. With coaches like that, players will grow and get even better."

Cleckler analyzed his team's performance.

"We struggled to hit the ball, as their pitchers had good control and speed on their pitches," Cleckler said. "Defensively, we struggled to make the routine plays to keep runners off the bases. The game got away from us, and we didn't recover from that deficit."

Softball: Charter School overcomes Ahfachkee's strong start

The Charter School Lady Seminoles' softball team closed its season in style, scoring 14 runs in a three-inning stretch to cap off an amazing comeback.

Down 6-2 in the second inning and 7-5 in the fourth inning, the Charter School made quite a comeback, closing out the game at 19-8.

"I knew we were tough and that we've persevered all season, but that was a big test for us," Allen said. "Being prepared to handle pressure situations for a team this young is amazing... We've been known to go on scoring tears in late innings of games to pull away from teams, so that didn't surprise me."

The historical matchup started well for Ahfachkee's Lady Warriors. Danni Jae Tommie hit a home run off the Charter School's starting pitcher, Diamond Shore, for a 1-0 lead.

That blast in the park was followed by two doubles from Taylor Fulton and Katie Bert, with Fulton's run putting Ahfachkee up 2-0 in the top of the first inning.

The Charter School countered with two runs of their own in the bottom of the first inning, thanks to a series of hits from the Brighton team, who willed their way to score on Tommie, Ahfachkee's starting pitcher.

Tied at 2-2 in the second inning, Ahfachkee tacked on four more runs, which included runs scored from Dayra Koenes and Savannah Tiger. The Charter School faced a 6-2 deficit in the bottom of the second.

"The emotion of my team worked against us when Danni Jae hit that home run," Allen said. "I felt like we were slightly shell shocked. We normally start fast and take the other team's will from them. It went in reverse this time for us, where we had to come from behind."

♦ See FACE OFF on page 6C

Herman L. Osceola Memorial Basketball Tournament draws crowd

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — During one of the Tribe's longest-running basketball tournaments, the spirit of the late Herman L. Osceola lived on from March 22-24.

The Herman L. Osceola Tournament is in its 28th consecutive year at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium.

The special basketball event began soon after the Tribal honoree's death in 1984, when the 24-year-old was killed in a helicopter crash on a U.S. Marine Corps mission to Japan.

Osceola, who enlisted in the military in 1983, helped ignite a Tribalwide interest in basketball while he served as a Big Cypress Recreation employee. Best known by the Big Cypress Community as an advocate for Tribal youth sports, the former U.S. military serviceman is also remembered for playing an integral role in the 1980 erection of the Big Cypress gymnasium.

The gymnasium where Osceola played basketball was dedicated to him less than five years after he passed.

Osceola's sister, Caroline Osceola, said she carries him everywhere she goes. And just like in years past,

she opened up about how his legacy lives on today.

"I'm proud to see my brother's memorial still going on," she said. "I can see him in my heart and in my spirit. He's still around, smiling big on us from heaven."

The Legends tournaments, which featured men and women 35 years and older, were played on March 22, while the women's and men's tournaments were played on March 23 and 24. Seventeen teams came out to play.

"We appreciate them for showing their love and support for my brother," Caroline said. "It was such a joy to see them all."

Plainzmen wins men's championship

It wasn't a sure thing that Plainzmen would end up winning the men's title.

However, when the team took on Brighton's B-Town Bad Boyz in the final, there was no doubt about Plainzmen's fate.

The two teams played each other for the second time, thanks to a 63-61 double overtime victory by B-Town in their first matchup, which sent Plainzmen to the loser's bracket.

♦ See BASKETBALL on page 5C



Rachel Buxton

From left, Katie Beck, Haylie Huff, Alyssa Gonzalez and Caylie Huff finish strong in the 100-meter dash at the Charter School's competition.

Students run, jump and throw in Charter School track-and-field meet

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Freelance Writer

BRIGHTON — Students of Pemaaytv Emahaky Charter School gave it their all on March 15 as they competed in the schoolwide track-and-field meet held at the Ollie Jones Memorial Softball Park on the Brighton Reservation.

Students participated in up to three events, vying for a first- or second-place finish that would qualify them to compete in the HERSHEY'S Track & Field Games on April 27 in Okeechobee.

Prior to the school's meet, students had to complete a track unit in their physical education classes, where they were also given opportunities to practice and hone their field event skills.

The track unit included: the 50-, 100-, 200-meter dash; 400-, 800-, 1600-meter run; and 4x100-meter relay. The field events were the standing long jump and the softball throw.

After concluding the track unit, students had the opportunity to choose the events they wanted to compete in.

Twelve-year-old Rudy Juarez chose to compete in

the two field events along with the 4x100-meter relay with his friends.

"We have been training in P.E., and I wanted to do the standing long jump and the softball throw for fun to see how far I could throw it," Juarez said. "My strongest event is the long jump. I do it every year, and I've been getting better."

Physical education teacher Chris Goodwin said they allow the students to sign up for what event interests them most, but they do offer advice when it comes to the relay.

"On the relay team, kids were encouraged to put the faster ones on and stack a team," Goodwin said.

In Okeechobee, students will compete against students from different local schools for a chance to advance further in the HERSHEY'S Games.

"We feel that although we are very small in number versus the other schools in town, we always come to compete," Goodwin said.

The annual HERSHEY'S Games is the largest youth sports program of its kind in the U.S. and Canada, with more than 400,000 participants.

♦ See TRACK & FIELD on page 7C



Naji Tobias

Take Over's Deforest Carter dribbles his way past Plainzmen's defense during a game at the 28th annual Herman L. Osceola Memorial Basketball Tournament on March 24.

Ahfachkee Warriors wrap up softball and baseball seasons

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Ahfachkee School's athletic program achieved several firsts during the Warriors' second spring season.

The Lady Warriors won their first-ever softball game on Feb. 13, a 21-20 win over St. John Neumann Catholic High School in the home opener. In addition, they defeated two opponents, Glades Day School and Immokalee High School, twice in a season — a first for the fledgling program.

To top it off, the Lady Warriors traveled to the Brighton Reservation for the first time on April 3 to play against Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School, which ended in a 19-8 loss for the Lady Warriors.

On the boys' side, the Warriors played their first-ever baseball game on the road against Moore Haven High School on March 9 — an 11-4 loss for the team.

The Warriors played all their games played on the road, including a 4-3 loss to Marco Island Academy on March 27.

The Warriors also traveled to Brighton on April 3 to face off against the Charter School — an 18-0 loss in five innings.

There were ups and downs with both teams, but through it all, the players and coaches gained experience and learned what it's like to grind it out on the field as a team.

Lady Warriors make strides

With most players returning from last season, the Lady Warriors' second-year softball coach John Gallegos said he noticed an improvement in the girls' teamwork.

"We still have a lot of hard work ahead

of us," he said. "But overall, I think they're getting comfortable enough to try some of the plays in games that they're taught in practice. I see that they trust each other more."

The trust paid off, as the Lady Warriors started their season off with a 3-0 record thanks to wins over St. John Neumann, Immokalee and Glades Day.

The Lady Warriors' first loss of the season came against Palm Beach Central High School on Feb. 24, but the Big Cypress-based junior varsity team rebounded in their next contest, completing a season sweep of Glades Day in a Feb. 28 road game.

A second loss to Palm Beach Central on the road left the team's record at 4-2, but during their next game on March 22, they scored their third consecutive home win of the season — a second victory over St. John Neumann.

A four-game losing streak followed, with road losses to St. John Neumann, LaBelle High School and the Charter School, as well as their first home loss of the season against Lake Placid High School, dropping the Lady Warriors' record to 5-6.

"We made a lot of mental mistakes in those games," Gallegos said.

The April 3 loss against the Charter School had its ups and downs for the Lady Warriors.

"We just have to stay strong throughout an entire game," Gallegos said. "That will come in time. We just have to keep working hard."

The Lady Warriors used the loss as motivation to finish the season on a high note.

They won their home finale on April

10 against Immokalee — a 16-12 win that gave the Lady Warriors a season sweep of Immokalee and tied their record to 6-6.

The Lady Warriors finished their season with a 13-10 loss to Lake Placid on April 12 and a win by forfeit against St. John Neumann on April 13, bringing their final record to 7-7.

"I think we have a good team," Gallegos said. "I believe the girls have their best softball ahead of them. They have come a long way."

During the offseason, Gallegos said he's thinking about giving the girls the opportunity to attend a softball camp to further improve their skills.

Beginning next season, the Lady Warriors are expected to join a district, which means they can qualify for the postseason in 2013.

"We have just begun our story here at Ahfachkee," Gallegos said. "It looks promising in the future for our girls."

Warriors complete first season

The Warriors' baseball team played four games since their season-opening loss to Moore Haven on March 9.

They lost a March 23 road game against Donahue Academy, a March 27 road matchup with Marco Island Academy, a March 28 road contest against the City of Hialeah Educational Academy and an April 3 road game against the Charter School.

Although the Warriors ended their season with a 0-5 final record, head coach Randall Cleckler did his best to keep the team's first season in perspective.

"Our players are learning the game as with any first-year program," Cleckler



Naji Tobias

Ahfachkee Lady Warriors' player Chelsey Alvarado scores a run against Lake Placid in her team's April 2 home game at the Big Cypress Softball Field.

said. "Game play strategies, positioning, defensive and offensive mechanics are still new to some of our players, and they work in practice to improve."

In the 4-3 loss to Marco Island, Cleckler said his players put their practice to good use on both offense and defense. Capitalizing on a few of Marco Island's errors made for a close game.

"We were successful on defense against Marco Island the first time out," Cleckler said. "We want to be more aggressive on

both sides of the ball the next time we play them."

Regardless of how the season turned out, he said he sees a bright future for the Warriors.

"I think the baseball program can grow," Cleckler said. "I would like to thank the Big Cypress community and the players' parents for their support and for investing their time to encourage their kids in playing this sport."



Naji Tobias

Ahfachkee Warriors' baseball head coach Randall Cleckler gives O'Shaa'ne Cypress tips on how to make a successful run to home plate in their team's March 9 season-opener against Moore Haven.



Naji Tobias

Ahfachkee Warriors' catcher Ryan Cypress gets into a rhythm before his team's baseball game.



Naji Tobias

Ahfachkee's Danni Jae Tommie was the team's starting pitcher for the softball season.

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Successful seasons end for Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

to Ahfachkee.

Overall, the Seminoles ended their first year with a 9-1 record and claimed victories over Gifford Middle School and Storm Grove Middle School.

Lady Seminoles complete second year on high note

Since last season, Allen said the softball team has experienced considerable growth, despite having many new players join.

"We went from being the unknown and undiscovered to going undefeated," Allen said. "We were loaded last year and extremely young this year. Our age and grade said we were inexperienced, but not our play."

Allen said this year's team was "full of fight," giving their all throughout the season.

"Going into the season, I was continuously asked about our pitching because we lost three pitchers from last year's team," Allen said. "Pitching was a strong point for us this year."

The team's starting pitcher, Diamond Shore, brought experience to the team, having pitched in 11 games, all wins.

"At times we showed signs of being young defensively, but we outworked our weaknesses and polished our strengths daily," Allen said.

He emphasized the importance of accountability among the players, and it translated into the classroom as well.

"The biggest improvement of this team didn't happen on the softball field, but it happened in the classroom... Going 11-0 and winning 20 straight games in a row was a great accomplishment, but it doesn't hold



Naji Tobias

The Charter School's Kalgary Johns fields a play during her team's game against Glades Day.



Naji Tobias

In a March 1 home game against Glades Day, Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School's softball team successfully records a steal.

a candle to every student athlete on this team having a 3.0 or better GPA," Allen said.

Another key to their success this season was the newly instated dress code, which served as a form of self-discipline on and off the field.

"I wanted them to look to their right and left and know that the player next to them was no different than they were," Allen said. "How you carry yourself and the way you dress has a huge reflection on your performance."

The team's determination to win

contributed to their success, Allen said.

"This team has a 'never say die' attitude and refuses to accept failure," he said. "They don't mind being pushed to greatness because they know what the outcome is for success."

Seminoles make strides to finish inaugural season strong

The Charter School's baseball team played on the road for six games, achieving a 5-1 record. Tewksbury said playing on the road was a challenge for them at the beginning of the season, but he knew they would pull through in the end.

"We knew that we would be on the road a lot because we were the new kids on the block, and we bit the bullet on that," he said. "These guys took the away games in stride."

The players learned to embrace the experience, Tewksbury said.

"The guys all got along great and seemed to know what their roles were on the team," he said. "We always had discussions during the bus ride about not playing scared or being intimidated by anyone."

However, the team's biggest challenge, Tewksbury said, occurred on their home field – a high-school-sized field.

"Our team adjusted to the field rather quickly," he said. "These guys had never played on a high-school-sized field before, so I wasn't sure what to expect. The distance between the bases (90 feet) and the distance from the mound (60 feet, 6 inches) to home plate was definitely a concern going into the season. Our guys were a little intimidated at first but that quickly went away."

The team's confidence grew with each

passing game, Tewksbury said.

During the team's first season, the Seminoles gave up just 24 runs in nine games played; that's an average of less than three runs made by the opponents per game.

"Our pitching was very good all season," Tewksbury said. "We threw about five times as many strikes as we did balls, walking very few in the process."

The team's hitting was on point as well; the players finished the season with a strong overall batting average of .306. In addition, the Seminoles rarely struck out, taking 84 walks this season.

To top it off, the Seminoles scored 84 runs in nine games, averaging 9.3 runs per game.

"I told them that there are two kinds of pain in the world: the pain of discipline and the pain of regret," Tewksbury said. "We went into that pretty deep at times. Also, as a team we prayed before and after every game, and I hope that they will remember that God holds the future and what is important in life."

Tewksbury said he believes there's a bright future ahead for the baseball program.

Assistant coaches Gene Thomas and Tom Finney, as well as the Brighton community, showed their unwavering support for the team and the Charter School's athletic program as a whole.

"I feel very blessed to be involved with these student athletes and this school in general," Tewksbury said. "The community has supported our sports programs very well, starting with Chairman James E. Billie, Council Rep. Andrew J. Bowers Jr. and Board Rep. Larry Howard."



Naji Tobias

Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School's Drayton Billie connects on a hit against Everglades City in the first inning of his team's 19-4 win on March 8.



Naji Tobias

The Charter School's Sean Osceola bats against Everglades City on March 8.

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Tribal members gather for sixth annual John Billie Sr. Horseshoe Tournament

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — On March 24, Tribal senior Louise Billie's family gathered at the Big Cypress Reservation's Panther Camp in remembrance of her late husband, John Billie Sr.

Family members and friends paid their respects to the honoree by participating in the 6th annual John Billie Sr. Horseshoe Tournament. John was known for his love of family and of playing horseshoes.

A table featuring framed photos and memorabilia of John made his presence known.

The friendly competition served as an outlet for participants to share fond memories of the late honoree, as well as for a chance to compete against each other for a year's worth of bragging rights.

The gathering also included a traditional Seminole meal under the chickee, a bounce house for the youth and entertainment from the rock band Yardsale.

A family affair

John, a member of the Bear Clan, was born on Feb. 5, 1939. A lifelong resident of the Big Cypress Reservation, the late honoree showed an interest in the field of machinery and heavy equipment, as he began learning the operations of a tractor in his younger days.

John later became an entrepreneur,

utilizing his years of experience in heavy equipment as a means to take care of his family.

He and his wife, Louise, were known to offer their hospitality to everyone affiliated with them, hosting many gatherings at the Panther Camp, specifically when it came to holidays and special occasions. The couple was also known for opening their home to children on the reservation.

Heather Billie, a granddaughter of John, talked about John's desire for family bonding.

"We're a very close family, so every day I had with my grandfather was a good one," she said. "We would have gatherings like this at almost any event when he was here."

She considered John as a breadwinner and a positive influence in the family.

"He made everybody feel special in their own way," Heather said. "Even through my own mistakes, I remember him telling me it would be OK as long as I made things right. He was always around to encourage me."

She said John always demonstrated love and affection for his descendants.

"When we were little, there was a time when we were playing in his boots," Heather said. "When he caught us playing, he would dance with us and say that he loves us."

Heather, who played in the family division of the horseshoe tournament, said horseshoes is a special game for her family.

"We love horseshoes," she said. "My grandparents got all of us into it. They're the ones that got this all started."

Seniors' special competition

John passed away on March 24, 2006, leaving Louise, a Panther Clan member, to carry on the family's legacy.

Part of that tradition includes a seniors' division of the John Billie Sr. Horseshoe Tournament. This year, the seniors-only competition, co-hosted by the Big Cypress Senior Center, took place on March 29 at the Big Cypress Culture Camp.

Big Cypress Tribal seniors played against each other throughout the morning in honor of John, including former Tribal Chairman Mitchell Cypress.

"We're out here to celebrate the life of John Billie Sr.," Cypress said. "He was a family man and a guy that we looked up to. He was an enjoyable gentleman to be around."

Cypress gave an account of John's jovial nature.

"There was a song called *Smiling Faces* years ago," Cypress said. "We would always say 'Smiling Faces' when he came around. He would laugh all the time when we called him that."

"Louise really misses her husband, so when we have these tournaments, it makes her happier," Cypress said. "People care a lot about Louise and her late husband. It's a good thing for all of us to take part in."



Naji Tobias

Tiffany Billie, granddaughter of the late John Billie Sr., puts her game face on in horseshoe play.



Naji Tobias

BC Tribal seniors Lonnie Billie and Louise Billie, wife of the late John Billie Sr., attend the John Billie Sr. Memorial Horseshoe Tournament.



Naji Tobias

A special group moment takes place with the family of the late John Billie Sr. at the Big Cypress Reservation's Panther Camp on March 24.

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J.U.S. wins 2012 NAYO boys' championship



Photo courtesy of Stacy Jones

J.U.S. celebrates their big win in Denver. Front row: Karlito Wargolet, Ty Pierce, Phillip Jones, Sky Aldrich, Connor Osceola and assistant coach Ryan Osceola; Back row: head coach Andrew J. Bowers, Trey Blackhawk, Jonathan Robbins, Treston Pierce and Todd Littlebull.

DENVER — Following a third-place finish in Lakewood, Colo., at the Amerind All-West Native American Basketball Classic and a third-place finish in the 2011 Native American Youth Organization (NAYO) tournament, the J.U.S. (Just us Seminoles) 18 and under boys' basketball team set out to Atmore, Ala., with a first-place NAYO finish on their minds. (The teams Just Us and Seminoles recently combined to form J.U.S.)

J.U.S. displayed stifling defense throughout the first three rounds of the tournament, mercy ruling teams Native Highlights, 57-17; Wild Turkey Hunters, 66-35; and Native Elite, 76-29.

The three opening round wins placed J.U.S. into a semifinal matchup versus Reservation ComboNation

out of Cherokee, N.C. The Cherokee team jumped out to an early 6-2 lead but would never lead in the game again. Following a quick timeout, J.U.S. refocused their attention on the defensive end of the court en route to a 67-47 final score.

The championship game pitted J.U.S. against the Red Devils out of Choctaw, Miss. Once again, J.U.S.' effort on the defensive end of the court combined with the pressure of their 2-1-2 press proved too much for the Mississippi team.

As the final horn sounded, the scoreboard read "J.U.S. 68, Red Devils 44." In front of a large contingency of Florida fans, J.U.S. raised the first-place trophy and celebrated after being crowned 2012 NAYO champions.



Naji Tobias

Plainzmen basketball teammates enjoy their men's championship win over B-Town at the Herman L. Osceola Memorial Basketball Tournament on March 24.

◆ BASKETBALL

From page 1C

Plainzmen used that single loss as motivation to dispatch B-Town 49-41 in the title game. They trailed for only 23 seconds in the final, as B-Town scored the game's first bucket with 13:33 left in the first half.

Plainzmen's Solomon Horsechief, who scored 4 points in the final, sliced through the heart of B-Town's defense to cap off an early 6-0 run with 12:24 left in the first half, giving his team a 6-2 lead.

The closest B-Town would get the rest of the way came off a 3-pointer with 7:23 left in the first frame, pulling B-Town to an 8-7 deficit — a 1-point margin.

With 7:01 left in the first half, Plainzmen's Jim Archaubault, who scored 14 points in the final and four 3-pointers in the game, connected on a game-changing 3-pointer that gave his team an 11-7 lead.

From that point on, Plainzmen clamped down on defense for much of the first half to take a 27-16 lead into halftime.

"We switched up from zone to man on defense," said Plainzmen's Ronnie Battle, who scored a game-high 15 points in the final. "Once we made the switch, we disrupted their shooting flow, and they couldn't get their shots off."

Plainzmen held off a late rally in the second half from B-Town, who got to within 3 points with 1:32 left in the title game. A few hustle moves and a layup from Tony Osceola, who scored 6 points in the final, cut Plainzmen's lead to 42-39.

And after a 3-point play by Plainzmen's Kevin Hanks with 59.7 seconds left, Plainzmen led 45-39. Then, B-Town's Duelle Gore made his team's final jump shot of the tournament with 49.3 seconds left, cutting Plainzmen's lead to 45-41.

With time running out on B-Town, they fouled Plainzmen's players several times when on defense, hoping the Plainzmen players would miss their free throws.

Plainzmen ended the game on a 4-0 run, making

four out of six free throws to take the championship with a 5-1 record.

"Our shots just weren't falling," B-Town's Gore said. "We couldn't trade buckets with them like we did the first time out. They just played real good defense." They finished with a 3-1 record.

The others teams' final records were: Take Over, 2-2; 41, 2-2; VSOP, 2-2; Big Cypress Men, 0-2; and Heat, 0-2.

ABC takes down Ball Hawgz in women's final

The ABC women's team outlasted Ball Hawgz 38-19 in the women's championship game, thanks to a strong defensive effort from the tournament's top ladies squad.

ABC beat Ball Hawgz twice in the women's competition, including a preliminary win early on, landing ABC a 3-0 final record. Ball Hawgz came in close behind with a 2-2 final record.

The other teams' final records were: 28th annual Bert C. Jones Memorial women's tournament champions Southern Smoke, 1-2; All Heart women's tournament champions You Don't Want It, 1-2; and All Heart women's tournament runners-up Lady Ballers, 0-2.

Rebels, Southern Smoke win Legends tournaments

After winning the All Heart men's Legends tournament this past February, the Rebels took their second consecutive men's Legends title at the Herman L. Osceola Memorial Tournament.

The Rebels defeated Living Legends 30-24 in the final to take the win, giving the Rebels a 3-0 final record.

Living Legends ended with a 1-2 final record, having also lost to the Rebels in the Legends tournament's first round of play.

Hollywood finished third overall after losing their games to the Rebels and Living Legends.

Meanwhile, in the women's Legends' best-of-three series, Southern Smoke won the first two games against Ball Hawgz to win the championship.



Naji Tobias

In the men's competition of the 28th annual Herman L. Osceola Memorial Basketball Tournament, VSOP's Byron Billie converts on a layup against Take Over at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium.

Brighton's travel volleyball team makes strides



Photo courtesy of Jo Jumper

This year's 14-and-under Lady Seminoles traveling volleyball team is enjoying a successful season. At the following Orlando tournaments, the girls placed in the Gold Bracket: Jan. 28-29, third place out of 34 teams; March 10-11, fourth place out of 25 teams; and March 24-25, fourth place out of 32 teams.

The team is coached by Holly Johns and Courtney Marker and is made up by Courtney Gore, Tyra Baker, Chastity Harmon, Cheyenne Nunez, Kalgary Johns, Kailin Brown, Odessa King, Shae Pierce and Trista Osceola.

The girls are doing great in the tournaments and we went on to compete in the AAU Regional Finals on April 21-22 and USA Regional Qualifier on April 28-29. (Results were not available at press time.)



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NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)
ACTION: Notice of Availability (NOA)

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is issuing a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for approving the construction and leases of trust property for Seminole Tribal member leases received in February 2012. The BIA has approved and adopted the following Environmental Assessments (EAs), dated February 2012, prepared by the Seminole Tribe of Florida Environmental Resource Management Department:

- Timothy Nolan Gopher Proposed Home Site, Brighton Reservation, Glades County
- Ty Huff Proposed Home Site, Brighton Reservation, Glades County
- Jessica Billie Proposed Home Site, Brighton Reservation, Glades County
- Stephanie Johns Proposed Home Site, Brighton Reservation, Glades County
- Shannon Purvis and Amber Craig Proposed Home Site, Brighton Reservation, Glades County
- Megan T. Betteyoun Proposed Home Site, Brighton Reservation, Glades County
- Paula Bowers Sanchez Proposed Home Site, Brighton Reservation, Glades County
- Todd Christopher Johns Proposed Home Site, Brighton Reservation, Glades County
- Isabell Garza Proposed Home Site, Big Cypress Reservation, Hendry County
- Texas Billie Proposed Home Site, Big Cypress Reservation, Hendry County

The EAs above have been adopted and a FONSI issued for the approval of the home construction and leases of trust lands in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969.

NOTICE: This is a Notice of Availability (NOA), that the EAs and FONSI for the federal action of approving the proposed home construction and leases of trust property are available for public review. The BIA has approved and adopted the above referenced EAs which address these proposals. The FONSI determination was based on review and analysis of the information in the EAs. Based on a review of the EAs listed above, it has been determined that the proposed actions will not result in significant impacts to the quality of the human environment, therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. You may obtain a copy of the EAs and FONSI from the BIA Eastern Regional Office or the Environmental Resources Management Department of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, 6365 Taft Street, Suite 3008, Hollywood, FL 33024, telephone (954) 965-4380.



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Naji Tobias

A group moment takes place after the first Ahfachkee versus Charter School softball game on April 3, as players, coaches and Tribal leadership from both Big Cypress and Brighton show a sign of Tribal unity on Brighton's Ollie Jones Memorial Park.

◆ **FACE OFF** from page 1C

The Charter School scored three more runs off Tommie, bringing the game to 6-5 going into the third

inning. Ahfachkee scored another run in the top of the third when Alyssa Osceola ran herself to home plate, giving Ahfachkee a 7-5 lead. The score would stay the

same until the fourth inning, when the Charter School began scoring in the bottom of the inning.

With two outs in the bottom of the fourth, Shore smacked in two RBIs off Tommie and sent runners Sunni Beardon and Shae Pierce home to tie the game up at 7-7.

Ahfachkee managed to salvage the inning, thanks to a timely stop by Ahfachkee's catcher Sabre' Billie, who tagged Shore out at home plate to end the fourth.

The fifth inning proved the most pivotal for both teams. The Charter School's superior defense ruled out Ahfachkee's trio of Osceola, Koenes and Chelsey Alvarado. With two runners on base, Alvarado was tagged out at second by the Charter School's Kalgary Johns as she tried to steal first base.

It was Ahfachkee's final chance to hold steady in the game, but the Charter School's batters scored six runs in the bottom of the fifth, thanks to runs from Chastity Harmon, Camryn Thomas, Martina Herrera, Crysten Smith, Jaylynn Jones and Shae Pierce. The fifth inning ended with the Charter School up 13-7 – an 8-0 scoring run in two innings played.

In the sixth and final inning, Ahfachkee scored one more run, thanks to an RBI double from Fulton, who sent Tommie home to cut the Charter School's lead to 13-8.

Ahfachkee would get no closer than that the rest of the way. The Charter School benefitted from a series of fielding errors from Ahfachkee's defense, with Kailin Brown, Harmon, Herrera, Jones, Pierce and Smith scoring in the final inning.

The Charter School scored six runs in two consecutive innings to end the game.

"I know we are young, but I also know we're tough, and winning is embedded in this group of girls," Allen said. "To me, the only negative to playing this game

is that someone had to lose. How can you go wrong with these two reservation schools playing each other? These young ladies, coaches, communities will talk and remember this forever."

Staff impressions

Many staff members were glad to witness the Tribal schools' sports teams make history.

"It was good to see the teams come out here to play," said Ahfachkee School principal Lucy Dafeo. "We told our kids to just go out there, represent and do their very best. I was glad to see them play hard until the end."

Charter School administrative assistant Michele Thomas, whose son Trevor Thomas played on the Charter School's baseball team, recapped the action.

"It's really a dream come true," she said. "We know we have athletes on both of our reservations, and we knew it was going to be competitive. When these players' children and grandchildren play each other one day, they will always remember the history that came out of this game. We're very, very proud to be able to host two Indian schools on our reservation."

Allen said there could be a home-and-home series each year between the Brighton and Big Cypress softball and baseball teams. If it happens, the games will either be played in Big Cypress or on a neutral field next year.

For now, Allen would like to soak in the moment. "The meaning of this game shows the growth of these two communities," Allen said. "To play an official FHSAA softball and baseball game amongst each other and in a Tribal community speaks volume for long-term growth."



Naji Tobias

Ahfachkee's Taylor Fulton attempts to tag out the Charter School's Camryn Thomas, who tries to steal a base during the April 3 matchup between both Tribal softball teams in Brighton.



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BC Tribal youth win high school golf tournament



Naji Tobias

Four Tribal golfers receive a \$1,000 scholarship check for their performance in the inaugural Rick Case High School Golf Challenge on March 30.

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Four Tribal golfers earned a \$1,000 scholarship check for their performance in the inaugural Rick Case High School Golf Challenge on March 30.

On April 11, high school athletes Stevie Billie, Quenton Cypress, Taylor Pratt and Jonathan Robbins were recognized by Big Cypress Council Rep. Mondo Tiger and the Rick Case Automotive Group for earning top honors in the challenge.

Rick Case corporate partners director Stan Bostic, along with Prestige Club founder and CEO Polly Wilkie, visited Big Cypress to present the giant check.

The Golf Challenge, hosted by the Prestige Club, took place at Inverrary Country Club in Lauderdale. The other competing teams were Calvary Christian Academy in Fort Lauderdale, Cypress Bay High School in Weston and Dade Christian in Miami.

TRACK & FIELD

From page 1C

Donald Cohen started the competition more than 30 years ago to promote fitness, self-esteem and hard work. The Hershey Co. became the official sponsor in 1978. Since its beginning, the HERSHEY'S Games has had future Olympic medalists and professional athletes participate.

"The track and field offers competition and a venue to showcase their skills," Goodwin said. "It also gives an opportunity to display sportsmanship and friendship with students from other schools."

Students compete across North America to become one of 480 finalists at the grand finale event held in none other than Hershey, Penn.

"The kids get better from year to year, and we have had students go on to state and national levels competing," Goodwin said. "We are always proud of the effort our students give, and we are confident in the upcoming meet."



Rachel Buxton

Ramone Baker leads the 9- and 10-year-old boys in the 100-meter dash, finishing first with a time of 14.97 seconds.



Rachel Buxton

Alyke Baker gets air in the standing long jump.



Rachel Buxton

Andrew Fish pushes hard in the boys' 100-meter dash for ages 11-12.



Rachel Buxton

Sunnie Bearden advances to the HERSHEY'S Track & Field Games in the softball throw.

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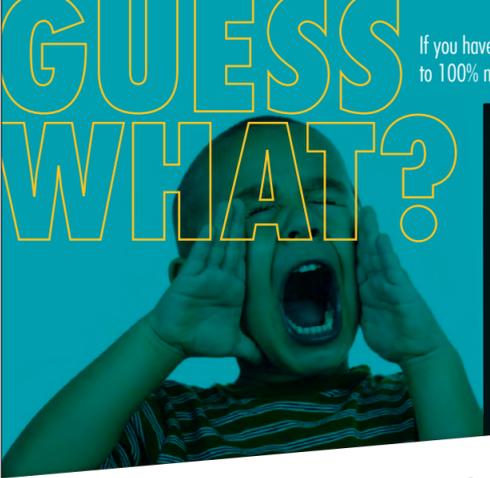
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