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# Cattle drive honors Roger Smith, a true Native cowboy

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**BRIGHTON** — Members of the Brighton community paid tribute to their friend Roger Smith at a cattle drive held in his memory on March 16.

Led by his riderless horse Goldie, Smith's boots backward in the stirrups, about 100 people participated in the Roger Smith Memorial Cattle Drive to move a herd of cattle through his four pastures into a field near the rodeo arena.

"He was loved by many and had a big influence on a lot of people," said Diane Smith, Roger Smith's widow. "We want to plan another one for next year to honor all the Smith men. They were all cattlemen."

The Smith men included the late patriarch Jack, his sons Jack Jr. and the late Roger, Fred and Richard Smith. Roger Smith passed away on March 13, 2012, at age 58.

The atmosphere during the 4-mile drive was respectful. People on horseback, in four-wheelers and swamp buggies quietly drove the herd of about 50 roping cattle. With the riders mostly silent, the cows didn't moo, the dogs didn't bark and there was nary a whinny from the horses. Louvella Yates expertly guided Goldie.

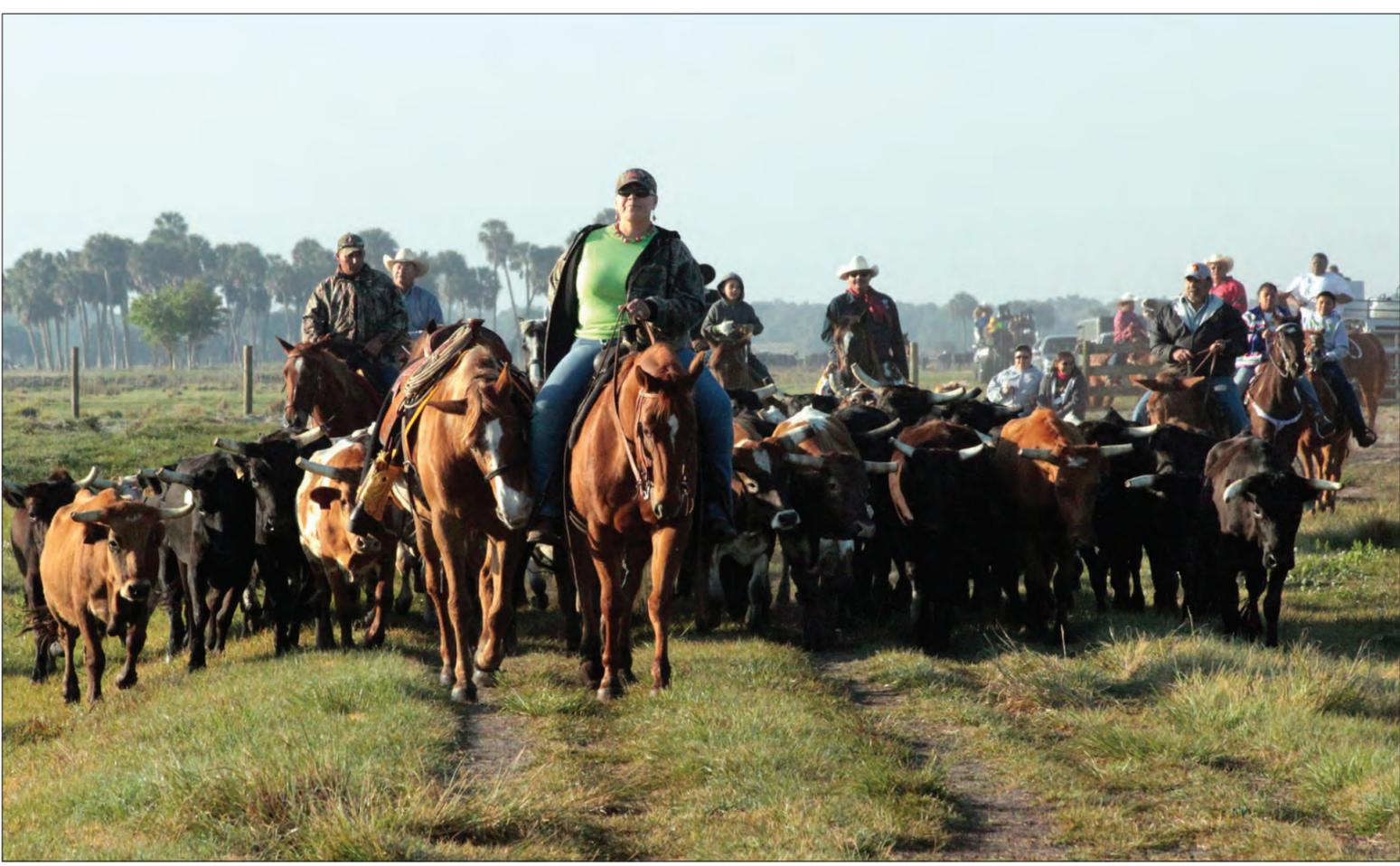
"I always called Roger my uncle," said Yates, a family friend. "He invited me to the first cattle drive I ever went to. After he died, I asked the family if they would have a cattle drive for him. Since I thought of it, they wanted me to guide his horse."

Brighton Board Rep. Larry Howard followed the herd in a swamp buggy.

"He was a true Native American cowboy," Rep. Howard said. "He took real pride in his cattle. He was always working in his pastures tacking fences, cleaning up and pulling up pond apples. It was his way of life and it was our way of life before casinos."

After the cattle drive, friends and family shared memories of Smith during lunch in the Brighton Gym. Smith, a leader in the community and the Tribe, served as a Brighton councilman for two terms and as a Board representative for one. But most people remembered him as a good friend.

"I grew up with Roger and I remember the fun times we had," Weems Buck said. "We grew up around the Red Barn and



Louvella Yates guides Roger Smith's horse Goldie as she leads the cattle drive through his four pastures during the Brighton event held in his honor March 16.

Beverly Bidney

used to play there all the time. During high school, we used to hitchhike home from football practice in Moore Haven."

Smith's legacy lives on in the hearts of his friends.

"He was a good man," said friend David Snow. "He loved his family and his cattle and was an all-around good guy."

People lined up to speak about Smith, some choking back tears.

"He was a hard-working man, he loved his family and he accomplished a lot in his life," Hollywood Councilman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. said of his father-in-law. "He was always on the move and loved to meet people. He'll be remembered not for what

we did here today, but because of what he did when he was alive."

Smith had the respect of other cattlemen in the Tribe.

"Roger learned from his dad and had the same work ethic," said Natural Resource director Alex Johns. "He went to his pastures once, twice, sometimes three

times a day. He was voted cattleman of the year three times in Brighton. He had the best herd he could and was the first to step up and offer steer to the 4-H kids. I'm proud to have known him; he was a big part of my life. I looked up to him and am proud to follow in his footsteps."

♦ See COWBOY on page 6A

## Senior profile: Trail matriarch Frances Osceola

BY JUDY WEEKS  
Freelance Writer

**TRAIL** — The Seminoles are a matriarchal society in which their blood line and clan are descended through the women of the Tribe. This high matriarch position is earned through many years of shouldering responsibility and serving the best interests of her descendants and clan members through hard work, self-sacrifice and adherence to cultural teachings.

Frances Osceola is one of these women who have truly earned the title of matriarch. She was blessed by the Creator with the unique qualities that define a good teacher, and she strived to learn and understand her heritage. By observing and practicing the traditions and artistic talents of her people, she has become an important link in the

chain of knowledge that maintains order in the system.

"It is important to begin teaching our children and grandchildren at an early age to have pride in where they come from and their responsibility to keep this knowledge alive," she said. "We can't just study our history in a book; we need to practice our traditions and make them a part of the daily lives of our children and their children."

Frances was born on Oct. 25, 1936, in an Everglades camp approximately 20 miles from where she lives today along the Tamiami Trail near the Collier/Dade County line. One of 13 children born to her mother, Alice Huff Billieboy, she is the granddaughter of Sam Huff and a member of the Panther Clan.

She grew up in a period of dramatic change for the Seminoles and lived a

traditional lifestyle under the influence of several notable Tribal icons. Her grandfather Sam Huff was one of her mentors and a member of the Big Town Clan. He was born in the early 1870s in what was then a part of the Everglades at Pine Island, close to the current Hollywood Reservation. His parents, followers of the revered spiritual leader Sam Jones, fought extradition to the Indian Territory in Oklahoma by withdrawing deep into the Everglades following the Third Seminole War.

By the time Frances was born, the Tamiami Trail and drainage projects in the Everglades were beginning to have a direct impact upon the Seminole lifestyle. Sam Huff warned everyone the projects would steal the water and destroy the Everglades. Living in his camp in Collier County, Frances remembers traveling by dugout canoe to Smallwood's Trading Post in Chokoloskee and following her family as they worked to earn a living.

As the economy changed with the encroachment of development, her family moved to Brighton. At 10 years old, she learned to read and write at the Reservation Day School. They recognized education would be a valuable tool and by the time she was 12, they allowed her to attend boarding school in North Carolina.

"I learned a lot in school but I was homesick. When I was about 15, I came back to live in the camp of Annie Mae Tommie at Dania," Frances said. "She was my great-grandmother's sister and taught me how to sew and make dolls, baskets and beadwork. I learned how to make palmetto baskets, but I didn't like doing them. It takes too long to gather the material and get it ready to use. She taught me the skills that helped me support my family for more than 40 years."

Frances related how living in the Tommie Camp gave her access to work in the fields picking tomatoes, cucumbers and peppers. The money she made on the farms supplemented her income from the sale of items to the tourists.

She found a partner for life in William



Brett Daly

Frances Osceola strives to keep her culture and heritage alive through her family.

McKinley Osceola Jr., known to everyone as "Wild Bill." They went to live at his father's camp along the Tamiami Trail east of Miami and began a family that would include four girls and two boys.

Sharing the same lifestyle, goals and ambitions, they became an indomitable team and were able to purchase a small abandoned campsite in eastern Collier County along the Trail. Raising their children with both education and traditional values, they built a strong family unit that is continuing to pass their knowledge on to their 14 grandchildren and many great-grandchildren.

"Wild Bill built all of this for her, and her camp is home to the entire family," said Frances' cousin Judy Baker.

♦ See FRANCES on page 2A

## Public Works wins first place Safety Award

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**HOLLYWOOD** — Most people don't give too much thought to how clean water enters and exits their homes. Fortunately, employees in the Public Works Department think about nothing else — except safety — while accomplishing that formidable task for the Seminole Tribe.

About a year ago, the department initiated improved safety standards at all its water and wastewater treatment plants with the goal of preventing injury and incidences. The department found numerous sources for safety training and implemented a comprehensive plan.

This year, Public Works won the 2013 Florida Water Environment Association's (FWEA) first place Safety Award for Class C Wastewater Treatment Plants. The award will be presented at the FWEA Awards Banquet on April 30 in Orlando. The four classes in the FWEA Safety Award are based on the size of the municipality and the amount of water processed daily. Class C plants process about 1 million gallons per day.

"We never had any incidences, but we realized we could always do better," said Anthony Osceola, Public Works director. "While we were creating the safety plan, we realized there are a lot of procedures and protocols that follow industry and OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) standards, and we are framing them to use for the Tribe."

The competition was the first the department entered.

"We set a goal to compete with other municipalities, and this is the result of the new initiative," said Derek Koger, assistant director of Operations.

♦ See PUBLIC WORKS on page 4A



Seminole Tribune archive photo

Frances Osceola's mother, Alice Huff, front row center, a daughter of Tribal icon Sam Huff, grew up in the Panther Clan Camp of Annie Jumper Tommie, right. c. 1919.

# Editorial

## Around here, it's still *Thal-chobee-yo-ke*

• James E. Billie

About 30 years ago when Gloria Wilson was still a little girl, I remember she was always into designing and drawing and engineering something to look a certain way, and as she grew older she maintained that passion. April 16 was a good example at the groundbreaking for the future Public Safety Administration Building.

You see, when I first came to Brighton back in 1948-1950, there was an occasional wood-frame house you could see, very simply put together. They looked just like those in any other community, put together the same, but smaller. Might only be 16 by 20 feet, maybe. But I remember they looked like big houses to me. Sometimes a family of four would be living in that little ol' wood-frame house with the tin top.

But there were chickees all the way around. It was a chickee village. And that's what most everybody lived in. I remember that the people of Brighton made their chickees in just a little different style than the way we did down in Tamiami Trail or Big Cypress. We made our chickees with a little bit of a pitch to it, and these people over here made their roofs a little bit flatter. They also used swamp cabbage logs for their legs and sometimes they might have used it for their rafters because there weren't too many trees around like cypress or pine. But we would all put the leaves on basically the same way.

Another difference I noticed when I first came to Brighton was the way the people dressed. Most of the people down in Big Cypress wore long pants and what looked like a big shirt hanging down with a belt tied around the waist. The Brighton people I visited more often were Dick Smith, Tom Smith, Oscar Jones, Sam Jones (not Abiaka, but the modern-day Sam Jones). There were also guys like Eli Morgan and Frank Shore. Now, Frank Shore, Oscar Jones, Lonnie Buck and Jack Smith, they would dress in trousers with the Indian shirt tucked into their pants with a long scarf wrapped around their necks held with a bolo. And a huge cowboy hat, like a 10-gallon hat. And that set the clothing trend around those parts.

Anyway, back to the way they lived: They all lived in chickee huts. And as time went along, I think the first years that we started to make what they call CBS Homes (concrete, block and steel) were around 1956, 1957 when the Tribe was organized. Several people on the reservation all got these homes; they were only about 30 by 60 feet. These houses were very simply made. Three bedrooms. I remember the bedrooms were only about 10 by 10 feet – some of them were 12 by 10 feet, maybe.

But they were comfortable. These types of houses were on until about the 1970s. Some of them are still standing today. After the '60s, the lifestyle changed. The CBS houses brought in a new trend: a new lifestyle of living away from chickees until there were no more Indian villages. Today there is not one Indian village in Brighton, except for my place. I live in a chickee hut. I got a cook hut, two guest chickees, and a canoe hut, which comprises what I would call my chickee village in Brighton.

As Gloria Wilson spoke of the changes in Brighton, it brought back old memories, even of herself. I remember Gloria has always being a determined person. It shows today in her dedication to her work, and I think she is doing a very good job. As it turns out, the groundbreaking for the new Public

Safety Administration Building would bring forth part of her own personal dreams and dedication to the Seminole Tribe. As she was introducing her staff, I had to chuckle to myself. She stood at the podium and started introducing all her staff without even looking at notes. I thought that was very interesting. There I was sitting in my chair trying to remember a few names and she just stood there and rattled them right off. I thought that was very nice.

It was interesting to hear her tell of the time when she was 10 years old and the teachers in her classroom asked the children to draw what they thought their Indian village of Brighton should look like in the future, and she drew one. It was funny to hear her say that she won the contest and that today Brighton looks a lot like the little sketch she made when she was a child.

The landscape of Brighton has changed tremendously. No one lives in chickee huts anymore. Except for me. You'll see an occasional building that was built back in the '50s, still standing, but now we have these very modern architecturally designed homes that easily cost more than \$500,000. Or more.

Now we have a very modern building known as the Veteran's Building, a Senior Center, a new Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School. We have a beautiful rodeo arena, and now we have this Public Safety Administration Building coming to the reservation.

As you drive into the complex you would not think you are on the Brighton Reservation anymore. It looks like you are in some other metropolitan area. But we still have the swamp cabbage palms nearby. If you get out of the community you know you are still in Brighton, where the eagle is still making his nest up in the pine trees, and for some reason, the buzzards are still using the water tower as their home. Or a place to roost. If you get away from the center part of our community and visit the natural forest areas of our reservation, you will see all the swamp cabbage trees. The Miccosukee Indians called this Brighton haven *Thal-chobee-yo-ke* – or land of the swamp cabbage palms. Big Cypress on the other hand is called *Ah-shah-we-yo-ke* – land of the cypress trees.

I grew up in Big Cypress, so naturally I would love the area of Big Cypress because of the cypress trees, the vast waters and sawgrass. But I have been in Brighton many years, and I love Brighton. But I have noticed that my two younger children, Aubee and Echo, they attended the preschool and now they attend Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School and their hearts belong to Brighton.

So at the groundbreaking, I could feel the change of winds. A new building. New architectural design. And it was good to see Gloria Wilson seeing her dreams come true.

Gloria, keep up the good work. Sho-naa-bish.

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



• Tony Sanchez Jr.

There is hope. I have seen the signs. I am excited, really jacked up about it. Sometimes I sit and wonder: Am I the only one who is thinking about this? But, to hear the discussions at the recent School Board meeting, realizing there are a number of people who are worried and thinking about how we can save our language, has really inspired me. I even heard people saying, "Learning our language should be mandatory."

They have my full support. I want everyone to know that next time there is a meeting or discussion about teaching and learning our language, call me and I will come running. It is that important. I tell my mom, I tell some of the elders I talk to, that if I could make a wish for one thing, my wish would be that I would be able to sit here and speak the language with them. It isn't about spending money; it isn't about living in a big house or driving a fancy car. No, none of that.

I would give anything to be able to sit there, especially in the role that I am in today, and be able to talk to the elders, to find out from them in their own words, what exactly was their vision when they went to Washington, or sat underneath the Council Oak and had all these meetings. They didn't do it just to have something to do. There was a vision. I would like to hear them tell me, in our language, and I want to understand.

We Seminoles should all recognize the importance of preserving the culture, the traditions, that make us who we are. If making some of these teachings mandatory will contribute to saving them from disappearing into time, then so be it. Because if we do not take steps now, in a couple generations, our language, especially, will be gone. So it is very refreshing to hear that meetings have been held and people are even talking about making it mandatory.

The incentive? Saving who we are. That should be enough incentive right there. It gets back to people standing up and recognizing that preserving our culture is a responsibility. It has always been our custom that the elders take the responsibility to teach and the young take the responsibility to sit and listen and learn. Yes, the parents and grandparents are the teachers. They must take that responsibility head on, and embrace the reality that they are the teachers. You know what? You may not necessarily know how to build a chickee or how to sew. But the language? That's the key. You lose that language, who are you?

English is not our first language. Look at me. I'm, a perfect example of that lost generation of American Indians, where it became absolutely important to learn English. So that's what I did. I learned English. By the time I graduated from high school, my native language was gone.

Since I have been in this role, I often think about Betty Mae and Jimmy O'Toole, Bill Osceola, and those times when they were all going up to D.C. saying, "We don't want to be terminated. We want to be federally recognized, and we are going to establish a Constitution. We are going to establish a Corporate Charter." They knew those were the mechanisms they had to have in place. What was that finished product they were hoping to create? My question is, with everything that we have going on, are we still going on that original path? Or have we veered off left and right? We may think we are just doing great, but when you talk to some of these elders, they may tell you that you are way off track.

That's why having that language is so important. And you know what? If someone told me, I am not going to get my dividend unless I start going to some of these classes, me personally, I would be OK with that. But will that be the reaction of the majority? I would like to think that they would all say, "Yes!"

But it would not be a case where you just put the threat out there and say, "OK, you have to go take these classes, and if you don't, you are not going to get your dividend." I would hope the conversation would be more along the lines of, "We want to preserve our culture; we want to preserve our language. We need you to be a part of this. Everyone is going to be a part of it. We want you to be a part of it. We want to train you to be a teacher."

But we also need to make sure that people show up for these classes. After all, the Tribe would be making the investment, spending a lot of resources – manpower, financial and so on – so we want to make sure that you attend these classes and get this training because it is who you are.

You are not just Seminole on the first and Seminole on the 15th. You are Seminole each and every day.

The one thing that will separate you from everyone else is your language. I would love to think that everyone is going to embrace that. They need to embrace that. Because you know what? Living in these nice homes, driving the cars that we drive, that is not us.

The lost generation happened because no one spoke the language to us at home. The dominant culture did not want us to speak our language. Our elders were made to believe that English had to be learned to make it in the outside world. Sure, but we can still live in the modern society and not lose our identity. We can still do that. Let's not let outside influences mask who we are and what we are.

Take a look at the Jewish faith. The way they dress, their commitment, the amount of time they spend at synagogue, what they have to practice, the Orthodox

## Seminole language: Hope for our future

Jews who have to walk to synagogue – those are the things that make up their culture; that is a part of their historic beliefs, who they are. So what they eat, when they can drive, when they go to worship, those are the things they have to do. So why do we need to be any different?

So many different ethnic groups are all over Florida. Yet, they seem able to maintain their identity, their native tongues. We need to do the same. It's not just the Seminole Tribe, by the way. This is a serious problem throughout Indian Country. That lost generation is everywhere.

The leaders need to support this, yes, but it is the people who will make it happen. We are talking about the Lorenas, the Dianas, the Staceys – they aren't elected officials, but they are so important. They are keeping our culture, teaching our culture. So we as leaders need to embrace it. We need to be the champions of those initiatives.

We are the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the group who fought and was involved in three Seminole Wars, the group who said, "We're not going anywhere." We are the direct descendants of those people and it is our responsibility to make sure that we don't lose that identity. That determination to survive is a part of our DNA. They fought. They didn't leave. They believed that this was where we belong. They had the warrior mentality. So we need to keep a tight hold on that mentality – not just what drove the Seminole Wars but also what drove the founding members of the Constitution and Charter. Those men and women fought, too – their battlefield was in the court rooms.

So we just can't have this laissez-faire mentality. A lot of sacrifices were made, over the years, to get us where we are today. Of course, when we are talking about maintaining our identity, keeping the language, we must also talk about learning how to function in the current society, learning how to manage our funds, understanding that getting educated does not mean you have to forget who you are.

Will I be around to see the fruits of the labor that is going to be put forth? Hopefully. But if not, my 9-year-old will. Just as the people who fought in the Seminole Wars are not around today to see the fruits of the labor they put in, and the sacrifices that they made. The Betty Maes, the Bill Osceolas, the Jimmy O'Tooles are no longer here...you could go on and on. They were only able to see a small sample of the fruits of their labor. We are living here experiencing the entire spectrum of those sacrifices they made and the battles they won.

In their later years, most of the language was only spoken by the elders. The younger people didn't know it. Now today, as we become elders, we look down and the kids are the ones who are learning it. Our Tribal schools are teaching it and that gives me great hope.

I'm excited. However, I can help move that cause; I want to be a part of it. I need to be a part of it. Yes, business is what I monitor. Yes, we are going to be successful on the business end. But again, I will not sacrifice the identity of who we are just for the pure sake of the almighty dollar.

It is not just about today. It is time to give attention and focus on what we want the Tribe to look like 10 years, 50 years, 100 years from now. We don't want the reservations to look like all the streets lined with just palm trees and green grass and all these fancy cars and we can't even speak the language, we don't even know who we are. All we know is we got tons of money coming in. We are much more than that. And the future generations need to know that.

Every other ethnic group out there has shown you can be successful and not sacrifice your culture, your identity. So let's borrow a couple chapters from their book.

We can dress, talk and do everything that is foreign to our culture, but we know that is what we have to do to be a part of mainstream society. It does not mean that is who I am.

I am talking about the importance of being Seminole. Forget about what jewelry I have on. Forget about having the latest and greatest phone. But take that away, there is still substance here. It is Seminole. Material things don't make me. It's about remembering and being proud of who you are. I am finding out that we have a lot of people who are willing to teach. I recognize the value they can bring to the table. Come in with an open mind, listen and you might be surprised. You might walk away learning a new thing or two.

I'll support this any way I can. I want to help further this cause. If what it takes is for individual leaders to be directly involved in language preservation to help further that cause, then count me in. I think it is that important. More than anything else, preserving our language – learning our language – gives us hope for our Seminole future. God bless the Seminole Tribe.

Sho-naa-bish.

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



### ◆ FRANCES From page 1A

"It is hard to find anyone today that remains as close to their culture. Her children and grandchildren all dress traditional, know how to cook over the fire and are being taught the skills of their ancestors and the

knowledge of their heritage," she continued.

Frances' daughters Debbie and Victoria smiled as they talked about growing up in the camp and the gift shop their mother operated for more than 40 years. Although Frances still sews and does beadwork, she closed the shop a few years ago to devote her attention to caring for Wild Bill when his diabetes became debilitating. Since his passing, she focuses her energies on her grandchildren and great-grandchildren and offers them the wisdom of her years.

"Grandma has always expressed the importance of tradition, education and being self-responsible," Wynter Dawn Billie said. "She has given us pride and purpose. Our ancestors had their permanent camps but sometimes had to set up temporary ones to follow the hunting and growing seasons or seek work in the tourist trade. We are no different. No matter how far we have to go to do our jobs and educate our children, we all consider this camp our permanent home. My main house is here, but I must keep a small place in town near the schools and office. This is where our hearts are, and this is where we really live in Frances Osceola's Camp."



Seminole Tribune archive photo

Frances Osceola, left, and Betty Mae Jumper compete in a clothing contest, showcasing their traditional Seminole clothing.

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# Community

A



Eileen Soler

More cowboys than cows participate in the 17th annual Junior Cypress Cattle Drive at the Big Cypress Reservation.

## BC cattle cut path to 'memory lane'

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — Monica Chavez was still a filly when she saddled up for the first time to help rustle dozens of 1,000-pound beefy beasts during a cattle drive on the Big Cypress Reservation.

On March 23, Chavez, now 20, rode for the sixth consecutive year in the 17th annual Junior Cypress Cattle Drive.

"Every year it's fun and exciting," she said. "It's always good to go down memory lane."

Reliving four centuries of local Native American cattle history is the point of the drive, said Moses Jumper Jr., who co-founded the event in 1997 with Paul Bowers Sr. and Richard Bowers Jr. with support from then-Chairman Mitchell Cypress.

"The past cattlemen and women not here today are looking down on us," Jumper said. "We do this to honor them and to remind the community that we're more than casinos and alligator wrestling."

Tribal ancestors had bartered cattle with Spaniards as far back as the 1600s.

Every necessary job for a historic cattle drive was held by nearly 100 cowboys and cowgirls for the 7-mile journey through what Jumper called, "The heart of Seminole cattle land." Groups of five or more took point and swing positions, clusters of a half dozen made up the flank, while scores more rode the back drag as if in a grand parade.

Two swamp buggies from Billie Swamp Safari, a carriage pulled by white horses and a stream of rugged ATVs rounded out the cavalcade.

In the old days, before streets, fences

and long before the Tribe was recognized by the U.S. government in 1957, cattle owned by area Native Americans roamed free. It could take two months to round up the herd and another three days to count, tag and care for them, said Cypress, nephew of Junior Cypress.

"I remember the open range. We ran Brahman during the times when screw worms were eating the heck out of the cattle. We'd be the youngest ones out there — me and James Billie and Joe Frank — doctoring up the cows and calves," Cypress said. "Some of the young ones these days will never know how hard those days were."

Perseverance paid off. Today, the Tribe ranks among the top three beef producers in Florida and the top 10 in the U.S.

Leading the herd of 30 steer was Benny Hernandez, the former director of the Junior Cypress Rodeo Arena. The honor of trail boss went to the family of Albert Billie. Born around Jan. 4, 1900, Billie was one of the first Seminole cattle entrepreneurs. He died on Feb. 26, 1993.

Billie's granddaughter Mary Jene Coppedge Koenes and grandson Gene Coppedge rode in a buggy at the head of the pack along the fringes of pastures, passed canals and atop roadside knolls. Koenes recalled Billie's hardworking life. He was a "horseless cowboy" who would set out on foot every morning "at dark 30" to work his herd in a pasture 4 miles from home.

"He had a cracker sack he made into a tool bag. Inside he had all the tools he'd need for the day: a hammer, fence pliers, rope and lunch," Koenes said. "He would be so proud to know the cattle program continued — four generations later."

A noonday snack of fresh fruit, trail

mix, crackers and other grab-and-go food was served on Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger's ranch. Huge blue kiddie pools filled with water quenched and cooled the horses.

Jumper recited one of his many poems that pay tribute to Seminole cattle history and culture.

He spoke of men who welcomed the night after a long day of hard labor, lying under a tin shelter, listening to the babble of a nearby creek and the buckling of old leather Army saddles. He dismissed Hollywood cowboys with names like Roy, Gene and Wayne. Instead, he invoked Morgan and Dixie Smith, Charlie Micco, Naha Tiger and other Seminole cowboys.

"Those were real men from the tip of their boots to the top of their hats," Jumper said.

The \$50 per rider fee paid for a hearty breakfast, a commemorative kerchief, lunch, a barbecue dinner, an alligator show and a sanctioned Eastern Indian Rodeo Association rodeo. Participation was about half Tribal and half non-Tribal.

♦ See CATTLE DRIVE on page 6A



Eileen Soler

Mary Jene Coppedge Koenes shares memories of her grandfather Albert Billie.

## Brighton sugarcane has banner year

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**BRIGHTON** — Growing sugarcane in Brighton is as natural as raising cattle; the 800 acres of sugarcane fields on the reservation are surrounded by cattle pastures. After a few years' hiatus and a complete overhaul of the fields, sugarcane is back in full production and the recent harvest was one for the record books.

"Sugarcane has been here for years, like the cattle," Brighton Board Rep. Larry Howard said. "The Tribe did away with it for a while, let it go wild and didn't harvest it. The Board brought it back to life and the first harvest in about four years brought in a profit of about \$1.8 million. We expect even more next year; we will plant about

1,000 acres."

Seminole have grown sugarcane at least since the 1880s. Author Clay MacCauley — who was asked by the Smithsonian Institution's Bureau of Ethnology to gather information on Seminole Indians — documented it in his 1887 book *The Seminole Indians of Florida*. "The cane which had been grown there was the largest I or my companion, Capt. F. A. Hendry, of Myers, had ever seen. It was 2 inches or more in diameter, and, as we guessed, 17 feet or more in length," he wrote.

Sugarcane is a giant grass that thrives in Florida's sunny, wet climate. The Tribe's fields contain six varieties of cane, some of which can withstand temperatures as low as freezing. In Brighton, the growing season

lasts between 10 to 16 months, depending on the variety, and the fields can be cut more than once during a harvest, which typically goes from October to April.

"We had two cuts this year," said James Tommie, sugarcane manager. "We cut about 15 to 20 percent more than our estimate of 40 tons per acre. It's like we added an additional 100 acres to the farm."

To get the neglected fields ready for a new planting, Tommie and his team leveled land, cleaned ditches, reset irrigation culverts and cut old cane multiple times to prepare the soil for new seeds. But the tedious process led to a successful harvest.

Before sugarcane is harvested, the fields are burned to get rid of leaves and chase away animals and insects. Stalks of cane remain, which are cut by large mechanical harvesters and deposited in an ever-moving line of bins pulled by tractors. The harvesters methodically work their way up and down the rows of cane until the fields are bare. The Tribe uses a contractor to harvest the cane, which is then sold to U.S. Sugar Corp. in Clewiston. U.S. Sugar processes, packages and warehouses the crop, taking it from the sugarcane to the crystallized sugar available in stores.

"I love watching it grow," Tommie said. "Each week you don't see anything but just green. When the plants are healthy and hearty it reflects back to what you have done. People say it's just a grass, but you need to manage it."

Rep. Howard readily credits Tommie and his team for the results of the harvest. In addition to sugarcane, the Board oversees the Tribe's citrus, juice, water and beef operations, which are sold and distributed through food purveyors domestically and internationally.

"We need to make sure we keep moving forward," Rep. Howard said. "The Board is the agriculture and economic part of the Tribe and we want to bring in more revenue. We are making strides to make it happen."



Beverly Bidney

The harvester drops cane into the bin while moving down the row. Other tractors are ready to move into place when the first bin is filled.

## Business profile: Chupco Indian Art Gallery

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**HOLLYWOOD** — Sally Tommie opened the Chupco Indian Art Gallery as an outlet to represent the Seminole Tribe and to share Native American heritage through artwork. It's also a place to find fine gifts for dignitaries visiting the Tribe.

As a former employee of Tribal government, Tommie presented Tribal gifts to VIPs but had a hard time easily finding high-quality items.

"I thought there has to be a place to make a quality purchase, something handmade by Tribal people, that is ready for gift giving," said Tommie, a member of the Bird Clan. "Instead of sitting on the sidelines and waiting for it, I took the initiative and created it."

The gallery, which opened in 2000, is named for Tommie's grandmother Sallie "Chupco" Tommie. Raised in a camp in Fort Pierce, Tommie shares her grandmother's name and always felt she had to live up to it.

"Filling the shoes of someone so grand was a tremendous responsibility," Tommie said. "As a little girl, she was a giant. She and my mother did whatever was necessary. Things seemed so easy living in the camp together."

Inspired by her mother, Minnie Tommie, an artist who made sweetgrass baskets, dolls and patchwork, Tommie wanted the gallery to showcase Native American heritage, culture and art. She purchased the old metal building on U.S. 441, which had been previously vacant, and transformed it into a place of refined beauty. Wood floors gleam throughout the spacious gallery, silk draperies adorn the windows and placement of custom-built display cases draw customers through the gallery.

There, art from about 50 Tribes, including Seminole, are for sale. Items include jewelry, clothing, paintings, sculptures and home goods. Prices range from an affordable small Seminole pin doll to an expensive original Guy LaBree oil painting or a Jim Jackson bronze sculpture.

For nearly two decades Tommie has traveled through Indian Country to collect art that catches her eye. She tries to find unique pieces not commonly found at festivals and pow-wows. Discovering that rare find or unusual item summarizes Tommie's purchasing philosophy for the gallery.

"Everything in here was created by hand; a part of the spirit of the creator is in each piece of art," Tommie said. "The entire space gives people a good spiritual feeling."

Because she chooses every piece of art herself, Tommie gets attached to certain pieces.



Beverly Bidney

Sally Tommie is in the Chupco Indian Art Gallery.

"When you sell it, you miss it," she said.

There are a few challenges to owning a gallery, such as getting Tribal members to frequent the store. Her greatest joy is when they come in and appreciate the Seminole work on display. She purchases many traditional arts and crafts from Tribal members and also sells a line of clan T-shirts adorned with Swarovski crystals and sterling silver clan charm bracelets and cufflinks.

Tommie, who also owns Redline Media Group, believes one of the most important things about owning a business is choosing the right name and buying the online domain name. She also advises having a business plan with realistic projections and enough savings to make it through hard times.

"We needed an outlet that would represent the quality of the people we are and the morals we have," Tommie said. "I wanted to educate the world about the Seminole Tribe and all the great people we have here by giving them a peek at who we are."

Chupco Indian Art Gallery is located at 3621 N. State Road 7 (U.S. 441) in Hollywood. Hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. For more information, call 954-893-9460 or visit [www.ChupcoGallery.com](http://www.ChupcoGallery.com).

If you are a Tribal member and business owner who would like to be featured in *The Tribune*, email [BrettDaly@semtribe.com](mailto:BrettDaly@semtribe.com).

## Tribe takes first place in Immokalee float competition



Judy Weeks

The Immokalee Seminole Culture float wins first place at the Immokalee Harvest Festival parade for the third year in a row.

BY JUDY WEEKS  
Freelance Writer

**IMMOKALEE** — The Seminole Tribe won first place in the float competition at the Immokalee Harvest Festival Parade for the third consecutive year.

The 53rd annual event was held on April 13. As in previous years, the Seminole Tribe played a recurring role.

This year, the Culture Department created a traditional Seminole campsite that included a chickee, garden and bountiful harvest of fruits and vegetables on its float.

"We chose a theme of harvesting the future," said Immokalee Culture Coordinator Geraldine Osceola. "We believe that we belong to the earth and that it is our responsibility to protect and care for it just as it provides for our existence. The populations of the world need to concentrate their efforts and put their knowledge to work to ensure that we can maintain clean air, water and a healthy food

supply to sustain future generations."

Immokalee community members wearing traditional attire took their places on the float waving signs depicting hybrid cars, organic farming and solar energy.

Displays of tomatoes, corn, peppers, watermelons, strawberries, potatoes and citrus showed the productivity of well-managed agriculture.

"Our Seminole ancestors were the first people to harvest crops in the Everglades region that eventually became Immokalee, and they continue to be a part of the agricultural chain today," Osceola said. "Their farming techniques varied dramatically from today's methods but the final goal was the same. Crops are planted, nourished and harvested as a food source and everyone looks forward to a successful harvest."

Miss Florida Seminole Alexis Aguilar exercised her role as ambassador as she waved to the crowd of spectators lining the parade route.

# Seminole imagery enhances art project

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter



Beverly Bidney

One of the towers contains Seminole imagery, including the yellow turtles and red bird symbols often used in patchwork.

In return for the access she received, Newman offered to teach Tribal women and children silk painting.

"I can show you how to paint your images on silk fabric," Newman said. "I want to share that with you as my gift. It will be my honor to give something back to the Tribe."

**DELRAY BEACH** — Delray Beach has never been a Seminole stronghold, but in the 1800s there were a few Seminole camps at nearby Lake Ida. On March 14, Delray Beach city officials cut the ribbon to commemorate the downtown Gateway Art Project, which features Tribal imagery as part of the area's cultural heritage.

Created by textile artist Michelle Newman, the six colorful, 30-foot towers flank Atlantic Avenue just east of Interstate 95 in Palm Beach County. Conceived in 2002 and inspired by the city's numerous cultural influences — including Seminole, Japanese, African-American, Haitian and the Victorian era — the design reflects diversity through stylized images.

Newman spent time learning Tribal culture, such as how to make patchwork, in the Hollywood and Brighton Culture departments. She used the symbols for lightning, birds and turtles in the permanent installation. During the ribbon-cutting ceremony, Newman recognized and thanked Tribal members for allowing her to learn Seminole culture firsthand.

"From the beginning, she was interested in the designs and our history," said former Tribal President Joe Dan Osceola. "She is a very talented lady and this is a great contribution to the community. You can see the Seminole influence — it's very distinct."



Beverly Bidney

From left, Joe Dan Osceola, Bobby Frank, Shannon Tiger, Donna Turtle, Bonnie Williams and Letitia Foster join artist Michelle Newman in front of the artwork.

## ♦ PUBLIC WORKS

From page 1A

"We want the Tribe's public water to be at the level of Fort Lauderdale or better. Our goal was to identify things that could be improved and we accomplished it," he said.

Public works handles water and wastewater treatment, distribution and collection (pipelines), solid waste, recycling and road maintenance. Part of the initiative includes creating uniform procedures within the department Tribalwide, including the uniforms employees wear. Every employee is licensed by the state for water and wastewater, which isn't the case in most municipalities. This makes for well-rounded employees, and their flexibility within the department boosts morale.

"We utilize their knowledge and experience," supervisor John Holdman said. "When you are just a shift operator with a large municipality, it is the same thing every day. Here, they do many different things, which makes the job more interesting. If you are motivated, you can make a difference here."

That attitude comes from the top; Osceola encourages a round-table approach to decision making.

"We're a strong team, and we let people in the field have a say in decisions," said Osceola, who has worked in Public Works for six years and has been director for more than a year. "We believe in empowering people and giving them responsibility."

Hilberto Pacheco, who studied wastewater and environmental engineering in college, moved from New York a year ago to work with the Tribe.

"It's been a great ride," said Pacheco, a Distribution and Collections operator. "I started at the basic level, but the Tribe moves people up from the bottom. I'm learning everything, and there is a lot of room for advancement."

Public Works does its best to promote from within; most of the top managers came from the department. Monthly training courses and an open-door policy encourage people to advance their careers.

"We try to recruit the best and the brightest," Koger said. "But we also train and retain our own people."

The philosophy behind the year-old safety program is that nothing is worth someone's life or limb. Employees learn to step back, take a breath, think about the situation and do things the right way.

There are numerous other state-wide competitions, and the Public Works Department is enthusiastic about entering as many as possible.

"We want to let the community know what we do," Koger said. "The health and safety of the community is the most important thing. Winning this award gives the community a chance to know what we do. That's our reward as a result of the award."



Beverly Bidney

From left, Bassem Sanaallah, Hilberto Pacheco, Johnnie Jones, Anthony Osceola, Derek Koger and John Holdman are at the Wastewater Treatment Plant in Hollywood.

## Tribal member Craig Gopher earns a state license

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**BRIGHTON** — Earning a state license to qualify for a job in the Public Works Department can be a challenge; rigorous licensing exams test student knowledge of specific and technical information. Recently, Public Works Quality Assurance coordinator Craig Gopher became the first Tribal member to earn a Water Distribution System Operator License, which qualifies him to work in the Water Plant as a Distributions and Collections technician.

To prepare for the licensing exam, the Tribe allowed interested employees to take a class. About 15 employees took the four-day course, followed by a 115-question test. Those who passed the test then took the state exam; Gopher, as well as a few others, earned his license.

"It makes me feel good inside," said Gopher, 42. "You are never too old to accomplish things."

Gopher has worked with the Public Works Department for about three years — with the last 18 months in the Water Plant. And he will keep pushing forward; he is working to earn a water and wastewater licenses so he can advance to become a water plant operator. He has about six months of book work to complete before he can take the licensing

exams. He figures the process could take up to a year.

After serving 1991-95 in the Army, Gopher attended technical school to become an auto body technician. Instead of going into that field, he went to work for the Tribe, which he had done on and off since he was 15 years old.

"Maybe I'll set a good example for other Tribal members to do something," he said. "It's not a hard job, but it's a job that can take you a long way. You don't need college when you have a license."

Gopher lives in Okeechobee with his wife, Denise, and children Zachary, 13, and Shyla, 11. He recently was hired to work in Hollywood. Because he believes the educational opportunities are better in South Broward, he plans to move the family south.

"This is a moment of pride for our department because very few people working for the various cities and counties throughout the state have accomplished this feat," said Michael Judson, Water Compliance specialist.



Beverly Bidney

Craig Gopher.

## 3rd Annual Seminole Okalee Indian Village



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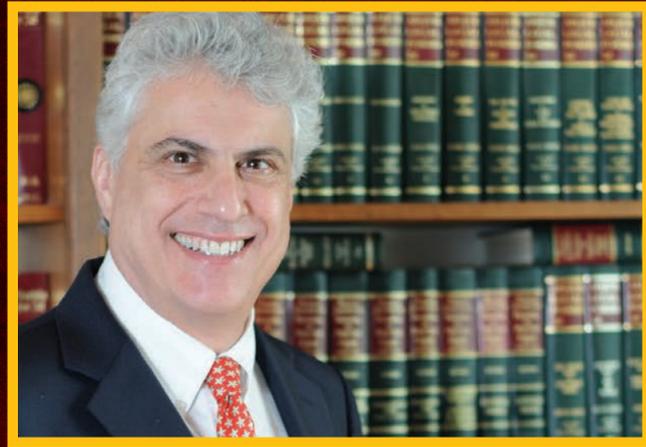
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# Big Cypress to celebrate big 1 - 1 - 7

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — Country music star Sara Evans will headline festivities May 3-4 during the Big Cypress 117th Anniversary Celebration at the Junior Cypress Rodeo Grounds.

A grand entrance 10 a.m. each day of Seminole Tribe officials and royalty will herald the two-day event. Tori Osceola, the grand prize winner of the 2009 Seminole Star Search Competition, will kick off entertainment with a performance of the National Anthem. Colorful dancing by the Central Plains Dancers and the Seminole Tribe Traditional Stomp Dancers will follow on both days.

Tribal members are invited to model their finest handmade Seminole attire in several clothing contests that will highlight old, modern, traditional and contemporary styles.

Critter shows hosted by Okalee Village will thrill and delight with native Florida swamp creatures that hiss, slither, chomp — and set the stage for the mystical sounds of Gordon “Ollie” Wareham’s soulful flute and unique storytelling.

Tribal food vendors will sell an array of traditional cuisine from sofkee to pumpkin frybread, spam with tomatoes and Indian tacos. Some clan families will cook over wood fires, as their ancestors did for centuries.

Merchandise vendors will include Harley Davidson motorcycles and Southern Divas jewelry, and intermittent bingo games will be held throughout the event.

The 117th Anniversary Celebration commemorates the Bureau of Indian Affairs’ land purchase in 1896 of a tract of swampland that, when added to 160 acres previously purchased in 1889, became the nucleus of the Big Cypress Reservation.

Though Native American ancestors who eventually became the Seminole Tribe likely made camps throughout South Florida’s Everglades for generations, it was not until 1911 that the land was ordered by then-President William Howard Taft to become an Indian reservation and not until 1936 that it was officially dedicated.



Photo courtesy of SaraEvans.com

Country music star Sara Evans will headline festivities May 3 during the two-day Big Cypress 117th Anniversary Celebration at the Junior Cypress Rodeo Grounds.

Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger hosted a similar festival in 2011 to mark Big Cypress’ 115th anniversary.

“We’d like to make it a Tribal fair every year moving forward into the future,” Councilman Tiger said.

The multi-platinum selling star, Sara Evans, who is of Native American descent, will take the rodeo arena stage at 8:30 p.m. following a lineup of country music artists, including the homegrown Cowbone Band and Osceola Brothers and national sensation Morgan Frazier. The night will cap off with a fireworks display.

Big Cypress Rep. assistant Wovoka Tommie said non-Tribal members will get a chance to see a great concert and “the culture, art, history and integrity of a great

nation never conquered by the government.”

For Tribal members, the two-day event will be a chance to bask in the same.

“They can come out and see what’s new, visit old friends, swap stories and pictures,” he said. “And for those who don’t want to cook, they’ll get a chance to eat some old-fashioned Tribal soul food.”

If you go:

Gates open at 9:30 a.m. both days. The festival is free but concert tickets cost \$35 each through [www.TicketMaster.com](http://www.TicketMaster.com) or [www.BigCypressCelebration.com](http://www.BigCypressCelebration.com). Wristbands for carnival rides cost \$10 for ages 12 and older, \$5 for ages 5 through 11. Kids younger than 5 get in free.

For more information, call 863-902-3200 ext. 13314.

## Seminole Chairman, Princesses star at Florida Folk Heritage Awards

BY PETER B. GALLAGHER  
Special Projects Reporter

**TALLAHASSEE** — Florida songwriter Frank J. Thomas, whose songs about Seminole Indians and Florida Crackers are Florida music legend, was awarded the highest cultural honor in the state recently when he was inducted into the Florida Artists Hall of Fame at the Florida Folk Heritage Awards.

Attending the March 20 event in Tallahassee were Seminole Chairman James E. Billie, Miss Florida Seminole Alexis Aguilar and Jr. Miss Brianna Nunez who met with Florida Secretary of State Ken Detzner.

Thomas, a longtime friend of the Seminole Tribe, was delighted.

“You know for an old Cracker boy that grew up over in rural Clay County it’s hard to believe some of this is happening,” Thomas said. “As my friends will tell you, I don’t consider myself nothin’ extra. I have written a lot of songs about Florida and I dearly love this state.”

Detzner opened the show by introducing Chairman Billie to the audience.

“Chairman Billie, we applaud your personal vision for cultural programs for the Seminole Tribe of Florida, including the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum of History, programs for seniors, student educations program and your long-time dedication to the Florida Folk Festival,” he said.

Chairman Billie, a friend of Thomas, gave attendees insight into the Seminole Tribe by describing how Seminoles have fought against and with the U.S. and have endured.

“By the time the Seminole Indians finally crawled out of the swamps in the 1900s and finally got used to the environment in Miami, Fort Lauderdale, Naples, Immokalee, Fort Pierce, one of the first things that put money in our pockets was tourism. Somewhere in the Miami area, a white man picked up an alligator and wrestled around with it, a bunch of tourists liked it and said, ‘Hey that would look better if an Indian did it,’ and the next thing I knew, we started wrestling those alligators. The tourists would throw money into the alligator pit and the rest of the day we would spend trying to find those nickels and quarters. But it served us well.”

“I grew up around Delray Beach and my grandmother would take me to the bus station. We had a little chickee hut there and I’d be with my grandmother selling dolls and Indian jackets, and my grandfather would be over there carving wood and selling it to the tourists.”

“There always seemed to be tourism in my blood. When [the] Seminole Tribe was organized in 1957, so be it we had an Indian village called Seminole Okalee Indian Village. We went to alligator wrestling and tried to do other things. These were the years that the Indians were trying to cut each other’s tongues out, meaning we were trying to catch up in this marvelous system so fast and so bad, with the desire to learn what we called ‘the white man’s way,’ to learn to read English, and do arithmetic and all that when we started into school.”

Chairman Billie explained how this



Peter B. Gallagher

Chairman James E. Billie and Florida Secretary of State Ken Detzner, along with Seminole royalty and Aubee and Echo Billie, take a moment to pose with an actor portraying Spanish explorer Juan Ponce de León during the Florida Folk Heritage Awards.

led to kids born in the 1950s not knowing their own language. However, by the 1970s, Seminoles of older generations began once again trying to teach their culture and language.

“Today, we are doing well; our culture is still intact,” he said.

Brianna Nunez, Jr. Miss Florida Seminole, educated the audience about her dress and patchwork: “Our clothing is known around the world. In my traveling, I always have people come up to me saying, ‘Let me feel your dress. Did you make this?’ It’s overwhelming.”

She went on to explain the patchwork and the meaning of the different designs: “Turtle, Broken Arrow, Panther, Man on Horse — they keep our traditions going. It gives us a chance to express where we come from.”

Alexis Aguilar, Miss Florida Seminole, was next to address the crowd, which observers said was the largest since the awards began in the late ‘80s. She began, as Nunez did, saluting the crowd in her own language.

“You notice Brianna spoke a different language from me. Because our Tribe is Creek and Seminole, she spoke Creek and I spoke the Miccosukee language. Our Tribes came together in a melting pot of culture and that is what you guys know today as the Seminole Tribe,” she said.

The evening ended with the inductions into Florida Artists Hall of Fame which is Florida’s highest cultural award.

Other 2013 inductees included 19th-century painter Laura Woodward, who was awarded posthumously, and Miami’s own Gloria Estefan. Estefan sent a video accepting her award. The awards ceremony included winners of the Secretary of State Historic Preservation Awards and the Florida Book Awards. On hand was an actor from Viva Florida 500 who portrayed



Peter B. Gallagher

Chairman James E. Billie is on hand to help honor Frank J. Thomas when he is inducted into the Florida Artists Hall of Fame on March 20.

explorer Juan Ponce de León on a search, he said, for Tribal historian Willie Johns.

Thomas, who has written more than 500 songs about Florida, is known as the Dean of Florida Folk Music, his songs performed for decades at venues and cultural events throughout the Sunshine State and on National Public Radio (NPR).

Chairman Billie joined Thomas on stage when his old friend received the award:

“I would like to invite all of you to come over to the Florida Folk Festival, Memorial Day weekend, in White Springs, a beautiful old town on the Suwannee River, and see a celebration of who we are here in Florida, where all the different cultures come together in this one event. The conchs down in Key West, the Tarpon Springs divers, to the Seminole Indians, the Minorcans over on the East Coast ...”

Thomas had the last word. “We are Florida,” he said. “And we are showing ourselves off to the world.”



Beverly Bidney

Kurya Kippenberger holds Casper as veterinarian Amie Lanier gives a rabies shot.

## Animal Control Program takes good care of pets

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

The Tribe’s Animal Control Program ensures treasured family pets receive vaccinations, rabies shots and electronically tracked implanted microchips through semi-annual clinics. About 50 Hollywood dogs and cats brought their owners to the rabies and microchip clinic on March 28 outside the Health Department.

“When the Animal Control Program was started in 2006, we had animals with rabies,” said Jonathan Vazquez, Animal Control Program coordinator. “We see a lot more people at these clinics every year.”

In 2007 the Tribe enacted an ordinance similar to the county and state’s, which requires pet owners to register their animals annually. The rabies and microchip clinics were held in Big Cypress, Brighton, Hollywood and Immokalee. The next clinic will be at Trail on May 2 behind the Miccosukee Preschool.

Education is an important service provided by Animal Control.

The program reinforces that animals stay on their owner’s property, so they don’t become a nuisance in the community. It also focuses on training pet owners to keep pets safe and healthy.

Other responsibilities include trapping feral animals and dealing with wildlife that can endanger people, including alligators, bears, panthers, coyotes and bobcats.

“We assess the animals and make sure they aren’t a threat,” Vazquez said. “We have to live with these animals;

they’ve always lived here.”

Animals are usually captured and relocated elsewhere on the reservation unless they have lost their fear of humans. In that case, animals like alligators are given to Okalee Village or Billie Swamp Safari. Animal Control works with the state to tag and collar bears and panthers for relocation.

Raccoons can be a nuisance if they find a regular food source, including garbage cans.

“They are part of nature and the ecosystem,” Vazquez said. “Once they find a food source, they stay. We educate the public on how to secure their garbage.”



Beverly Bidney

Jonathan Vazquez prepares to give a dog a rabies shot as Gus Batista secures the dog.

## Seminoles increase Florida Folk Festival participation

BY PETER B. GALLAGHER  
Special Projects Reporter

**WHITE SPRINGS, Fla.** — Since the Florida Folk Festival began in 1953, the Seminole Indians have been popular participants, presenting their unique Native culture through dance, song, stories and crafts on the grounds of the Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park in White Springs.

Historically, a group of old chickees has marked the north entrance of the park, which borders the historic Suwannee River. Now, workers are rejuvenating the chickee camp by building a new authentic village to be completed just in time for the 2013 festival set for May 24-26.

“I can’t believe it. It is so exciting. We have waited so long for this day,” said Festival director Elaine McGrath, who is convinced the new village and performing area will rejuvenate the entire festival. “I have been assured the chickees will be finished by opening day of the festival. We can’t thank Chairman Billie and the Seminole Tribe enough for this wonderful gift.”

In the mid-1990s, Chairman James E. Billie renovated the structures and added a stage built with cypress and palmetto thatch. The music attracted more visitors to the area — called *Ee-to-lit-kee* — to observe Tribal members cook, carve, chop and sew in the old ways when Seminoles lived in chickee villages.

Over the past decade, however, Tribal participation waned at the Memorial Day weekend event — the chickees deteriorated and *Ee-ti-lit-kee* began to crumble.

Discussions to renovate again started

a decade ago between Chairman Billie, Florida State Parks director Donald Forgiome and McGrath. Chairman Billie wanted to relocate the Seminole area inside toward the middle of the park and build it the way a 19th-century Seminole village in North Florida might have looked.

The state park officers agreed.

At this year’s event, for the first time, Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum staff will operate an information booth near the planned village where a team of Tribal members will provide cultural demonstrations. The team, assembled by Lorene Gopher and Yvonne Calhoun in the Brighton Cultural Education Department, will include Gopher, Jenny Shore, Nancy Shore, Victor Billie, Mollie Jolly, Beulah Gopher, Charlotte Burgess and Martha Jones who will demonstrate Seminole sewing, patchwork, cooking, wood carving, doll making and other crafts over the three-day festival.

About 300 performances are scheduled. Headliners include songwriter/TV star Jim Stafford, country music legends The Bellamy Brothers, bluesman Ben Prestage and Florida Folk patriarch Frank J. Thomas. Country music star Billy Dean will make a special appearance on May 26.

The Florida Folk Festival will happen on the grounds of the Stephen Foster State Folk Culture State Park in White Springs, just south of the Florida-Georgia line. The park features one of the largest carillon towers in the United States (it plays Stephen Foster music periodically all day) and a grand antebellum museum dedicated to Foster, who penned the song, *Way Down Upon the Suwannee River*, or as Foster called it, *Old Folks at Home*.

## Employee witnesses Boston explosions

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**BOSTON** — Seminole Media Productions Brighton employee Jose Garcia and his girlfriend, Lisa Molyneaux, took a few days off work to support a friend racing in the Boston Marathon. There, they witnessed history and walked away shaken, but unscathed.

Two deadly explosions near the finish line of the marathon on April 15 killed three and injured more than 170 people. At press time, one suspect had been killed, and law enforcement was searching for the second.

Garcia was trying to get to the finish line by taking a shortcut through the Lord & Taylor department store when the first bomb detonated. On his way outside, the second bomb exploded across the street.

“Everyone was running and there was a lot of smoke,” said Garcia, a service technician. “We got about 2 miles away before we stopped to decide what to do next. Like everyone else, we were panicking and didn’t know what was going on.”

Once Garcia determined his friend was safe, he and Molyneaux breathed easier.

“You don’t ever picture yourself in that kind of situation,” he said. “It was frightening because we left our kids at home; I was worried about them.”

Before getting on a plane at Logan International Airport, Garcia and Molyneaux were interviewed by the Massachusetts State Police and the FBI, who were looking for photos of the scene. They had nothing to help the investigation, but they arrived home safely.



# E a s t e r



Omar Rodriguez  
Immokalee residents collect Easter eggs during the community's party on March 29.



Eileen Soler  
Girls pull with all their might, even in pretty bunny ears and painted faces, to win a tug-of-war game against the boys March 15 at the Big Cypress Reservation Easter celebration.



Emma Johns  
Mary Tigertail collects the most eggs (73 eggs) during the senior Easter party.



Judy Weeks  
Peggy Osceola, Jenny Doctor and Diane Billie join Trail Liaison Norman Huggins for a picture.



Brett Daly  
Hollywood preschoolers take off to collect Easter eggs during an Easter-themed Get Fit Day at the Hollywood Ball Field.



Brett Daly  
Hollywood preschoolers play Easter-themed games on March 22 to celebrate the holiday.



Eileen Soler  
J-La Billie, Jason Billie, Jason Billie II and Michelle Turrubiatez find the prize-winning plastic eggs at the Big Cypress Reservation Easter party.



Peter B. Gallagher  
Nancy Motlow paints a ceramic bunny during Tampa's Easter party.



Emma Johns  
Adriana Gomez is proud of her basket full of eggs in Fort Pierce.



Omar Rodriguez  
Immokalee youth scramble for Easter eggs during the community's holiday party.



Peter B. Gallagher  
Tampa seniors get in on the Easter festivities during the community's holiday party on March 23.



Judy Weeks  
Three-year-old Savannahj Hanks is 'gettin' down with the Easter Bunny during the Trail community's Easter party on March 26 at the Miccosukee Golf & Country Club.



Judy Weeks  
It's instant love for the children of the Naples community as they play with a variety of real-live Easter bunnies.



Judy Weeks  
Members of Wanda Zepeda's family gather around her to celebrate Easter in Naples on March 29.



Emma Johns  
Parents join in to help little ones navigate the trees during the Trail community's Easter egg hunt in Fort Pierce.



Judy Weeks  
Sisters Katherine and Lauren Jim share the laurels and the egg hunt in Trail.

# Health

## May is national Heart Health Month

• Paula Bowers-Sanchez

The importance of keeping your heart healthy is paramount. Your heart is the control center of your body. All your daily activities are only possible if your heart is in good working condition.

Keeping your blood pressure within optimal ranges (120 over 80) – along with optimal cholesterol levels, sensible eating habits and getting regular exercise – will help you maintain a healthy heart.

Get your blood pressure checked as often as you can. Many pharmacies and grocery stores have blood pressure checking stations. So, while you're there picking up your supplies or groceries, stop and check your blood pressure. You should check with your health care professional for your personal optimal level according to your age, gender and other factors.

Equally important is keeping your cholesterol levels in check. Your total cholesterol should be less than 200.

Within that number, your LDL number should be less than 100; this is commonly referred to as the "bad" cholesterol. When there is too much LDL circulating through your blood, it can cause plaque build-up in your arteries, causing them to narrow and harden and become less flexible. This condition is known as atherosclerosis.

Your HDL should be 60 or higher. This is referred to as "good" cholesterol. Studies prove that high levels of HDL can protect against heart attacks. On the other hand, low levels of HDL can increase your risk of

heart disease.

Your triglycerides should be less than 150. Triglyceride is a form of fat made in the body. People with elevated levels of triglycerides usually have a high total cholesterol level. Individuals diagnosed with heart disease and diabetes usually maintain high levels of LDL cholesterol and low levels of HDL cholesterol – these individuals also are likely to have high triglycerides levels.

When talking about controlling blood pressure and cholesterol, make sure to include sensible eating habits in the equation. Eating "sensibly" means eating the right amount of fats, carbohydrates and proteins. It doesn't mean we have to starve or deprive ourselves of our favorite foods; it means to be mindful of what we put into our bodies on a daily basis.

For example, we know it's not healthy to eat pizza or fast food every day. But, it's OK to have one of those choices once in a while.

Now, when it comes to exercise, you all know I am a huge advocate of any form of exercise. As long as you get up and get your body moving for at least 30 minutes to an hour, four or more times a week, you will definitely see improvements.



Eileen Soler

Big Cypress residents wrap up Stomp the Swamp, a month-long exercise promotion that uses pedometers to shed pounds.

## Swamp walkers shed pounds

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — After trying "so many times" to lose weight and get healthier, Sam Tommie said he's on the right track now thanks to a pedometer walking challenge called Stomp the Swamp at the Big Cypress Reservation.

"What I always needed was support. Then the pedometer made it much more interesting," Tommie said.

The contest, organized by the Big Cypress Wellness Center, had participants weigh in, measure body mass and then walk while wearing pedometers to keep track of every step.

Health educator Sarah Pinto said about 10 people participated in the six-week effort to lose pounds and gain healthy lifestyle habits. Bragging rights, certificates, fitness gear awards and a chance to win a vacation prize provided extra incentive.

Weekly meetings at the Mitchell Cypress Fitness Trail kept competitors on track – literally. Pinto said three laps around the path equals 1 mile. In the beginning walkers walked 1 mile. They added more laps as the weeks progressed.

A lunchtime wrap up party on March 12 at a gazebo in the exercise park featured a light spread of crisp fresh vegetables with dip, homemade meatball sandwiches,

water and an awards ceremony.

"I didn't care about the prizes. I challenged myself every week and I beat my own record," said Tommie, who lost 8 pounds. For Tommie, taking home the Most Steps and Most Participation awards in the senior age group was just a cherry on top.

Other winners were: Vinson Osceola for most weight lost (10 pounds); Almira Billie for most steps walked among non-seniors (322,194 steps); and Katherine Billie for most participation among non-seniors (17 participation points out of 24).

Alvin Buster, a Fitness specialist for the Health Department at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium, led stretches and workouts before and after walks. Participants recorded their daily diet and activity in booklets. Altogether, the group walked more than 3.5 million steps – or about 1,174 miles.

All reservations conducted similar pedometer walking events during the same six-week period but with different incentives and results.

Each reservation is also planning to host a spring health festival.

Health director Connie Whidden said all participants were allowed to keep the pedometers, if they intended to continue using the devices.

"They say (the pedometer) helps to motivate them. It reminds them to walk," Whidden said. "This program is all about keeping us going and keeping us moving."

## Coming soon: free 'Spring into Health' fairs

Fun, health and fitness will converge in coming weeks during Tribalwide health fairs hosted by the Health Department at four reservation locations. Themed "Spring into Health," the fairs promise games, prizes, information booths and a nutritious lunch free for all Tribal members, community members and employees.

Here's the schedule:

- Immokalee Reservation: 2 – 5 p.m., May 9 at the Immokalee Gym.
- Big Cypress Reservation: 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., May 23 at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium.
- Brighton Reservation: 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., May 30 at the Florida Seminole Veteran's Building.
- Hollywood Reservation: 11 a.m. – 3 p.m., June 10 at the Hollywood Gym.

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## So you want to cater food...

SUBMITTED BY PATRICK PECK  
Environmental Health Program Manager

If you plan to start a catering business, you must comply with a few basic steps.

You will need to register your business and obtain a license from your local Health Department. You also must satisfy the basic food safety training requirements. It is important to note that all involved in your business will need to obtain (at minimum) the Food Handler Certification.

The following tips and tricks will help you establish yourself as a caterer.

**1.** Decide what kind of catering you would like as your business' focus. If you're just starting out, try to cater small events before engaging in a big event that may overwhelm you. Decide if you want to try home-based catering, school catering, corporate catering or small-event catering. Once you've gained experience, you can start courting clients for bigger occasions.

**2.** Make sure that the place you prepare and cook food is impeccably clean – this is one of the most important catering tips. It doesn't matter if your new business doesn't have the same flare as the old caterers; what matters is that you're serving clients and guests the best food you can offer under the cleanest conditions. Clients might not inspect your place, but the Health Department will. So make it a point to have a clean environment when cooking.

**3.** Aside from the supplies and food ingredients, clients and guests, you also need to have all the necessary permits, certifications and authentications to legalize your business.

You need to complete this task before taking on your first client. You can stop by the Health Department offices to find out what certifications and inspections you need.

If you will prepare food in your home, expect to make some changes to comply with all the local and state regulations – you will need to have a commercial-type kitchen separate from your home kitchen that is designated specifically for the purpose of the business.

**4.** Finally, be flexible and accommodating to your customers, as they will probably change their minds about at least one of the things ordered. While you cannot give in all the time, it helps your business to provide good customer service. When outlining a contract, make sure you stipulate up front any additional charge for changes and substitutions.

Starting a catering business can be a fun and rewarding task, but it can also be a lot of work. When dealing with food, you have to provide a high level of customer satisfaction, as well as pay close attention to the cleanliness of your prep areas.

For more information about catering licenses and food safety training, contact the Tribe's Health Department at 954-985-2330.

## TIGER TIGER : NEW ERA LEE TIGER'S CD RELEASE PARTY

April 27, 2013 8:00 pm  
The Swamp in Seminole Paradise  
at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino



This free concert is a tribute to the Seminole Tribe's acquisition of Hard Rock International, which inspired Lee Tiger to write the song "Red Rocks the Earth"

**Lee Tiger and the Tiger Tiger Band  
will perform at 10:00pm**

Introduced by Mindy Lang, Magic 102.7's #1 DJ

**FREE CD GIVEAWAY TO THE FIRST 20 GUESTS**  
Door prizes including other CDs, cassettes, and signed photographs  
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# Mysteries at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

**SUBMITTED BY TARA BACKHOUSE**  
 Collections Manager

Many of you may be familiar with the popular Travel Channel series *Mysteries at the Museum*, where charismatic host Don Wildman travels around the country to unearth dramatic stories tied to objects at museums. Such plots make for engaging TV, but perhaps bear little resemblance to reality. The real stories of mysteries at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum – and many other museums – may not be as catchy, but the implications are great and the opportunity for discovery is equally amazing.

In many museums, staff changes and organizational inefficiency, especially in the early years of developing museums, may create unavoidable gaps in record keeping. In an ideal situation, museum staff would keep records of its collection items so that objects' origin, age and creator are known. Staff assign tracking numbers to objects in collections, and the same number is written on any related paperwork. The objects are then stored in a safe place. For most objects, the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum knows this information and has the paperwork. But sometimes, despite the best intentions of the Museum, the information is lost. A staff member may learn the information about an object and plan to write it down later and then forget. Or the paperwork that accompanied an object may get separated from the object

itself.

When that happens, the Museum does the best it can. Putting things into "mystery lots" gives the Museum a way to organize the objects and to start re-gathering information. An object in a mystery lot gets a number, and gets entered into a database, but it does not have much information attached to it. The Museum tries to rectify the situation as soon as possible. If details of the object are unknown, the Museum can't share knowledge with the community and can't give credit to the creator or the creator's family.

There are several ways to gather information about these objects. It is often possible to locate the missing associated paperwork. It may also be possible to track down staff members who can provide more information. But, it is especially rewarding when the donors themselves, or their families, can identify these items and provide the information necessary to help the Museum fulfill its mission.

You may be able to be a part of this process. These pictures are a few examples of mystery objects in the Museum's collection. If you recognize them, or if you think you know who made them, please let the Museum know. And if you want to see more mystery items, call the Collections Division at 877-902-1113 ext. 12246 or email [TaraBackhouse@semtribe.com](mailto:TaraBackhouse@semtribe.com). As always, the Museum is also happy to show off non-mystery items.



Photo courtesy of Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki

**Mystery Lot Doll: The Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum needs help identifying this Seminole doll's history.**

With your help, the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum can solve its own mysteries at the museum, and it will be much more rewarding than watching a TV show.



Photo courtesy of Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki

**Mystery Lot Basket: The Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum needs help identifying this sweetgrass basket's history.**



Photo courtesy of Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki

**Mystery Lot Coat: The Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum needs help identifying the history behind this Seminole patchwork coat.**

## Seminole People of Florida exhibit returning to state museum in May

**BY PETER B. GALLAGHER**  
 Special Projects Reporter

**TALLAHASSEE** — The Museum of Florida History will revive the popular *Seminole People of Florida: Survival and Success* exhibit, from May 17 to Aug. 18. The temporary exhibit honors the Seminole people, their remarkable story of survival and success, and their unique culture that endures today.

The exhibit, previously on display in 2007-08, provides a glimpse into Seminole history, culture and artistic traditions from the mid-1850s to the present, with particular focus on the rich material culture that the Seminoles created and sustained during the late 19th and 20th centuries.

The exhibit features more than 90 artifacts, including several examples of clothing from the museum's collection of Seminole artifacts. Other artifacts to be displayed include baskets, dolls, jewelry and utilitarian items. In addition to artifacts, a variety of historical photographs, colorful graphics and informative text panels will be displayed.

The Seminole exhibit returns "because it was really, really popular, according to feedback from visitors. People love Native American exhibits and we figured this would be a great summer exhibit for us," said senior curator Lisa Barton.

Return visitors will notice new and different displays, including several artifacts on loan from the Seminole Tribe's Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, including an early 19th-century bandolier bag, a 1930s wooden doll and nine paintings by the late Seminole artist Noah Billie.

"That will be the biggest obvious change," Barton said. "Those wonderful Noah Billie paintings fill an entire wall."

Billie was a well-respected artist of the Seminole Tribe. His art offers a modern perspective on Seminole history and culture, and it captures the traditional way of life.

Also new, from Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki, is the earliest artifact in the exhibit: a beaded bandolier bag dating between 1820 and 1840. Both Creek and Seminole men commonly wore shoulder pouches of this type, which were popular from the

early 1800s to the 1860s. These beaded accessories perhaps were copied from bandolier bags worn by British soldiers to hold ammunition. The strap was worn over the shoulder and across the chest with the pouch at the hip.

The exhibit includes several notable items, such as reproductions of George Catlin's illustrations of Osceola, Micanopy and other Seminoles; 24 colorful patchwork garments, several made by Seminole seamstress Jane Tiger Motlow; and traditional Seminole objects, such as palmetto dolls, sweetgrass and palmetto baskets, wood carvings, women's leg shakers and a rattle made by Seminole elder Bobby Henry.

The Museum of Florida History has scheduled an opening event for May 16, featuring live music and a talk by Seminole Tribal historian Willie Johns. Monthly programming is scheduled to highlight the exhibit, featuring live music presentations by scholars and authors specializing in Seminole culture and history. For more information visit the museum's website at [www.MuseumofFloridaHistory.com](http://www.MuseumofFloridaHistory.com).



Photo courtesy of Florida Museum of History

**Jane Tiger Motlow made this cape and skirt ensemble in 1954.**



Photo courtesy of Florida Museum of History

**This palmetto fiber doll of a man and baby was made by Maggie Osceola.**



Photo courtesy of Florida Museum of History

**This long shirt is the oldest garment in the exhibit.**

## Hah-Tung-Ke: Lee Tiger

**BY PETER B. GALLAGHER**  
 Special Projects Reporter

**MIAMI** — When Micosukee musician Stephen Tiger died after a tragic home fall in 2006, his brother and longtime Tiger bandmate Lee Tiger slipped into a long depression.

"I lost interest in everything I was doing," said Lee, who, in addition to the music he took around the world with his brother, had led a very successful career as a global marketer of American Indian eco-heritage tourism.

"I dropped out, man. But deep inside, I knew my brother would want me to keep going," said the 62-year-old Native musician. "I had to re-evaluate everything in my life. I came to focus on this new album and began to work real hard crafting the songs. It brought me back out again."

The album, titled *New Era*, will be officially released Saturday, April 27, with a live concert at The Swamp (located at the Hollywood Seminole Hard Rock Paradise adjacent to Bongos). The album features a song Tiger said was inspired by the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

"I was just musing about the Seminole Tribe one day, thinking about all the success they have had, imagining this huge Hard Rock empire that they own and control now," he said. "I thought about how far all of us had come and, especially the Seminoles. Suddenly the phrase, 'Red Rocks The Earth' came to my mind."

"I couldn't get it out of my mind. Red Rocks The Earth. And it became a song that I am very proud of. It fits in perfectly with the theme of this album. The new era for American Indians."

A stadium-worthy anthem fueled with powerful guitar licks by South Florida guitar slinger Raiford Starke, *Red Rocks The Earth* does not refer to the Seminole Tribe by name but "this song is definitely about and for the Seminole Tribe. They have shown the rest of us the way," said Lee, who combined a 21st-century resonance with his own classic rock roots for what he said is a new signature sound. "It is new music that tells the story of the survival of our Native American people."

Stephen Tiger died a month after he and his brother achieved their greatest honor — The Lifetime Achievement Award from the Native American Music Association. The award honored their 40-



Photo courtesy of Lee Tiger

**Native American musician Lee Tiger releases a new album, with a song inspired by Seminoles.**

year Tiger Tiger career as America's first great Native rock band. The Tiger brothers spent the 1960s and '70s appearing alongside rock icons such as Jimi Hendrix and Led Zeppelin and touring the world, settling for a while in California, where they appeared at legendary clubs such as the Whiskey a Go Go and the Troubadour.

The brothers grew up on the Micosukee Reservation and in nearby boarding houses, as the sons of legendary Micosukee Chairman Buffalo Tiger. Responding to a plea from their father to return home to Florida and use their musical talents to help the Micosukee Tribe, the Tiger brothers moved back to Miami in the early '80s, where they launched successful tours of South America and Europe and appeared at many Native global marketing events.

Lee Tiger supervises both Lee Tiger & Associates, a Native American tourism development firm, and TTM Records, which handles the substantial catalogue of Tiger Tiger music. As he has for years, Lee maintains a business relationship with the Micosukee Tribe of Florida Indians, where he consults in community outreach and communication/marketing issues, often acting as a spokesperson for Tribal matters.

### 'Red Rocks The Earth'

Red rocks the earth, red rocks the earth  
 Red rocks the earth, red rocks the earth

Ever since the dawn of time, we all knew  
 Everything was fine  
 If we can just touch your minds  
 Come get together, across the lines

Red rocks the earth, red rocks the earth  
 Red rocks the earth, red rocks the earth

Red rocks the earth, red rocks the earth  
 Red rocks the earth, red rocks the earth

Now our lives have changed for good  
 We all celebrate this time with you  
 Made some changes in our lives  
 Good things happened with all our Tribes

Red rocks the earth, red rocks the earth  
 Red rocks the earth, ha, red rocks the earth

Tomorrow lies a brand new day  
 It makes us happy to hear you say  
 The night is good the day gets better  
 Tomorrow knows, the earth comes together

## Thousands of years of occupation: Tribal Historic Preservation Office investigates Naha Tiger Camp

**SUBMITTED BY MAUREEN MAHONEY**  
 Tribal Archaeologist

The Tribal Historic Preservation Office recently investigated the Naha Tiger Camp as a site eligible for the Tribal Register of Historic Places. Located in the northern portion of the Brighton Reservation in the mid-20th century, the camp was occupied by Naha Tiger, his wife, Lucy, and her granddaughter Sally Tommie Billie.

Naha Tiger was born in 1886 to Molly Tiger and Captain Tom Tiger and played a significant role in the Tribe as a Medicine Man and as one of the first cattle representatives for the Brighton Reservation. Naha's wife, Lucy, was the daughter of Polly Parker and Henry Parker.

The Naha Tiger Camp was established between 1948 and 1957. Prior to this time, Naha Tiger and his family had at least three other known camps — two on the Brighton Reservation and one in St. Lucie County. The camp in St. Lucie County was occupied in 1930, but based on documentary evidence it appears that Naha Tiger and his family had moved to the Brighton Reservation by 1939. The final camp occupied by Naha Tiger, Lucy and Sally was established with the construction of Billy Bowlegs Road. This camp consisted of four structures,

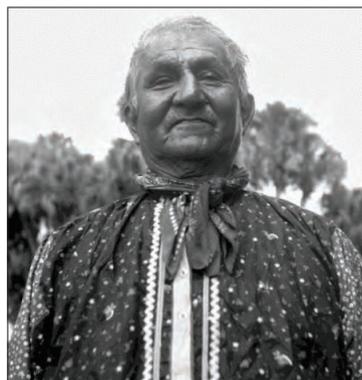


Photo courtesy of THPO

**Naha Tiger played a significant role in the Tribe as a Medicine Man and as one of the first cattle representatives for the Brighton Reservation.**

which included a storage chickee that was also used as a guest room, a dining chickee, another storage chickee and a sleeping chickee. A dirt road led into the central portion of this camp. No components of the Naha Tiger Camp remain today.

As part of the investigation of the area with the Naha Tiger Camp, the Tribal Historic Preservation Office conducted an archaeological survey that found evidence that the area had been used for thousands of years. While the site has seen continuous clearing and some modern construction, remnants of a past prehistoric site remain. The oldest item found at the site includes a projectile point that may have been created 8,000 years ago. Animal bones found at the site help show the diet of previous occupants and the pottery that was discovered would have been used by people for storage purposes.

One of the most significant parts of the Tribal Register nomination process is determining the future use of the site. Based on community input, the Naha Tiger Camp will be listed as an area that can be used to remember the great roles that Naha Tiger played in the Tribe. If you have any information about the Naha Tiger Camp, or would like to list a site on the Tribal Register, contact the Tribal Historic Preservation Office at 863-983-6549.



Photo courtesy of THPO

**This projectile point was discovered within the Naha Tiger Camp site area that may have been created 8,000 years ago.**

# Announcements

## Thank you

The Environmental Resource Management Department would like to thank all of those who stopped by their booth at the Big Cypress Easter Celebration on March 15. Community members and children were all encouraged to plant seeds to bring home to start a garden. This year we raffled off three gardening gift baskets and two guava trees. The winners of the gift baskets were Louise Billie, Edna McDuffie and Randall Osceola. The grand prize guava tree winners were Claudia Doctor and Barbara Billie.



<http://www.oramsnurseries.com.au/fruiting.html>

### Willie Frank Library

James Patterson has created more enduring fictional characters than any other novelist writing today. He has also had more *New York Times* best sellers than any other writer, according to Guinness World Records.

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Patterson has also written numerous No. 1 best sellers for young readers, including the *Maximum Ride*, *Witch & Wizard* and the *Middle School* series. In total, these books have spent more than 220 weeks on national best seller lists.

In 2010, Patterson was named Author of the Year at the Children's Choice Book Awards.

His lifelong passion for books and reading led him to create the innovative website ReadKiddoRead.com, giving adults

an invaluable tool to find the books that get kids reading for life.

He writes full-time and lives in Florida with his family.

New James Patterson titles available at the Willie Frank Library for checkout include: *Alex Cross*, *RUN*; *Tick Tock*; *1st To Die*; *Private: #1 Suspect*; *Private London*; *Daniel X*; *Witch & Wizard*; and *Maximum Ride Books*.

Visit the library today and check out one of these great books and also view a new exhibit of Seminole items on loan from the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum.



## Congratulations 2013 NAYO basketball tourney winners

About 125 Tribal members attended the Native American Youth Organization's (NAYO) annual basketball tournament, held March 28-30, in Seneca, N.Y., including seven Seminole teams and supporters. Athletes came from Seminole, Cherokee, Choctaw, Seneca and Poarch Creek Tribes to compete in the tournament, which was categorized by age on teams of 12-to-14 and 15-to-17 year old boys' and girls' teams.

### Results:

#### 12-14 Girls

- 1st Place: Xtreme (Choctaw)
- 2nd Place: I.A.C. (Seneca)
- 3rd Place: Seneca Nation (Seneca)

#### 12-14 Boys

- 1st Place: MBCI Storm (Choctaw)
- 2nd Place: Cherokee Tropicals
- 3rd Place: MBCI Native Flights (Choctaw)

#### 15-17 Girls

- 1st Place: Sundown (Seminole)
- 2nd Place: U.L.S. (Seminole)
- 3rd Place: EBCI (Cherokee)

#### 15-17 Boys

- 1st Place: J.U.S. (Seminole)
- 2nd Place: Silky Smooth Skinz (Cherokee)
- 3rd Place: Seneca Chiefs (Seneca)



### Correction

In the March issue of *The Seminole Tribune*, Delancé Carrillo was misidentified. We apologize for any confusion this might have caused.

### 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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SUBMITTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

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CLAN: (OPTIONAL) \_\_\_\_\_

*The Seminole Tribune* contact information:  
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 Address: 3560 N. State Road 7, Hollywood, FL 33021  
 Fax: 954-965-2937  
 E-mail: [BrettDaly@semtribe.com](mailto:BrettDaly@semtribe.com)

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

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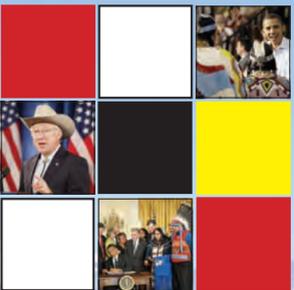


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# NATIONAL NATIVE NEWS



## Basketball daughters bring pride to Umatilla Reservation



Photo courtesy of Associated Press

**MISSION, Ore.** — Even though powerhouse Connecticut rolled all over Louisville, winning 90-62 in the NCAA women's basketball championship recently, fans in Indian Country have been honored by the two athletic Native American sisters from a reservation in northeast Oregon who led the Louisville Cardinals into the NCAA finals.

Umatilla Indian Tribal members Shoni Schimmel, a junior guard, and her sister Jude, a sophomore guard, have achieved rock-star status in Mission, and nearby Pendleton, and are known to American Indians across North America, where their exploits as college basketball stars have been broadcast all over the world; not to mention glorified in the outstanding documentary about the Schimmels, *Off the Rez*, which premiered in 2011.

Family friend Connie Sams described a typical scene following a game: "When the game was over you go outside and you could hear people cheering. All the kids in the neighborhood had a basketball and were outside shooting. You know they were pretending they were Shoni and Jude — the boys and girls the same."

In fact, the two athletes have pioneered a style of all-out basketball called "Rez ball" that formed the spine of the Louisville 2013 team.

"They're just paving the way for a new generation of kids that are going to be like, 'Yeah, that's awesome they can do that,'" said Shana Radford, another friend. "They're on ESPN; they're doing interviews. It's just so cool to see them in the mainstream, to see Natives in the mainstream. It's just never been done. It's history."

During the NCAA Tournament, Jude Schimmel was awarded the NCAA Elite 89 award, which honors the individual who has reached the pinnacle of competition at the national championship level in his or her sport, while also achieving the highest academic standard among his or her peers. The Elite 89 is presented to the student-athlete with the highest cumulative grade point average participating at the finals site for each of the NCAA's championships.

Schimmel, who is majoring in sociology, currently carries a 3.737 GPA — the highest GPA among all players in the NCAA women's basketball Final Four.

— *OBP.org*

## Poarch Band squares off against Attorney General

**MONTGOMERY, Ala.** — Alabama Attorney General Luther Strange's "strange" lawsuit against the Poarch Band of Creek Indians has been moved to Federal District Court, where the Tribe has demanded it be dismissed.

Two months ago, Strange asked an Elmore County Circuit Court Judge to shut down the Poarch Band's three casinos as "a public nuisance." The slot-style, electronic bingo machines used at the casinos are illegal in Alabama, Strange said. The Poarch Band, though, contends that the state's lawsuit is preempted by the federal Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA).

Even if the state did have legal standing to sue a sovereign nation, said the Poarch Creek motion, it could not use a state "nuisance claim" as a way around the IGRA.

— *AL.com*

## County backs Fort Sill Apache Tribe's casino plan

**DEMING, N.M.** — Doña Ana County commissioners unanimously OK'd a statement of support for the Fort Sill Apache Tribe of Oklahoma's plan for a casino in an adjacent county.

— *El Paso Times*

## Oklahoma, Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes ink casino deal

**OKLAHOMA CITY, Okla.** — The Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes took down their free-play Internet gaming site, PokerTribes.com, after the state of Oklahoma refuted their right to operate it, under terms of their compact.

But the parties reached a new agreement allowing the Tribes to re-launch the site for real money bets if the website is exclusive to players outside the U.S. and if the Tribes pay the state 20 percent of the proceeds. Oklahoma Gov. Mary Fallin and Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes

Gov. Janice Prairie-Chief Boswell signed the agreements in an April 5 ceremony at the state Capitol in Oklahoma City.

The home page of PokerTribes.com currently states the real-time, real-money website will go live this summer on "the web, mobile, iPad, laptop, desktop and apps near you." And the website, developed and managed by Universal Entertainment Group, won't be relegated to poker. It will offer a variety of casino games like bingo, blackjack and pull-tabs.

The Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes operate two brick-and-mortar casinos in the state, both named Luck Star Casino, in Concho and Clinton.

— *ICTMN.com*

## Hard Rock acquires options on land for traffic plan

**WEST SPRINGFIELD, Mass.** — Hard Rock International has taken out options to buy three properties on Memorial Avenue in West Springfield as part of its plans to improve traffic flow to a proposed \$700- to \$800-million casino project on land along the east side of the Eastern States Exposition campus, part of a \$35-million-plus traffic plan that Hard Rock CEO James Allen said will not only handle anticipated casino traffic, but also improve existing traffic patterns.

"We are truly trying to be part of the community, enhancing the existing infrastructure to make it better for all going forward," Allen said.

— *MassLive.com*

## NIGC named one of best government places to work

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** — The National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC) was recognized as one of the best small agencies to work for in the federal government, so said a survey by the nonprofit Partnership for Public Service.

NIGC's No. 11 ranking (among 362 federal agencies and subcomponents with less than 100 employees) was the commission's highest since the index was developed.

— *NIGC.gov*

## Alaska Tribes win land trust suit versus Secretary of Interior

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** — A Washington, D.C. district court has found that the Secretary of Interior has the authority to take land into trust for Alaska Tribes — a ruling that places Alaska Natives on equal footing with other Native American populations.

The state of Alaska had argued that the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) of 1971 prohibited the secretary from taking land into trust.

Judge Rudolph Contreras, however, ruled in favor of the Akiachak Native Community in its lawsuit against former Secretary Ken Salazar. The Tribal government for the village, which is on the Kuskokwim River near Alaska's southwestern coast, argued that a federal regulation blocking the secretary's acceptance of trust land only in Alaska was unlawful.

"The ruling is an important recognition of Tribal self-determination and trust status will protect Tribes from lawsuits, taxation and foreclosure," said attorney Heather Kendall Miller, who argued the case on behalf of Alaska Tribes. "The ruling will allow Alaska Tribes to petition the secretary to have non-ANCSA lands placed into trust and the opportunity to enhance their ability to regulate alcohol, respond to domestic violence and generally protect the health, safety and welfare of Tribal members."

— *Indian Country Media Network*

## Northern Ute may lower blood, raise enrollment

**FORT DUCHESNE, Utah** — The Tribal nation with North America's strictest enrollment criteria may soon decide on more flexible rules that might, if adopted, dramatically increase the Tribe's current 3,000-plus membership.

A pending secretarial election (not yet scheduled) could lower the five-eighths Ute Indian blood degree requirement for membership in the Ute Indian Tribe, Uintah and Ouray Reservation (Northern Utes), which occupies some 1.3 million acres of trust land containing significant oil and gas deposits.

The proposed constitutional amendment resulted from a petition signed by a "large number of Tribal members" calling for change, in hopes of allowing increased enrollment, sources said.

"We're financially stable and we're giving our people identity," said Valentina Sireech, who works in Ute economic development, "but if we're financially able to do that, we should be sure to give the kids their identity. As some say, though, if we're not able financially to do that, maybe we can't."

The kids she mentions are children who may have a parent of full Ute heritage but who lack by an eighth degree the quantum required, or children of full Indian heritage who lack the required five-eighths Ute quantum.

A controversial vote, the secretarial election will be administered by the BIA, not the Ute Indian Tribe.

— *Redlakenationnews.com*

## Chippewa leader rips state in 'State of Tribes' speech

**MADISON, Wis.** — Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Chairman Gordon Thayer took Wisconsin officials to task in the annual State of the Tribes address, accusing them of spreading "propaganda" in a dispute over fishing, harming the state's natural resources with legislation easing the mining permit process and failing to give the Tribes enough credit.

The address was a manifestation of how fractured the state's relationship with Wisconsin's six Chippewa Tribes has become. The two sides have clashed over a host of environmental and conservation issues during the past year and a half.

"We can't be dismissed as a subgroup of people in Wisconsin," Thayer said. "That's all I'm saying. We're here."

The feud began when Republicans introduced bills to establish the state's first organized wolf hunt. The Chippewa have taken special exception to the wolf hunt. They see that animal as a spiritual brother.

The mining bill was designed to ease the path for a company called Gogebic Taconite to open a 4.5-mile long open pit mine just south of the Bad River Chippewa's reservation; that Tribe fears the mine will pollute their water.

The proceedings began amiably enough, with legislators greeting Tribal leaders as they took their seats in the State Assembly Chamber and standing as the Tribes carried their flags past the main dais.

Thayer's remarks so angered Assembly Speaker Pro Tem Bill Kramer that he walked out of the chamber during the speech.

"When you're continually talking about collaboration but tell us everything we did wrong... I don't think my walking out was any more disrespectful to the speaker than the speaker was disrespectful to us," Kramer said.

— *Sheboyganpress.com*

## Navajo Code may allow 2-percent sales tax on junk food

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** — The Navajo Health Education and Human Services Committee (HEHSC) is considering an amendment to the Navajo Nation Code to allow for a 2-percent sales tax on junk food and the elimination of sales tax on fresh fruits and vegetables.

Legislation co-sponsor Jonathan Nez said he lost 100 pounds since changing his eating habits, attributing much of his weight loss to exercising and taking part in the Navajo Nation's "Just Move It" program.

The generated tax revenue could raise substantial sums of money to benefit programs that are facing sequestration budget cuts, Delegate Nez said; the tax also encourages local communities to be more self-determined and self-sufficient.

After two hours of deciding on the issue, the HEHSC members chose to hold a work session to explore and address the issues and concerns that were brought forth.

HEHSC members voted 4-0 to table the legislation until a work session takes place.

— *Navajo Post*

## Shoshone-Paiute Chairman Terry Gibson walks on

**OWYHEE, Nev.** — On the evening of April 4, Tribal Chairman Terry Gibson, of the Shoshone-Paiute Tribe of the Duck Valley Reservation on the Nevada/Idaho border, passed away at age 52. According to Gibson's son, Buster Gibson, he died as a result of a heart attack.

"Chairman Gibson served the people of our community as an employee, Council member and as Tribal Chairman. His presence will be missed and his loss will be felt by not only those locally but by many throughout the nation," said the Tribe in a statement. "We thank you in advance for your condolences, thoughts and prayers during this time."

— *Nativeamericanencyclopedia.com*

## Sally Jewell wins confirmation as Interior Secretary



Photo courtesy of Associated Press

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** — Sally Jewell, Seattle-born CEO of outdoor

retailer Recreational Equipment Inc., won easy Senate confirmation April 11 to be the nation's next Interior Secretary, overseeing more than 500 million acres of national parks and other public lands, plus more than 1 billion acres offshore — including lands used for energy development, mining, recreation and other purposes.

The Senate approved her nomination 87 to 11, with all the "no" votes coming from Republicans.

One of the first challenges Jewell, 57, will face is a proposed rule requiring companies that drill for oil and natural gas on federal lands to publicly disclose chemicals used in hydraulic fracturing operations. The administration proposed a draft "fracking" rule last year, but twice has delayed a final rule amid complaints by the oil and gas industry that the original proposal was too burdensome. A new draft is expected this spring.

Jewell also is expected to continue to push development of renewable energy such as wind and solar power, both of which are priorities of the Interior Secretary she succeeds, Ken Salazar.

President Barack Obama said in a statement that Jewell's extensive business experience — including her work as a petroleum engineer — and her longtime commitment to conservation made her the right person for the job.

"She brings an important mix of strong management skills, appreciation for our nation's tradition of protecting our public lands and heritage, and a keen understanding of what it means to be good stewards of our natural resources," Obama said.

— *Boston Globe*

## Ken Salazar leaves top Interior job with no regrets



Photo courtesy of Indian Country Today Media Network

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** — Interior Secretary Ken Salazar has packed up his photos and most of his books and is taking his paintings down from the wall. As the transition begins for the retiring Salazar and his recently confirmed successor, Sally Jewell, Salazar muses over his eventful four years in office. He points to a small vial of oil recovered on July 14, 2010, from the BP Oil Spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

"I'm not sure if I'll take it," Salazar confessed, though he said the federal reforms and restoration funding stemming from the Deepwater Horizon disaster have left the country better off. "The legacy, of it, I think, is a positive one."

During an interview with the *Washington Post*, Salazar said he was satisfied with his accomplishments.

"I don't know that I would have done anything differently," he said. "I feel very good and very much at peace."

Coping with the oil spill dominated his time during 2010, admitted Salazar, who promoted renewable energy both on public lands and in federal waters, after taking over a department that embraced a mind-set of "drill everywhere."

Salazar also touted the nine national monuments President Barack Obama has declared over the past four years, including five the president designated late last month. He described preserving those historic, cultural and environmental sites, including Colorado's Chimney Rock and New Mexico's Rio Grande del Norte, as acts that "will be seen as foundational to the conservation legacy of this president."

— *Washington Post*

## Tex Hall receives 2013 Wendell A. Chino Humanitarian Award

**PHOENIX, Ariz.** — Tex Hall, the longest serving Chairman of the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation, received the Wendell A. Chino Humanitarian Award at the National Indian Gaming Association's (NIGA) 2013 Indian Gaming Tradeshow & Convention.

A well-known and respected leader in the Indian and non-Indian communities on the state and national levels, Chairman Hall has dedicated his life to protecting sovereignty and defending Tribal governments.

The award was given during NIGA's annual Banquet during at the Phoenix Convention Center.

Chairman Hall currently serves as President of the Native American Basketball Invitational Foundation. He is a founding member and spokesperson for the Coalition of Large Tribes (COLT) representing Tribes with large land bases.

"This award signifies leadership, humility, strength and honor," Ernie Stevens Jr. said. "Tex Hall exemplifies

all of those qualities. He continues to take charge when many do not, but while doing so, instills courage to others, many of which are in this banquet room. Indian country, and the MHA Nation are stronger because of the efforts of this man."

Mark Chino, Wendell Chino's son, presented the award to Chairman Hall. Wendell Chino, the award's namesake, is an iconic figure in Indian Country. He was a nationally recognized leader of the Mescalero Apache Nation, serving most of his life as his nation's president. He implemented his Tribal economic philosophy by turning the Mescalero Reservation into a small business model that raised his Nation to a level of economic growth never before experienced by the Mescalero Apache Tribe.

The Seminole Tribe of Florida's Special Projects Department — a branch of Seminole Media Productions — produced the video tribute played during the NIGA Wendell Chino Award dinner on March 26.

— *Indian Gaming Weekly*

## Genting starts cruise to Bimini casino

**NORTH BIMINI ISLAND** — Genting (USA) Ltd., the company that has been trying to change Florida laws to build a super casino in Miami for years without success, has apparently chosen the next closest geographic alternative: a fast cruise to Bimini, the nearest offshore destination to South Florida where a full casino can operate, except for Seminole and Miccosukee Tribal casinos.

Resorts World Bimini Bay is scheduled to open December 2013 at Bimini Bay Resort & Marina, featuring a 10,000-square-foot casino with full-scale gaming tables, slots and sports betting in a venue similar to Genting's London casinos.

The boat, recently purchased by Genting, is the 32,728-ton fast ferry Superfast VI (to be renamed Bimini Superfast for service from Florida to the Bahamas).

The ship is capable of carrying 1,600 passengers, with berths for 934 overnight passengers. It is 669 feet long with a beam of 82 feet. As the name implies, it can operate at a very high speed of around 28 knots and will be able to complete the 48 nautical-mile distance from the Florida coast in around 2.5 hours.

— *Maritimematters.com*

## Hard Rock's John Fontana honored by Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling



Photo courtesy of Hard Rock Tampa

John Fontana, left, with Paul Ashe.

**ORLANDO** — John Fontana, president of Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa, was awarded with the Treatment Award from the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling (FCCG) in a ceremony at the DoubleTree Hilton on April 5.

This is the first time a member of the gaming industry has been recognized with the award.

"Words cannot sufficiently express the work of John Fontana, this year's Treatment Award recipient, and the difference he has made in the lives of problem gamblers and their families," FCCG President Paul Ashe said. "While most individuals give lip service to the concern for problem gamblers, he has long proved his dedication to the cause on an ongoing basis."

The Treatment Award was created to recognize an individual or organization that has significantly furthered treatment services or support to the problem gambling population in Florida.

A 10-year member of the FCCG's Board of Directors, and its current vice president, Fontana spearheaded the initiative which secured funding from the Seminole Tribe of Florida, resulting in accessible treatment for persons in need of help for a gambling problem within Florida.

To support individuals with a compulsion to gamble, the Seminole Tribe of Florida operates a Self-Exclusion Program, established to allow people with a gambling problem to voluntarily exclude themselves from casino gaming activities in all Seminole casinos.

Also, in collaboration with the FCCG, the Seminole Tribe of Florida assists in funding 1-888-ADMIT-IT, Florida's 24-hour, toll-free help line for casino players with a compulsion to gamble. The help line is used in ads and on all marketing materials for the Seminole casinos.

— *Prweb.com*

Big Cypress Council Rep.  
**MANUEL "MONDO" TIGER**  
and Community Welcome You To The



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**BIG CYPRESS**

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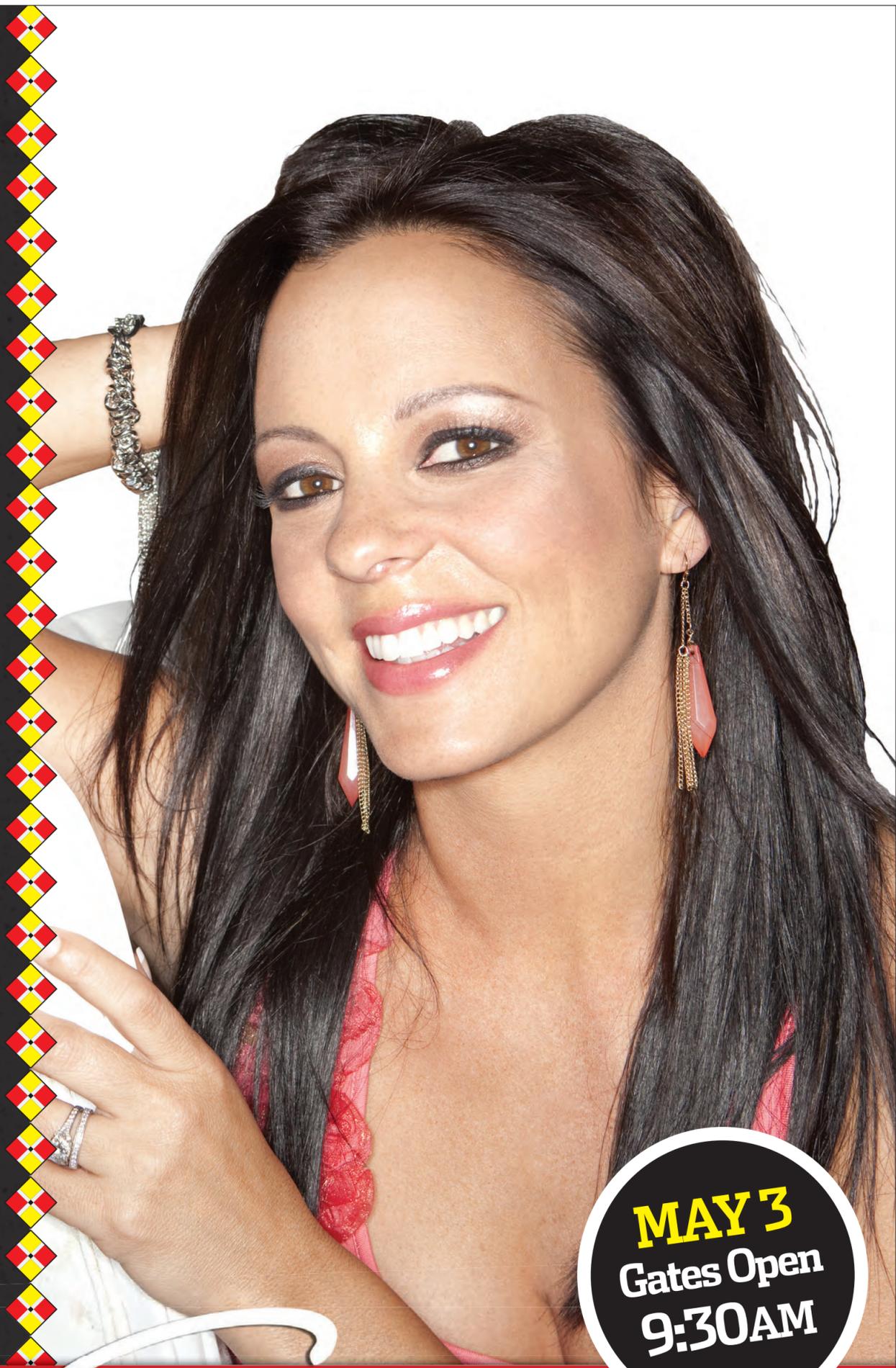
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# Education

# B



Beverly Bidney

Max Osceola Jr. tells the Police Explorers the history of the Council Oak under its branches on April 9.

## Police Explorers learn their history under the boughs of the Council Oak

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**HOLLYWOOD** — As the Hollywood Police Explorers prepare for their annual trip to Washington, D.C. — the seat of the federal government — they learned about the Seminole Tribe's government and how it was established. Former Hollywood Councilman Max Osceola Jr. met the Explorers on April 9 under the Council Oak to share the history of the Tribe.

"Back in the 1950s, the Tribe sat under this tree and made some big decisions that affect you today," Osceola said. "This is where the Tribe was formed; it is part of your history."

Osceola told the kids about the "old days" when Tribal members lived in chickees and farmed nearby fields where the Classic Casino stands today. The Tribe was always organized but never had a formal government. Federal recognition by the U.S. government required the Tribe to create a constitution of their own.

Meetings were held under the Council Oak where members formed a committee to write a constitution and a charter. Tribal members voted to ratify their Constitution and Corporate Charter on Aug. 21, 1957.

"The Constitution is like a rule book on how we run the government," Osceola explained. "It's like rules of the game in baseball; it's three strikes, not four. The rules are followed."

The children learned that Tribal

government, which was set up using U.S. Congress as an example, consists of a Council and a Board. Council members and Board representatives each have two-year terms; the Chairman of the Council and President of the Board have four-year terms.

"This tree saved our Tribe and let us plan for the future," Osceola said. "You are the future. You need to go to school because we need you to learn how to run the Tribe."

When the Tribe wrote the Constitution and Corporate Charter, they couldn't envision the Hard Rock, but they knew an opportunity would come along to allow the Tribe to prosper. Osceola said. In 2007, the Tribe purchased Hard Rock International and subsequently owns 120 cafes, nine hotels and four casinos in 52 countries. A photo captured the moment when the Tribe signed papers allowing the purchase.

"We came back to the Council Oak to sign that resolution and now that photo is in every Hard Rock Café in the world," Osceola said. "In 1957 our annual budget was \$12,000. Today it is about \$1 billion. We've come a long way, but we have to manage the money. You can't spend it all today; you have to make sure to save some for tomorrow."

Osceola told the Explorers some of them could be doctors, lawyers, professional athletes, entrepreneurs and more. But he also told them they could be successful business people just by working with the Tribe.



Beverly Bidney

Explorers listen attentively as they learn the significant history of the Council Oak.

"This is a significant and sacred place and I'm proud to be here," he said. "It's the responsibility of the elders to teach

the young. It's your responsibility to know about the Council Oak and tell your children about it. Share your knowledge."

## Dasani Cypress captures national science award

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.** — Taking first place in a school science fair is exciting. Winning a No. 1 spot at the National

American Indian Science & Engineering Fair (NAISEF) is huge.

"It was a very fun learning experience," said Dasani Cypress, a seventh-grader at Ahfachkee School.

In December 2012, Cypress' How Well

Do You Know Your Water science project won first place at Ahfachkee, which led her to the NAISEF fair and convention held March 21-23 in Albuquerque, N.M. There, she blew away judges to take first place in the national environmental sciences category of the contest.

About 260 elementary, middle and high school students from Indian Country competed in nearly 30 categories that included computer science, health science, molecular science, animal science and bio-engineering.

Patricia Jolly, an instructional aide at Ahfachkee, accompanied Cypress on the trip. Students Janessa Jones and Sabré Billie also attended to enter their Ahfachkee first-place projects from December, though neither placed at NAISEF.

"Both Janessa and Sabré showed well. It was a good experience for everyone. They enjoyed the trip," Jolly said.

Cypress' project took about a month of research and follow-up to determine the quality of water that flows through Big Cypress and the impact the water's natural filtering system has on the community. She credits Lisa Meday, Whitney Sapienza, Christopher Fuller and Craig Tepper, of the Tribe's Environmental Resource Management Department, for help that included sharing data already at hand and analyzing Cypress' own collected water

samples.

"Not a lot of people are aware that Big Cypress is a big part of our water filtering system," Cypress said.

At the core of the project, Cypress set out to discover if water coming into the reservation was cleaner or dirtier than water going out. She was concerned about the effects of water runoff from cities and agricultural land beyond Big Cypress.

"It's the minerals that collect that worry me. Too much can kill plants and fish," she said in December during an interview at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium where the school's science fair was staged.

Cypress hopes to continue the project.

On April 3, Meday sent an email to Cypress' mother, Danielle Jumper-Frye, indicating that the department will continue its own job of gathering data to monitor the water quality. They will share their findings with Cypress.

Meday also invited Cypress to tag along with the department in July and August during aquatic diversity studies in Big Cypress and Brighton. The study will link biological (fish, bugs, algae, etc.) findings to water quality.

Cypress is all for it. "I would like to continue my project, to learn more about our water quality, to see if it is improving and to take the project to another level," she said.



Photo courtesy of Patricia Jolly

Dasani Cypress poses next to her national award-winning science project, How Well Do You Know Your Water, during the National American Indian Science & Engineering Fair in Albuquerque, N.M.

## Tribe launches Professional Development Program

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

Education doesn't end with graduation from high school or college — it is a lifelong endeavor. The Education Department realizes this simple fact and has designed programs to encourage Tribal members to continue learning in the real world.

The revamped Tribal Professional Development Program has three components: Summer Work Experience, Work Experience and Advanced Career Development. Each component has specific requirements and directives based on the participant's age and educational level.

"The program is more than a placement agency; it's an educational experience," said Marie Dufour, Professional Development Program manager. "This is a comprehensive program that will benefit both the participants and the Tribe in the long run."

The program aims to create future leaders and to build on the investment the Tribe has made in education. The new structure of the program will help participants learn skills and behaviors to help them succeed academically and professionally. Additionally, the program will act as a liaison between the Education and Human Resources departments.

The Summer Work Experience began in 2005, and the goal of the nine-week program is largely the same: to expose Tribal youth to various departments within the Tribe so they can begin thinking about a career. Previously for youth ages 14 to 18, it is now open to people from ages 14 to 24. Another new requirement is a 2.0 GPA. Participants will rotate between departments to glimpse the career diversity within the Tribe.

"We want to encourage them to align their academic journeys to match future career opportunities with the Tribe," Dufour said. "This is an awesome opportunity. Most students don't know where their education will lead them; we can focus their education to match their interests."

Summer Work Experience participants will rotate through several departments during the summer program. Last year, more than 50 kids participated in the program. Applications will be available in the Education Department on each reservation starting May 6. The deadline for applications is May 31, and the program runs June 10 through Aug. 12.

The Work Experience component, a two-year program geared toward people ages 18 and older, provides professional growth through on-the-job training. Participants, who must have a high school diploma or GED, will learn the core competencies needed in each department. The program aims to provide Tribal members with employment opportunities that will develop their work ethic, help them build a resume and learn effective interviewing skills.

"We want to give the participant as much experience as possible to learn what they need to succeed in each department," Dufour said. "We used to be just a placement opportunity, but now we will develop the participants as employees."

Following specific curriculum, each department will train participants, track their progress and help them understand what is expected of them. The participants will spend enough time in each department to master those skills. The evaluation process is an essential part of the program. The Professional Development team will evaluate the joint performance of the departments and the participants to make sure things run smoothly for all involved.

Work Experience is not a new program but it has been revamped to meet the needs of the Tribe and the employees. The participants, which are limited to 60 people, will be paid while they are in the program.

Advanced Career Development participants will work directly with management while grooming to be future leaders of the Tribe. Participants must be 18 and older and have an associate degree or higher, as confirmed by the Education Department. Participants will rotate between departments within their individual career arcs. The goal is to get Tribal members into management positions within the Tribe.

College graduates can join the program to gain experience working with supervisors, managers and directors and to increase organizational and operational experience. The Education Department recognizes Tribal graduates need to develop workplace expertise, and the ACD offers the opportunity to gain those skills. The program is projected to begin early 2014.

"The Professional Development Program can develop peoples' skills and make them true professionals," Dufour said. "That will let them give back to their community, and not many people can say that."

For more information about the Tribal Professional Development Program, email MarieDufour@semtribe.com.

# Storytellers span generations, keeping Seminole legends alive

## New Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum series will take place throughout Tribe

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

Seminole tell stories as a way of passing information, legends and morals down through generations. In keeping with the tradition, preschoolers were invited to a Seminole Storytellers program at the Hollywood Senior Center on March 21.

During the intergenerational storytelling, sponsored by the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, the group of 3- and 4-year-old children sat on a rug and listened to Gordon "Ollie" Wareham and Paul Buster share their fables. Despite their best efforts to listen, the preschoolers were easily distracted. The young crowd was more of a squirming, wriggling mass of cuteness, but it didn't stop either storyteller from reaching the moral of their tales.

Wareham began the event by playing songs on a Native American flute. As the children settled into their seats, he told the legend of the Rabbit and the Box Turtle.

"We have some bad people in these stories to teach you kids how not to act," Wareham said. "We are Seminoles, and that is more than our DNA. It's about the knowledge we have and the stories told by our grandparents and parents."

Master of ceremonies Van Samuels introduced the storytellers and engaged the preschoolers.

"When I was your age, these stories

were told to me," said Samuels, Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Community Outreach specialist. "If you listen closely you might hear about an animal you know."

With that, Buster took his seat at the front of the room and began speaking in Elapoonke, or Mikasuki, to the children.

"Make an effort to be a good Seminole and learn your language," said Buster, cultural language instructor in the Hollywood Culture Department.

He went on to tell a story about procrastination. The person in the story saw some berries when they were green and too hard to eat. Then he saw them when they were ripe but didn't go out to gather any. By the time he went out to get the berries, they were shriveled and no good. The lesson: Avoid putting tasks off and do them when the time, and the berries, are ripe.

"Telling the story in English takes about 50 percent out of it," said Buster, who would have preferred to tell it in Elapoonke. "Listen to your teachers, moms and dads and you will do well."

Buster sang a song for the children, in English and Elapoonke.

"We want to get the seniors to interact with the children," said Melissa May, Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Programs manager. "We hope as the program grows, other seniors will feel comfortable enough to share their stories."

The Seminole Storytellers program will be held on May 23 in Big Cypress.



Beverly Bidney

Gordon 'Ollie' Wareham tells the story of the rabbit and the box turtles, using hand gestures and facial expressions to entertain Hollywood youth.

### Big Cypress hosts own storytelling session

Traditional legends can be passed down anytime and anyplace said Billy Walker, of the Big Cypress Reservation, who entertained about a dozen children with stories April 2 at the Willie Frank Memorial Library.

"A long time ago we'd sit by the fire

and hear the stories. Listening to the legends was our television," he said.

Walker, a storytelling alligator wrestler and wildlife guide, shared tales that teach respect for humanity and nature. He also recanted a legend of how several central Florida bodies of water, including Lake Okeechobee, came into existence – thanks to two hunters and a snake.

Walker knows nearly 40 legends that have been passed down through generations by word of mouth. For some people, Walker said, it can take a lifetime to "get" the message.

Staff reporter Eileen Soler contributed to this article.



Beverly Bidney

Hollywood preschoolers laugh during one of the stories told by Gordon 'Ollie' Wareham.



Eileen Soler

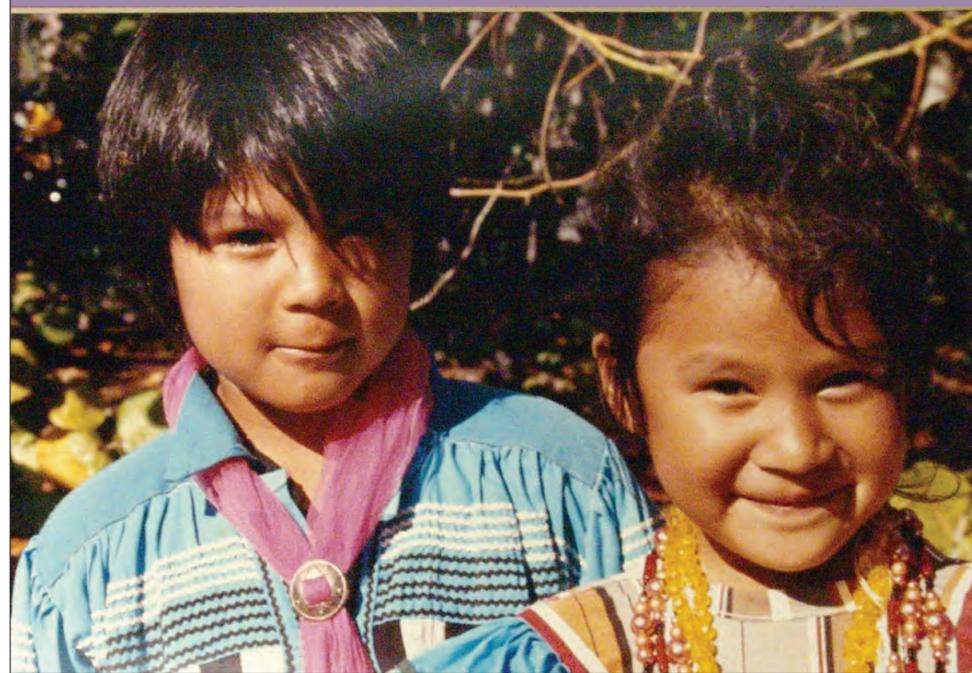
Billy Walker tells a group of children in Big Cypress the part of a Seminole legend when a boy turns into a tree.



Eileen Soler

Billy Walker poses with children April 2 at the Willie Frank Memorial Library in Big Cypress after a special after-school storytelling hour.

# Ahfachkee Values



Eeyaataale, you protect them through good and bad, because they would do the same for you.

**LOYALTY**

Kaylan Osceola, 11th Grade – I selected this picture because it is of my aunt and uncle when they were younger, and it's cute. The value I selected is Loyalty. I selected this value because they're brother and sister and I know no matter what they argue about they'll always be family. You should always stay loyal to family.

Family always sticks together.

**PERSEVERANCE**

Malari Baker, 11th Grade – I selected this picture because it is my great grandma in it. Growing up she didn't really have a lot but no matter what she always took care of her family and kids. She obviously did a good job because the baby's all fat in the picture. I choose the value Perseverance because it goes with the way she was and also the way she taught us to be. It means to keep going no matter what obstacles or hard times come.



# Former Seminole Tribune writer inspires young authors

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**BRIGHTON** — Every time Michael James writes, he answers an expectation. James, a former professional photographer and *Seminole Tribune* journalist, met Patrick Smith while reporting Smith's 1999 induction into the Florida Artists Hall of Fame.

Two of Smith's books, *Forever Island* and *Allapattah*, focused on Seminole culture and struggles.

"We sparked a friendship then started writing letters, and in every letter Patrick would tell me to keep writing," James said.

When James left South Florida at age 37 to study nursing at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Smith did not let up.

"He sent another letter that said, 'I hope you're writing,'" James said.

James, now 52, is the son of an Okeechobee dentist who in the 1960s served the Tribe. James said he practically grew up on Big Cypress Reservation, where he forged many friendships. After establishing two photography studios and a career that took him coast to coast, his photography became nearly exclusive to the Tribe and he began to write in 1995.

Last year, the photographer/reporter turned nurse, who now works as a kidney transplant coordinator at University of North Carolina Hospital, obliged Smith by

publishing three books and a short story all influenced by his experiences with the Tribe.

One of the novels helped fulfill another promise.

*Billy's Camp* was culled from days he hunted wild turkey and boar with an old buddy who had a camp in Big Cypress during the 1990s, before the hunting grounds became an animal refuge. His friend died in 1999.

"The last conversation we had, Billy told me to write about our times," James said.

The book and James' other missives — *Bone Diggers*, *Turning Final* and *Pirate's Ghost* — were on display April 3 at the Billy Osceola Memorial Library on the Brighton Reservation, where James led an after-school book writing workshop for eight children, all students at Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School.

"I want the children to know that it's important to write," James said. "That's how we know about people 50 or 100 or so years ago. It's because someone wrote it down."

The workshop began with a challenge: "Why don't we write a book just for the fun of it?" he asked.

Now James is committed to new muses. "Even though I live 700 miles away, we will write this book together," he said.

The children bubbled with ideas. They brainstormed the necessary parts

of a story and what they would want to read or write. The decision? They would write about playing hide-and-seek after school on the reservation — and the title would be *Funny Book*.

Later, the children used colored markers to create the book's front cover art. The pretty scene included a horse, trees, flowers and a chickee.

James and the children will finish the book in coming months via the Internet, phone and letters with help from Deborah Johns, site supervisor for the library.

"It's my first time to ever write a book. It will have a horse, a pig and they will all play together. It will be magical," said Ashlynn Collins, 7.

"I just can't wait to tell friends that I am an author," said Talena Holata, also 7.

Johns said it was coincidence that the event happened.

One day she was surfing the Internet looking for books relating to Native American topics and recognized James' name from his days as a *Seminole Tribune* reporter. Four days later, James called "out of the blue" to ask if he could host the kid's workshop.

"It's great to have Michael back here. He promotes reading and shows the children that writing is something they can do — they can put their thoughts on paper," Johns said. "Now, when the children pick up a book to read, they will know what the author did to make the book happen."



Photo courtesy of Brighton Culture Department

Seminole boys work on re-thatching a chickee located on the Okeechobee Freshman Campus as part of the school's annual Heritage Day.

## Students participate in Heritage Day

BY EMMA JOHNS  
Freelance Writer

**OKEECHOBEE** — Every year, the Okeechobee Freshman Campus honors its diverse student population by hosting Heritage Day. Each ethnicity represented at the school is invited to share their cultural background through relevant demonstrations with the student population.

On April 22, ninth-graders from the Brighton Reservation and Brighton Culture staff participated in the event. The Seminole students began their presentation with an oral representation of Seminole culture to the student body.

Each student shared his or her Indian name with fellow students. Rumor Juarez demonstrated the Creek language with a rendition of a traditional song. Michael Garcia demonstrated the Creek Pledge and Royce Osceola shared a traditional

Seminole legend. Later, students gathered outdoors to further learning about different ethnic groups represented.

The Seminole students participated by showing how to re-thatch a chickee by completely repairing the one located on campus.

The girls exhibited their knowledge of how to prepare and cook traditional pumpkin bread. The students and Culture staff also displayed an array of traditional Seminole arts and crafts.

The Seminole students were able to engage in leadership roles and share their knowledge of the Tribe by answering questions peers had about the culture of the Seminole people.

They also enjoyed sharing samples of pumpkin bread with students almost as much as their fellow students enjoyed eating the bread.



Eileen Soler

Author Michael James hosts a book writing workshop with children April 3 at the Billy Osceola Memorial Library on the Brighton Reservation. The children and James will work together via emails and phone conversations to write and illustrate a book they have already named *Funny Book*.



Eileen Soler

Naleah Billie and Talena Holata draw the cover art for a book they will title *Funny Book*.

## Charter School teacher wins Glades County Teacher of the Year



Emma Johns

The Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School Teachers of the Year, along with principal Brian Greseth and other teachers and staff, pose for a picture during the Glades County Golden Apple Banquet on April 3.

BY EMMA JOHNS  
Freelance Writer

**MOORE HAVEN** — The Glades County School Board held its annual Golden Apple Banquet and Awards Ceremony on April 3 to honor the county's outstanding teachers and support staff for the school year.

Victoria Paige, a second-grade teacher at Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School, took home top honors from the banquet, as she was recognized as the 2014 Glades County Teacher of the Year. This recognition is the highest achievement an educator can earn within her school district.

"Being named Teacher of the Year... has been a great honor," Paige said of her nomination at PECS. "Knowing that the equally dedicated and highly professional individuals I work with supported my nomination was indeed a humbling experience."

For more than 34 years, Paige has dedicated her career to the education of children, and her resume speaks for itself.

She was formerly named Teacher of the Year and Volunteer of the Year in Okeechobee County and also received the prestigious WPEC TV CBS12 Educator of Excellence Award in 2000. Paige praised her PECS family and her own family for their dedication and support of her career as an educator.

Paige is the second teacher from PECS who has received the Glades County Teacher of the Year Award.

PECS Middle School Teacher of the Year Quenten Pritchard and Support Staff Employee of the Year Linda Long were also recognized during the banquet for their educational achievements at PECS.

Current and former students, along with PECS principal Brian Greseth, had very encouraging and supportive words to share about all the honorees.

During the event, held at the Doyle Conner Building in Moore Haven, Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School was also recognized as a Golden Apple Sponsor for their continued support of the Golden Apple Banquet.



Emma Johns

Elementary teacher Victoria Paige is named the 2014 Glades County Teacher of the Year.



Photo courtesy of Brighton Culture Department

Lahna Sedatol skillfully fries pumpkin frybread for her peers to sample.

## Student spotlight: Amy Dimas

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**IMMOKALEE** — Being a mother of three school-age children can be a real challenge; homework, dinners and extracurricular activities all take time before bedtime. Amy Dimas, of Immokalee, had to juggle her children's busy schedules with her own rigorous requirements to graduate from Hodges University in Naples. Despite the obstacles, Dimas earned a bachelor's degree in health studies in the fall of 2012.

"It took a lot of time management to make sure they were taken care of first," said Dimas, 29, of Lehigh Acres. "I made sure their homework was done and they were in bed before I started mine."

That meant Dimas would get to her own assignments after 9 or 10 p.m., work until the early hours of the morning and then get up to wake the kids for school. It was tough, but she focused on her goal.

Dimas, the daughter of Raymond Garza and Dolores Hernandez Lopez, originally studied massage and became a certified massage therapist, but she couldn't see herself working as a masseuse for the rest of her life.

"I wanted more out of it," she said. "I learned massage wasn't the career for me. I wanted to do more rehab therapy."

Although the course work was demanding, Dimas enjoyed it. Her biggest challenge was finding the time to study, which she did anywhere she could — even in the car as she waited for her children to get out of school.

Now that she has an undergraduate degree, Dimas plans to get a doctorate in

physical therapy at Florida Gulf Coast University. She ultimately wants to open her own physical therapy practice but doesn't know what she will concentrate on, perhaps pediatrics or trauma. The FGCU physical therapy doctoral program will take three years to complete and includes clinical work, so Dimas will have a chance to experience the different specialties within the field.

Dimas is motivated by her children, Haylie Holloway, 12, Harlie Holloway, 9, and Joshua Dimas, 5, who inspire her to succeed. She knows graduate school will be a challenge, but she will take things one step at a time instead of worrying about future curriculum. She knows she couldn't have gone this far without the support of her husband, mother and sisters, who helped care for the children when she attended class.

Dimas, who works in the library on the Immokalee Reservation, believes the secret to success is simple enough and is applicable in all areas of life.

"Keep going, keep pushing and don't dwell on yesterday," she said. "Don't ever give up because you've come to a rock in the road; just keep going."



Photo courtesy of Amy Dimas

Amy Dimas plans to complete her doctorate in physical therapy.

# Artist Elgin Jumper passes down palate of know-how

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — Not even with a swish of his brush would Seminole artist Elgin Jumper paint himself to be an educator.

"I am not a teacher, but I am an artist who likes to share with other artists. Children? They are emerging and inspiring artists," he said.

On April 10, Jumper, whose paintings have been exhibited in several art books and venues including the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, provided a multitude of paint supplies and a wealth of knowledge to children at the Big Cypress Reservation's Education Center.

The event was the second fine arts painting workshop hosted by Jumper, of Hollywood, and sponsored by the Willie Frank Memorial Library for people of all ages. On hand to help were library site supervisor Gretchen DeBree and Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum's programs manager Melissa May — who also tried her hand at painting.

A rainbow of acrylic and oil colors in plastic and metal tubes filled a supply table. Watercolor containers and neatly packed boxes of pastel sticks flanked paper towels and water cups at creation stations where

students sat before large sheets of paper taped to cardboard.

"The most important rule to remember is: There are no rules," Jumper told the group.

But there are guidelines. Jumper explained various painting styles by displaying some of his works. He showed a cubist painting of the great Seminole warrior Osceola; an impressionistic landscape view of the sunrise east of Snake Road; and a modern art piece in which he scrolled his name in loops.

As students eagerly began, Jumper showed them how to "contour" the subject of their art piece by using pencil to outline their idea. He demonstrated how to apply water over the pencil drawing, then brush on watercolors. He suggested layering acrylic and pastels to add dimension to the work. He coached them to "dry brush" for texture.

"Co-mingle your mediums and try to be versatile," Jumper advised.

Most children created with blues, purples or greens as prominent colors but all incorporated one or more of the Seminole colors — yellow, black, red and white.

"I really like the Seminole colors, but I also like purple," said Jaiven Washington, 8, who outlined his name in gray surrounded

by swaths of blue and purple. Jalee Wilcox, 7, showed deliberate technique with her rendering of a brown puppy amid hearts and a peace sign. Eight-year-old Akira Cabral's thick royal blue acrylic was punctuated in purposeful candy red lines.

"For us to be able to paint whatever we want is the best part of art," Cabral said. Jumper, who studied art at Broward Community College and with Nilda Comas at the Legacy Art Studio in Fort Lauderdale, said creating art requires practice.

"It's a journey of discovery," he said. The finished workshop pieces will be framed, then exhibited at the library. The pieces created in the first workshop in March have been delivered for display at the Big Cypress Boys & Girls Club.

DeBree said children and adults are welcome to attend a special Mother's Day workshop 2 p.m. on May 8. Children will be encouraged to create pieces for their mothers.

Jumper said kids and adults need to be exposed to art and be given the opportunity to create as often as possible. "Seeing art and doing it makes lives brighter — it's all good," Jumper said. "The Seminole Tribe wasn't built in a day. The Seminole artist can't be built in a day either."



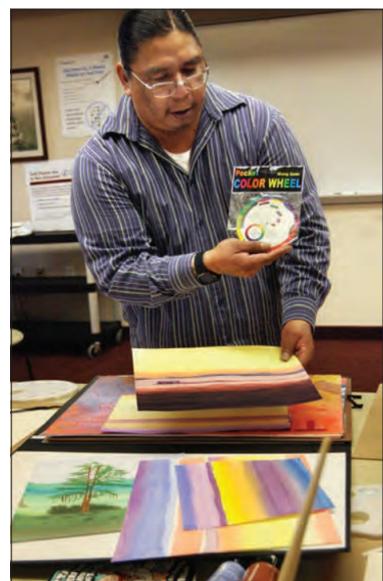
Eileen Soler

Aspiring artist Markayla Cypress gets a little hands-on help from established Seminole artist Elgin Jumper during the April 10 painting workshop.



Eileen Soler

Seminole artist Elgin Jumper poses with 'emerging' artists after a workshop April 10 at Willie Frank Memorial Library at the Big Cypress Reservation.



Eileen Soler

Seminole artist Elgin Jumper talks about various painting styles while showing examples from his own work during the workshop.



Eileen Soler

Peggy Sue Cypress concentrates on drawing the outline for her original painting.



Eileen Soler

Dylan Robbins and Chanon Frye discuss what color acrylics and oils to use during the art workshop.

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# Students receive third nine weeks awards

BY EMMA JOHNS  
Freelance Writer

**BRIGHTON** — On April 11, faculty and parents gathered at Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School to recognize kindergarten through eighth-graders for their third nine weeks achievements.

Awards were given for effort, citizenship and overall academics in the classroom. Bronze Awards were presented to students with a GPA between 3.0-3.4, Silver Awards went to students with GPAs ranging from 3.5-3.9, and Gold Awards were presented to students with perfect 4.0 GPAs.

The Culture Department recognized students for writing and speaking skills, arts and crafts skills, and overall effort during Creek class. And coach Chris Goodwin recognized students for athletic improvement and performance in physical education class.



Emma Johns

Sixth- through eighth-graders receive Culture Awards during the third nine weeks award ceremony at Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School.



Emma Johns

Students are recognized for their physical education performance.



Emma Johns

Sixth- through eighth-graders receive awards for classroom special recognition.



Emma Johns

Rudy Juarez receives a Gold Honor Roll Award from principal Brian Greseth for having a 4.0 GPA.



Emma Johns

Creek Spelling Bee winners pose with their ribbons: from left, second-place winner Raelley Matthews; third-place winner Heath Lawrence; and first-place winner Aiyana Tommie.

# PECS holds annual Creek Spelling Bee

BY EMMA JOHNS  
Freelance Writer

Gopher and the second-place winner was Heather Dobbs.

**BRIGHTON** — The Culture staff at Pemayetv Emahakv held the annual Creek Spelling Bee to help install the traditional language in youth.

Prior to the March 20 event, students in second through eighth grades competed in individual class Creek spelling bees to identify top students from each grade. The winners advanced to the final competition.

The Creek bee emulates a traditional spelling bee in its execution; students are given a word by the proctor, and then they must say the word, spell it and say the word again.

Native Creek speakers Jenny Shore and Ginger Jones served as judges and monitored the correct spelling of each word. The Judges monitored the spellings very closely because the Creek language is not written phonetically.

Many students had mastered a solid foundation of the Creek alphabet that most spelled the words accurately and spoke them fluently.

The winners were: First place, seventh-grader Aiyana Tommie; second place, sixth-grader Raelley Matthews; and third place, fourth-grader Heath Lawrence. A parent/teacher Creek Spelling Bee was also held following the student spelling bee. The first-place winner was Myra



Emma Johns

Heather Dobbs, left, and Myra Gopher celebrate their spelling bee wins.

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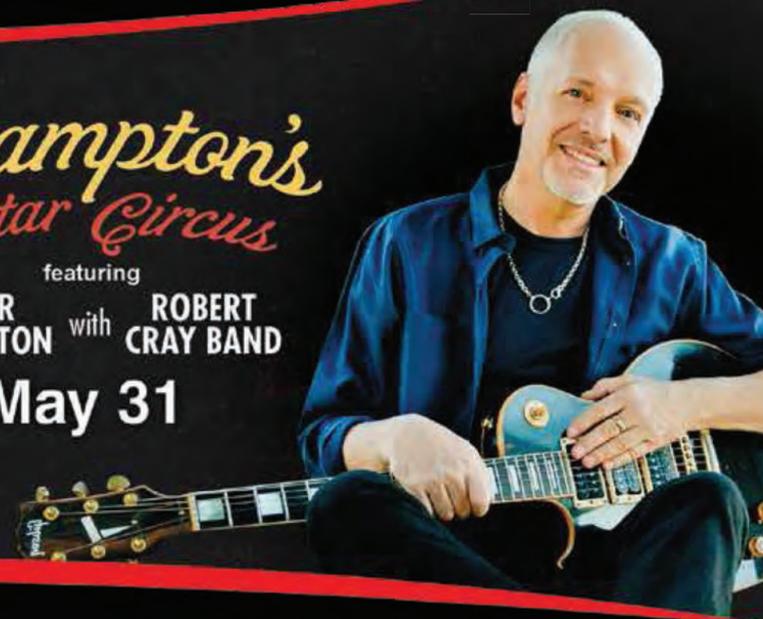
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# PLAY HARD

# Sports

C

## From playpen to cattle pen: Youth compete in rodeo

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — Dyami Nelson, 13, began rodeo sports only two years ago but competes like he was born in the saddle.

During the March 22 Eastern Indian Rodeo Association (EIRA) kids' non-sanctioned rodeo at the 17th annual Junior Cypress Cattle Drive & Rodeo, Nelson, of Hollywood, held tight to the bull rope on the back of a massive bucking steer and took first place in two steer riding events.

Like an old hand, he then helped strap younger riders into safety gear, settled rough stock in chutes and assisted adult organizers with any need.

Other youth rodeo competitors included Jaylen Baker, who came in second in the first steer riding; Dothan Osceola-Rodriguez, who won first among 7-to-9-year-olds in pony riding; Jaylen Baker, who came in first in ages 10-to-12 pony riding; and Andre Jumper, who took first in chute dogging.

Blevins Jumper took first place in steer undecorating, and Andre Jumper won first place for breakaway roping. Barrel race first-place winners were: Diamond Osceola in the 4-to-8 age group; Budah Jumper for ages 9-to-12; and Kalgary Johns for ages 13-to-17.

"It's an adrenalin rush," Nelson said while wiping sweat and clay from his face.

It's also in the blood for most of the 100 Tribal youth registered in the EIRA non-sanctioned events program, said the program director Moses Jumper Jr.

"Rodeo is a top traditional sport for the Seminole. We were about horses and cattle for hundreds of years, long before the Indians of the plains and back when the Spaniards were here," said Jumper, a fourth-generation cattleman and cowboy who passed the culture to his sons, grandchildren and countless Tribal children.

Most people are surprised to learn that rodeo was the first money-making business for the Tribe, not pow-wows, Tribal fairs or alligator wrestling shows, Jumper said. He likes to see kids as young as 2 begin to get comfortable on the back of a horse.

"They can start at 3 years old with sheep events and move up from there," he said. "They can barrel race at 4 and by the time they are 17, they can be in roping events and bull riding."

Loosely organized training is available on Brighton and Big Cypress Reservations, Jumper said, provided by parents and grandparents willing to pass down the lifestyle and sport. His grandchildren, nieces, nephews and their friends are welcome to practice on his Big Cypress ranch any day, any time.



Eileen Soler

Dyami Nelson rides a 1,000-pound junior bull on March 22 during the Eastern Indian Rodeo Association kids' non-sanctioned rodeo event at the Junior Cypress Rodeo Arena in Big Cypress.

Most Hollywood Reservation youth train during scheduled times up to five days a week at Linda Sluder's Spun Gold Equestrian Center in Davie.

"They have to practice like any team sport but they also learn horsemanship, how to care for the animal, how to compete and how to win," Sluder said.

Jo "Boogie" Jumper, a rodeo pro who serves as secretary for the EIRA, said

training is a must and competing at the non-sanctioned events is "huge" — especially this year.

"We use the kids' events as feeders to the adult rodeo," she said. "We've already witnessed how that happens with people like (rodeo pros) Jacoby Johns and Justin Gopher. Both came up from the Seminole programs."

Adam Turtle, a former director whose

children are now in the youth program, said he made it as an adult competitor to the Indian National Finals Rodeo (INFR) finals 10 times.

"But this is where it starts," Turtle said, watching the barrel races at the Junior Cypress Rodeo Arena. "Kids need to come out and have fun. It builds pride for who they are and heart for what they can achieve."

For the first time, Seminole children

will have a chance to participate at the INFR championship in Las Vegas in November 2013.

But first, youth competitors must compete for spots on INFR tours. The top 10 from the tours will then go on to the INFR championship.

♦ See more RODEO photos on page 4C



Emma Johns

Baseball and softball players pose with their families. On March 21, Pemahtv Emahakv Charter School held a special event to honor the eighth-graders and their parents.

## PECS holds parent night

BY EMMA JOHNS  
Freelance Writer

**BRIGHTON** — As the Pemahtv Emahakv Charter School baseball and softball seasons come to an end so does the middle school career for the eighth-grade athletes.

On March 21, PECS held a special event to honor the eighth-graders and their parents. Eight softball players and three baseball players were proudly escorted across the infield by their parents as they were showered with words of encouragement from coaches.

The event gave the coaches an opportunity to thank players and parents for their commitment to their team and school. It also gave them a chance to say goodbye and good luck as the students prepare to leave PECS and enter high school.

"I like to honor the body of work that these student athletes have put in for us," athletic director Darryl Allen said, adding that many have participated in the program

since elementary school. "I think we've given them some strong tools to work with."

Those tools combined with the support of their parents and teachers offers greater chances of success in the students' futures, Allen said. Through the athletic program at PECS, Allen said they emphasize everything from academics to how students should present themselves.

"We don't have sports teams," he said. "We have sports programs."

The students look forward to what lies ahead.

Pitcher Diamond Shore shared her plans on attending Moore Haven High School next year and has set a goal to spend her high school years working toward being a good student and earning an athletic scholarship.

Shae Pierce looks forward to playing sports in high school and hopes to earn her way into the University of Minnesota or Baylor University on an athletic scholarship, while Trevor Thomas looks

forward to attending ninth grade at the Okeechobee Freshman Campus and to continuing playing sports. Through his academics and athletic potential he hopes to attend the University of Florida.

Although the students aspire to play for top colleges as athletes, they each understand and respect the fact that their academics are also a large part of earning an athletic scholarship.

During the event, students credited their school, coaches and parents for their support and encouragement to become the athletes and students they are today.

Best of luck to the eighth-grade Lady Seminoles: #4 Sydnee Cypress, #5 Shae Pierce, #11 Deliah Carrillo, #15 Martina Herrera, #2 Raylon Eagle, #14 Alexis James, #13 Diamond Shore, #9 Courtney Gore.

Best of luck to the eighth-grade baseball players: #2 Trevor Thomas, #23 Drayton Billie, #11 Demetrius Clark.

♦ See more PECS photos on page 5C

## Sports spotlight: Maleah Isaac

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**CHOCTAW, Miss.** — Some girls just wanna have fun, as the song says. Maleah Isaac, 18, finds the most fun playing basketball.

"I have to play basketball. I get to know people, I make friends and I love the competition," Isaac said.

The senior, in her first year at Choctaw Central High School in Choctaw, Miss., will graduate this spring having put her love of the game to the test. She moved to Choctaw to play with a more competitive, seasoned team, and the strapping forward helped bring the Choctaw Lady Warriors to a district championship win in February and then to the state regional semifinals. Originally from Brighton, she moved to Hollywood and played for Hollywood Christian School for three years.

Isaac has always been athletic, said her mother, Gwen Spiva. She started playing sports at the Tribe's Recreation Department in Hollywood before first grade.

"Even at age 5 she was out there playing softball," Spiva said. "When all the other kids would stand there in the field being cute, Maleah was in the outfield running after every ball, grabbing the ball up and throwing it in."

Isaac got hooked on basketball at age 8. At Hollywood Christian, she added volleyball to her list of favorite sports. This year, Isaac diversified further when she joined Choctaw's track team.

College is next.

"I don't really worry about where I will go to college. I just want to play basketball there," she said.

But while basketball is a must-do, the A-B honor student knows that college hoop dreams won't come true without shooting for a good education. Inspired

by her mother's past career as a teacher at the Tribe's Preschool in Hollywood, Isaac plans to double major in business and early childhood development.

Recent weeks have been spent trying out for junior college teams in Mississippi. Spiva said Isaac will be a walk-on, as Spiva was decades ago when she played basketball for Meridian Community College, also in Mississippi.

After graduation, Isaac hopes to build and manage a Tribal preschool in Mississippi.

"I love to be around kids," she said. "It's what everyone says I am good at — I'm about making children smile."

She was a frequent volunteer for the Hollywood Boys & Girls Club, and Spiva said children gravitate to her daughter.

"She'd always have kids gathered around her. She wants to help out and make everyone happy," Spiva said.

But Isaac did not realize the importance of her gift until after she endured middle school — then turned the bullies into her friends simply by being herself. In Isaac's world, whether volunteering in the community or entertaining her many cousins, no child is mistreated or left out and everyone gets a chance to shine, whether they are first-time athletes or stars of the team.

Giving herself to others is important.

She once envisioned becoming a Seminole Police Officer, so she spent a summer volunteering with the department. Last year, as a junior at Hollywood Christian, Isaac was one of 60 students picked from hundreds nationwide to travel with the faith-based People to People Ambassador Program to Australia where she helped minister to aboriginal Tribes — and went scuba diving in the Great Barrier Reef.

"I love being active. I won't sit still," she said. "Basically, my love for sports and children is where my life will take me."



Eileen Soler

Maleah Isaac is hopeful about her hoop dreams.

# Students keep active on the rez during spring break



**An ostrich makes new friends during a swamp buggy visit from children on spring break at the Big Cypress Reservation's Billie Swamp Safari.**



**Children on spring break in Big Cypress, and adults, take an airboat ride in the Everglades at Billie Swamp Safari.**



**Hollywood kids on spring break warm up with a run on the field; Morningstar Osceola leads the group.**



**Teams of campers in Brighton execute the 'big trick' as Okeechobee Xpllosion All-Stars staff spots the kids as part of the Cheer and Tumble Camp held March 25-27 in the gym.**



**Careful technique combined with speed is necessary for Diamond Osceola to successfully complete the obstacle course on the Hollywood Ball Field.**



**Tiyanni Anderson, center, learns how to cheer during Brighton's Cheer and Tumble Camp.**



**Spring break campers on the Big Cypress Reservation line up with fishing poles and hope for a catch.**



**The races are close for the spring break campers in Hollywood; Carmello Cooper, Tony Billie Jr., Elijah Osceola, Diamond Osceola and Charles Osceola vie for first place.**



**Kids at the Cheer and Tumble Camp in Brighton practice their moves as their campmates wait their turns.**

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# Tribalwide T-ball tournament brings youth together



Beverly Bidney

The Brighton team warms up before the T-ball World Series in Big Cypress on April 13.



Beverly Bidney

Hollywood player Sylas Billie hits a ball off the tee.



Beverly Bidney

Brighton tries to make an out at first base, but Hollywood player Justin Rodriguez is about to beat him to it.



Beverly Bidney

A Brighton player wearing a pink helmet threads the needle and runs right through the Hollywood players to third base.



Beverly Bidney

A Hollywood player is about to tag a Brighton player out at third base.



Beverly Bidney

Hollywood infielders Malakai Vazquez, left, and Sylas Billie are ready for action.

## Hoopster breaks for tee time

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — From the court to the diamond to the fairway, Quenton Cypress, 17, represents the unrelenting spirit of the Ahfachkee Warriors.

On March 22, the high school basketball and baseball player led schoolmates Troy Cantu and Caitlin Cypress to a second-place finish in the Rick Case Automotive 2nd annual High School Golf Challenge. Cypress played two parts in the four-player scramble against one boys' and one girls' team, both from Cypress Bay High School.

Cypress' three years of consistent golfing experience came in handy when it came to adding double to his swing, he said.

"It was a four-man scramble but three showed up. I hit twice all the way around, so I actually played twice," Cypress said. "It helped that I golf year-round. It keeps my swing smooth."

Coached by Amos Mazzant, golf coordinator on the Big Cypress Reservation, the team scored 36 in the front nine and 39 on the back nine. Because the event was not sanctioned by the Florida High School Athletic Association, no winners or losers were announced or recorded.

"Basically, it was a friendly challenge between high school players. It made for a more relaxed and enjoyable day to acknowledge teen golfers," said organizer Stan Bostic, national director

of communications and VIP programs at Rick Case Automotive. "Kids are always getting attention for football, baseball and basketball, but we don't hear enough about the golfers."

Bostic said it makes sense to bring high school students out to the greens.

Thirty adult teams also played at the same time and place in the 9th annual Golf Classic held to benefit The Prestige Club. Based in Broward, the club founded by president Polly Wilkie in 1996, donates time and money to organizations that help families and children in need.

During the inaugural school challenge last year, Ahfachkee scored the highest among several teen foursomes. In keeping with the non-ranking nature of the teen event, all participation prizes and trophies were the same. At the end of the day, however, the names of all participating schools are put into a hat for a scholarship drawing. Last year, Ahfachkee plucked a \$1,000 scholarship. This year, the school came away with \$500.

"The money goes to the athletic directors of the schools for distribution to a high school senior golfer with a GPA of 3.2 or higher...eventually we'd like to see 10 to 15 schools playing the challenge," Bostic said.

Cypress said he would meet the golf challenge again, as he does with other sports.

"For me, it's about doing my best whether I'm skating, golfing, playing basketball or shooting pool," he said.



Eileen Soler

Quenton Cypress.



Emma Johns

Shae Pierce competes in the softball throw during Track and Field Day.



Emma Johns

The girls' 200-meter runners round the final corner and head for the finish line during the Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School's Hershey Track and Field Day on March 1.

## Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School holds Hershey Track and Field Day

BY EMMA JOHNS  
Freelance Writer

**BRIGHTON** — On March 1, Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School held the annual Hershey Track and Field Day.

To prepare for the track and field events, physical education teachers at PECS spent several weeks preparing students by focusing the P.E. hour around

the events that would take place at the track meet. Students practiced each event and received tips on how to improve their skills and technique in running, jumping and throwing.

The Brighton Ball Field was filled with parents, family and community members who came to root for the athletes.

On the day of the competition, students participated in the 50-meter dash,

100-meter dash, 200-meter run, 800-meter run, 1,600-meter run, standing long jump, softball throw and four-person relay race.

The top two winners in each category advance to the District Hershey Track and Field Meet in Okeechobee.

At the district meet, students have the opportunity to qualify for the state Hershey event held during the summer.

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341602	2000	CHEVROLET	SILVERADO 1500 (2WD)	172,531	POOR	\$2,192.50
151279	2006	CHEVROLET	TAHOE (2WD)	173,686	POOR	\$1,477.58
B16843	2007	FORD	ESCAPE (HYBRID)	215,797	GOOD	\$3,470.50
A82937	2007	FORD	ESCAPE (HYBRID)	271,135	FAIR	\$2,264.25
141983	2006	CHEVROLET	SILVERADO 2500 (4WD)	239,050	FAIR	\$7,947.00
177444	2006	FORD	TAURUS SE	157,173	GOOD	\$2,060.25
A77810	2007	FORD	F150 (4WD)	136,368	POOR	\$4,391.05
228065	2001	DODGE	RAM 2500 (4WD) DIESEL	246,527	POOR	\$3,800.00

Note - Previously advertised vehicles are not reflected on this advertisement, only newly received vehicles. For more information please contact Richard Chin 954-966-6300 ext.11216



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◆ More **RODEO** photos from page 1C



Eileen Soler

Blevins Jumper performs in the chute dogging contest March 22 during the Eastern Indian Rodeo Association kids' non-sanctioned rodeo event at the Junior Cypress Cattle Drive & Rodeo.



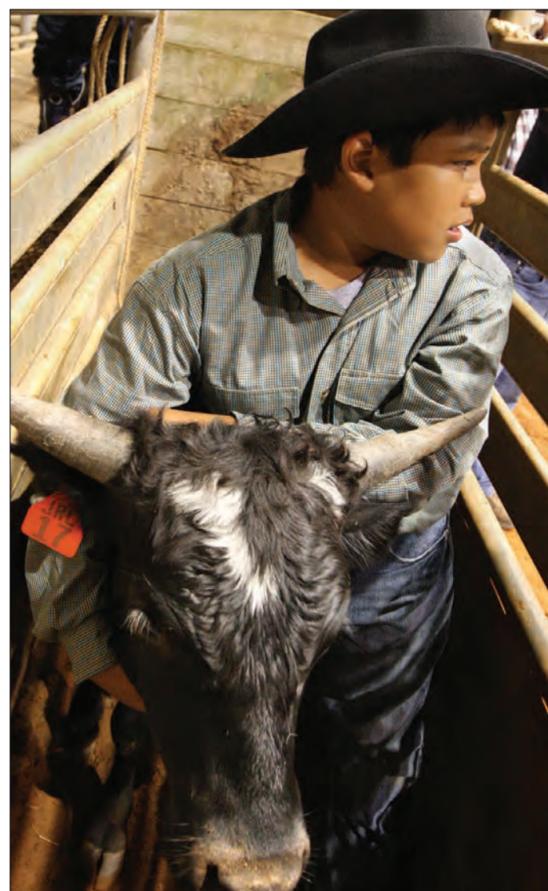
Eileen Soler

Mutton busting is like riding a bike for Bryce Baker.



Eileen Soler

Quayton Billie gets plenty of coaching right out of the gate during the mutton busting contest.



Eileen Soler

AJ Tigertail holds a calf in the chute before competing in the chute dogging contest.



Eileen Soler

Hannah Platt can't reach to put her feet in the stirrups, but she does just fine in the 4-to-8 age division for barrel racing.



Eileen Soler

Lason Baker approaches the second barrel during the Junior Cypress Memorial Rodeo.

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# Youth compete in pool tournament



Beverly Bidney

Donovan Harris, 11, of Brighton, takes a shot as Leviticus Buster, 9, of Big Cypress, looks on during the Youth Billiards Tournament in Big Cypress on April 13.



Beverly Bidney

Cisco Rodriguez, 13, of Hollywood, competes in the billiards tournament.



Beverly Bidney

Dakoya Nunez, 9, of Brighton, takes aim.



Beverly Bidney

Hunter Strickland, 13, of Brighton, shoots pool during the Youth Billiards Tournament.

## More PECS photos from page 1C



Emma Johns

Athletic director Darryl Allen gives Martina Herrera one last appreciation hand shake during Pemaetv Emahakv Charter School's eighth-grade parent night on March 21.



Emma Johns

Deilah Carrillo says farewell to athletic director Darryl Allen during the event.



Emma Johns

Baseball player Trevor Thomas shakes athletic director Darryl Allen's hand as he prepares to finish up the season.



Photo courtesy of Jo 'Boogie' Jumper

The Florida Seminole 12 & under Lady Seminoles Volleyball Team celebrate their winning season.

# Brighton travel teams complete volleyball season

SUBMITTED BY JO JUMPER & DALLAS NUNEZ  
Volleyball Coaches

**ORLANDO** — The Florida Seminole 12 & under Lady Seminoles Traveling Volleyball Team ended their season at the Disney Classic Volleyball Tournament in Orlando held at the ESPN World Wide of Sports Complex April 6-7.

The girls were in a pool of five teams and played four games on April 6. The Lady Seminoles won two matches and lost two matches, which qualified them to the Silver Division. First, they played Big Lake Juniors, of Okeechobee, on April 7 and won the match 2-1 (24-26, 25-19, 15-7), putting the team into the Championship Game for Silver.

The competition was fierce but they won the Championship Game against the KPVA Elites in three games (17-25, 27-25, 15-3).

We are very proud of these girls; it was the last tournament but it took all season for them to come together as a team. We teach these girls that there is no "I" in team and that in order to be successful at this game, they have to play together as a team and have each other's back. Once they realized this, it was amazing and an honor to witness it all come together.

Although a young set of girls, they matured over the course of the season. We have such great talent here on the reservations that we hope girls will start stepping out and taking advantage of the great opportunities that are offered.

The 12 & under traveling players, coached by Jo "Boogie" Jumper, include the following: Burgundy Pierce, Julia Smith, Alicia Fudge, Caroline Sweat, Alaina Sweat, Jacee Jumper, Krysta Burton, Ryanna Osceola, Jenna Brown and Alyssa Gonzalez.

Brighton Recreation's 10 & under Volleyball Club came to an end with the

Disney Classic held in Orlando from April 6-7 at the ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex. The girls competed against some of the best teams from throughout Florida.

The 10 & under team managed to win their only set of the day against UPONTOP Cheetah's, of Port St. Lucie, but lost the match 2-1 (25-13, 23-25, 15-5).

After that match, they went into their second against a strong OVA Asics team from Orlando and lost 2-0 (25-17, 25-20). Their last match of the day was against local rivals Big Lake Juniors, of Okeechobee, who won 2-0 (25-18, 25-17).

With only seven teams entered in the 10 & under tournament, all teams were entered into the single-elimination Gold Division on April 7.

The Seminoles seeded fourth in pool play No. 1, which meant they would play the first seeded team, Tampa Warriors, from pool play No. 2. Despite feeling defeated, the girls put it aside and won their first match 2-1 (26-24, 20-25, 15-13).

After this win they again came across UPONTOP. With chants of Cheetahs coming from the stands, the determined Seminoles played through nerves and tears, and battled to win 2-1 (21-25, 25-19, 15-13). With adrenaline still flowing, the young Seminoles didn't realize they would play in the Championship Game against OVA Asics. Despite their best effort, OVA Asics won 2-0 (25-12, 27-25), ending the Seminole's impressive season in second place.

The team consisted of: Aubee Billie, Naleah Billie, Makya King, Taryn Osceola, Karlyne Urbina, Mariah Billie, Morgan Yates, Melina Steve and coach Dallas Nunez. Other team members who couldn't make the trip included: Preslynn Baker, Amber Kawayla, Alice Osceola, Tammy Martinez and coach Brittney Macias.

For more information, call 863-763-5020 ext. 15205.



Photo courtesy of Dallas Nunez

The 10 & under Volleyball Club complete their season with a second-place finish.

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