



Kirsten Doney Wins Award
EDUCATION ▯ 1B

Bowers' Retirement
COMMUNITY ▯ 3A



Ft. Pierce Comm. Center
COMMUNITY ▯ 3A



The

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Trail Boss Moses Jumper Jr., left, and President Richard Bowers Jr. lead the herd.

Rachel Buxton

Junior Cypress Cattle Drive Continues to Grow in 14th Year

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — More than 400 cowboys and cowgirls from Tribal reservations and surrounding counties traveled to the Big Cypress Reservation to ride in the 14th annual Junior Cypress Cattle Drive event, designed to reenact a piece of Seminole history.

The cattle drive on March 27 began at the end of West Boundary Road and was lead by the Honorary Trail Boss, Moses Jumper Jr., down the

seven-mile stretch to the Junior Cypress Rodeo Arena. Riders were stationed along the trail to help herd the roughly 50 head of corriente cattle. "Today you see all the fences and everything nice, but back then it was nothing but wilderness and they had to go out through the woods and hunt all the cattle up," President Richard Bowers Jr. said. "It took maybe two weeks to about a month to round them up so this is just to commemorate how it was back then."

Halfway down the trail, riders stopped to give their horses a rest and to rehydrate themselves.

Big Cypress resident Mary Jene Koes welcomed everyone into her pasture where a tent was set up with drinks and refreshments. Koes, the great niece of the late Junior Cypress, said she is proud to be a part of the annual cattle drive each year.

During the break dignitaries were introduced including Chairman Mitchell Cypress and Hendry County Commissioner Karson Turner.

Jumper entertained the crowd with one of his

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Tribal Council Holds Special Session, Passes Compact

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — The Class III gaming compact issue can finally be put to rest as Tribal Council convened at the Tribal Headquarters on the Hollywood Reservation for a special session, passing a new Florida Gaming Compact agreement by unanimous vote.

In terms that have been negotiated three times during a three year period, the Tribal Council, Gov. Charlie Crist, and legislative leaders in the Florida House and Senate finally renegotiated a new 20-year plan.

The longtime, impeding matter, which was thought to have been resolved dating back to November 2007, was the only resolution on the agenda April 7.

"Today we have the best compact we are going to get. I want to thank all the attorneys that have been a part of this process," Tribal Council Chairman Mitchell Cypress said to those in attendance. "I also want to thank everyone on behalf of the Seminole Tribe for their patience throughout this."

Although card games are currently illegal in Florida, the new arrangement gives the Tribe the exclusive right to operate blackjack, baccarat and chemin de fer games at its casinos in Broward County, Immokalee and Tampa. The agreement excludes the Brighton and Big Cypress Reservation casinos.

"This compact helps to ensure the Tribe but also the people that work for them," Seminole Gaming CEO Jim Allen said. "It is truly a historic day and for the next 20 years."

The games will be authorized for the Tribe for a five-year period with a guarantee of funds to the state and up to a 10 percent share of net profit.

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Members of Tribal Council, upper row, Council Liaisons and legal representatives share a moment to celebrate the historic gaming compact signing.

Chris C. Jenkins



Briana Abitton

Group photo at Harvard Yard with Marcus Briggs-Cloud, bottom center, a South Florida native.

Tribal Youth Tour Northeast Colleges

BY BRIANA ABITTON
Staff Reporter

As the coach bus turned the corner onto 34th Street, 23 curious, wide-eyed students focused their attention on the thousands of people pushing past the yellow cabs that filled the streets. It's where sleep is only something you do while riding the subways - New York City.

The final stop on the Education Department's College Tour of the Northeast, students like Tia Blais-Billie, a ninth grader and aspiring artist from Hollywood, were anxious to tour the New York Film Academy.

"It's crowded, really big and the buildings are really tall," Tia Blais-Billie said. "It would be hard to get used to, but I think eventually I could."

The tour is only one component of pushing higher education. The College and Career Fair in January and the College Ad-

missions Panel, under the direction of Tribal Education Department Director Emma Johns and her staff, are ways students get set up for a brighter future.

Higher education advisor Linda Iley says it is important for students to find the right college match for them.

"The college fair introduces students to the different choices, but the college tour gives them the opportunity to experience the school atmosphere, the campus and it's important for them to feel comfortable in that environment," she said.

Iley said the college tour and other Education Department initiatives have encouraged Tribal students to enroll in colleges such as the University of Miami, Florida State University, Troy University and others. In all, 64 Tribal students are currently attending college.

Iley said the Education Department's

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William Osceola Strives to Secure a Future in Tradition

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Reporter

TRAIL — William Osceola accepted a position with numerous challenges when he became Tribal Liaison for the Seminole Tribe of Florida. In a little more than a decade, he has tackled each situation from an objective standpoint and refuses to take "no" for an answer.

Under his guidance, structured change is taking place with careful consideration of traditional values.

"It is impossible to go back in time, and few of us would consider giving up our modern conveniences and amenities," Osceola said. "However, we can preserve our culture and traditional values while living in harmony with the present. Our future depends upon getting an education and learning from our elders."

Many of the administrative projects facing Osceola are not unique to the Trail constituency. A growing

Tribal population and limited housing facilities in all communities has the Tribal leadership working diligently to address this issue.

For Osceola, this is particularly difficult because the territory he represents stretches across the Everglades with occasional high pieces of ground. Most of the inhabitable land lies within the federally controlled Big Cypress Preserve and Everglades National Park.

"One of my first projects was to eliminate cramped living areas to make room for expansion and enhance the lifestyle of the people, while allowing them to retain their traditional identity," said Osceola. "Dealing with limited financial means brought out the resourceful aspects of my job."

When people live in the same place for a long period of time, it is human nature to accumulate a lot of things. Osceola hired a company with an old bulldozer and a truck. Moving

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Judy Weeks

As Trail Liaison, William Osceola, strives to enhance the lifestyle of the people he represents while preserving traditional cultural values.



Naji Tobias

Crescent Valley Baptist Church youth member Jacob Martin, left, helps Big Cypress First Baptist Church member and Ahfachkee School student Kylen Jumper with his spelling homework assignment during the Boys and Girls Club's Power Hour on March 16.

Oklahoma Youth Missions Group Visits Big Cypress

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — John Jumper wanted a youth missions group from Oklahoma to visit their peers in Big Cypress to strengthen a bond between the two groups.

So Jumper joined 27 other members of the Crescent Valley Baptist Church of Tahlequah, Okla. for a two-day van trip to the Big Cypress First Indian Baptist Church. The Crescent Valley Baptist Church group participated in numerous activities during their four-day stay March 15-18, including a campfire service and helping Ahfachkee School students with their homework.

The youth missions group had one primary thing in mind — to reach out to the Big Cypress youth and to give themselves a sense of courage in spreading words of inspiration to their peers nationwide.

"For me, I wanted Crescent Valley to experience another Indian culture away from Oklahoma,"

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Don't Miss the Seminole Channel's Profile on the Tampa Reservation on May 6



Crescent Valley Baptist Church praise and worship leader Rose Wytes, 18, plays guitar and sings a medley of gospel songs as the youth from both the Big Cypress and Crescent Valley Baptist churches join her in harmony during the Unconquered for Christ youth service on March 17.

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Juniper said.
Juniper, a Seminole who originated from the Hollywood Reservation but moved to Oklahoma years ago, pitched the idea not long ago to the Crescent Valley youth group and its youth pastor, Nick Howk.
Both men ended up agreeing to hold the missions trip.
The campfire service was March 15 at the Big Cypress First Baptist Church and primarily aimed at getting the Oklahoma group acclimated to the culture at Big Cypress. On March 17, the Big Cypress First Baptist Church held its weekly "Unconquered for Christ" youth service at the Her-

man L. Osceola Gymnasium.
"You know, I believe our youth have seen the Lord from the Tahlequah group," Big Cypress First Baptist Church pastor Rev. Bruce Pratt said. "The Tahlequah youth group is outgoing, friendly and helpful. They've been a blessing to our community and our church."
Crescent Valley youth leader Sawyer Wise, 15, said in her experience here at Big Cypress, she noticed that the reservation is a really close-knit community.
"Coming to Big Cypress has given me a lot of insight as to how the Seminoles live," Wise said. "It's cool that they're the only Tribe in the nation that wasn't conquered by the U.S. government. I didn't know that."
Juniper said the youth from Big Cypress took to the Oklahoma visitors very well.



Surrounding cowboys and cowgirls brave the heat to take part in the annual Cattle Drive.



Brighton Tribal member Roger Smith enjoys the day with granddaughter Mallorie.

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from one campsite to another, they cleared out discarded materials, debris and invasive exotic plant growth to uncover additional usable acreage.
He successfully negotiated with the government to acquire the abandon spoil piles of fill dirt and lime rock left from the excavation of a canal with the provision that he be responsible for moving it. Using their old equipment, they transported the materials to raise the campsites and then enhanced the living areas and added sanitary facilities.
Upon learning about a Congressional act that allows indigenous people to recoup their traditional campsites on public lands, Osceola approached the Big Cypress Preserve. His initial efforts were denied. Taking his plight to Tribal counsel Jim Shore, the battle for land rights began in earnest.
"Attorneys and lobbyists worked diligently under Jim Shore's watchful eye to counteract their objections on many levels," Osceola said. "The Preserve challenged our

first selection of sites along the Trail using the argument that our traditional camps were deep within the swamplands. We had to establish that as a nomadic people, the entire land area of South Florida was our traditional home."
The homes needed to be built along Tamiami Trail in order to meet the needs for clean water, proper sanitation and ecological responsibility. Tribal attorneys and officials solicited the approval of numerous governmental agencies and the sites were eventually granted.
"After eleven years, it is now possible to accommodate some of the growing list of Tribal members wishing to build residences along the Trail and recently ground was broken on six campsites," said Osceola. "It has taken a long time, but none of this could have taken place without the support of the Tribal Council and leadership. They have had my back every step of the way and continue to make it possible to move forward."
Scores of engineers, environmental specialists and contractors are using extreme care in the installation of the necessary infrastructure. The least evasive methods are creating a traditional atmosphere where build-

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many poems. A tribute to his grandfather Morgan Smith, Juniper recited "Indian Cowboy Dream," a poem he wrote about the many late Seminole cowboys.
"I know you always think with Seminoles it's alligator wrestling and bright colored outfits," Juniper said. "But that's basically turn of the century stuff. Cattle and horses have always been a big part of our history."
The cattle drive shortly resumed as the herd of cattle and horses made their way through the Big Cypress community to the rodeo arena where riders were treated to a steak dinner barbecued by Tomahawk Catering and an Eastern Indian Rodeo.
"It's a chance to be together with the whole family," 12-year participant and Tribal employee Rey Becerra said. "In the beginning we had more cows than cowboys. Now we have more cowboys than cows."
The Junior Cypress Cattle Drive was started back in 1996 by President Richard Bowers Jr., Big Cypress Board Rep. Paul Bowers Sr. and Juniper in honor of Junior Cypress, one of the Seminole Tribe's main cattle foremen who helped shape the Tribe's cattle program into what it is today.
Juniper said the idea originated from the Florida cattle drive that was held back in the 90s for the Florida cattlemen.
"We wanted to go ahead and do that and put together our own cattle drive, here on the Seminole Reservation," Juniper said. "It not only PRs the Tribe and Reservation, it gives an idea that we are a Tribe that is heavily influenced by cattle and horses."

ing the new residences. Future plans include gardens, chickens and a campsite setting in which the next generation can grow up and learn about their rich heritage and culture.
Leases with the Big Cypress Preserve include traditional, ceremonial, hunting, fishing and trapping rights.
"My parents were born on islands in the Everglades," said William Osceola. "As a child I listened as my father, Joe Osceola, Sr. told us about traveling for days in a dug-out canoe to reach Miami. They built a fire to cook their food in a pile of sand in the bottom of the dugout. My mother, Martha Osceola, raised a garden, prepared corn and cootie and sewed the clothing. They caught and cleaned and cooked wild game, fish and turtles."
"As a young man, I felt myself being drawn back to the lifestyle of my ancestors and the freedom they experienced," he said. "It is hard to imagine the enormous changes that have taken place in one generation. Survival of cultures depends upon their ability to adapt and our ancestors have successfully met the challenges for their continued existence."

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its to maintain the exclusivity for another 15 years. Operations for the Class III, Las Vegas-style slot machines will also continue at four casinos outside Broward and Miami-Dade counties.
In return, the state of Florida will receive funding as part of a revenue-sharing plan.
After the five years, the Legislature must either pass a law to allow the games to continue or prevent them from further operation. If the operations were to be halted, the Tribe would be allowed to reduce the amount of money it is paying the state of Florida.
"This is the best contract any Tribe has ever achieved," said attorney Jerry Strauss, one of the main attorneys involved in the deal representing the Tribe. "It was a very hard effort. There were setbacks, but the

Seminole Tribe does not give up."
Tribal Board President Richard Bowers Jr. expressed happiness about the day but warned that the Tribe's struggles for fairness will still continue.
"We [as Seminoles] have won many battles over the years but the battle is still not over, we have many more left," President Bowers said.
The various opponents and competitors of the Tribe stand to gain as well and will receive: a lower tax rate for horse and dog tracks and jai-alai frontons in Miami-Dade and Broward counties, an installation of up to 350 bingo-style machines and vending machines that dispense lottery tickets and other racing mechanisms, as well as give all pari-mutuels extended gambling hours and higher limits for betting.
The original accord between the parties called for a 25-year deal to be in place with a substantial amount of the funds going toward educational efforts within the Florida school system.



Tribal Council Chairman Mitchell Cypress signs the new gaming compact agreement.



Tribal students take a break in "the city that never sleeps."

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goal is to reach out more to our high school students, to make sure they go to college or vocational schools."
The group first visited the quaint island of Martha's Vineyard, known as the summer colony, located in Massachusetts. "The Vineyard" was first occupied by ancestors of the Wampanoag Tribe for at least 10,000 years in the town of Aquinnah. The students were invited to sample venison chili, authentic clam chowder and meet another sovereign Native tribe.
"You need to see what other tribes have and what they don't have, because you can't just stick to what you know," said Jason Melton, a sophomore from Big Cypress.
After riding a ferry back to Boston, it was time to get started on visiting colleges. Boston and Harvard University, two flagship colleges in the historic New England city, caught the attention of Hollywood freshman Joseph John, who one day hopes to be a doctor.
"Harvard's filled with so much more history than I expected," John said. "At first you don't think much, but then you see all the paintings and you hear about all of the people that graduated from here and you think they were here and now I'm here."
Marcus Briggs-Cloud, a great example

of a Native American from South Florida studying at Harvard, joined the tour during a Native American panel.
"The Seminole Tribe has a great opportunity to send these young ambassadors to Western Institutions of higher education, to acquire that knowledge, bring it home and implement it into communities," Briggs-Cloud said.
The students visited Trinity College and the Lincoln Culinary Institute in Hartford, Conn., two hours southwest of Boston. They also visited Rutgers University in New Brunswick, N.J., and the New Jersey Institute of Technology.
Just over the bridge, the Big Apple awaited many students interested in the arts. The New York Film Academy helped form a deeper understanding for those with an interest in making or watching films. The Fashion Institute of Technology was the final school visited and it gauged an interest in threads, garments, buttons and bows.
After visiting FIT, the students were treated to the Broadway sensation "Wicked: The Untold Story of the Witches of Oz."
One of the youngest members of the group, Brianna Blais-Billie, a seventh grader from Hollywood, started her college prep early recognizing its importance.
"This tour shows kids in the Tribe how good college is and that they should get a job and not just rely on dividends from the casino."



Virginia Mitchell, left, and Allison Osceola ride the ferry to Martha's Vineyard.

Community

A

Fort Pierce Presents Plans for New Community Center

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Staff Reporter

FORT PIERCE — The Fort Pierce Reservation will break ground this summer on a new, 33,000-square-foot community center, reservation Liaison Sally Tommie and Schwab, Twitty & Hanser Architectural Group announced at an April 14 community meeting.

The community center will include a gym, pool, sauna, walking track, softball field, playground and cultural center with a kitchen. A clinic will also be found in the center to service the Fort Pierce Tribal residents.

Roughly 25 individuals including Chairman Mitchell Cypress and Hollywood Fort Pierce Council Rep. Max B. Osceola Jr. attended the meeting held at Creative Catering in Port St. Lucie. STH presented the newly designed renderings of the state of the art Fort Pierce Community Center that will be located within the Chupco's Landing development.

"This is a dream come true for me," said Fort Pierce Tribal member Remus Griffin. "This community center will get our kids active in after school activities and give our people a chance to exercise."

STH provided the attendees with a PowerPoint presentation describing specific details that were used to design the community center. STH said they worked very hard in incorporating Seminole history and the

rich heritage into the design. For example, the roof lines will take on the shape of the wings of a bird representing the bird clan, honoring the Seminole Fort Pierce matriarch Sally Chupco.

Ground breaking is scheduled for August 15 and construction is estimated to last 14 to 16 months. The building is designed to be eco friendly and will lower energy use, carbon emissions, water use and solid waste.

The community center has received silver certification in the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design rating system, a recognized standard for measuring building sustainability. LEED certification is dependent on five green design categories — sustainable sites, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, materials and resources and indoor environmental quality.

Once the facility is built, and open, Tribal members will be able to take classes to learn about their history and heritage in the cultural facility. Sewing and patchwork will be available as well as traditional cooking classes.

Tommie said the goal is for any Tribal member who enters the building will be able to learn more about themselves and where they came from.

"It will be a good place to come together, learn together, teach together and play together," said Rep. Osceola. "We can't change the past but we can change the future."



Schwab, Twitty & Hanser Architectural Group

A rendering of the Fort Pierce Reservation's new Community Center.



Chris C. Jenkins

Bowers, center, with brother and Brighton Tribal Council Rep. Andrew J. Bowers Jr., as well as members of Tribal Council, who present her with a custom plaque for her years of service to the Tribe.



Chris C. Jenkins

Bowers gets ready to blow out the candles on a birthday cake celebrating her 70th birthday.

Tribal Fixture Elsie J. Bowers Retires

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — With hundreds in attendance, Elsie J. Bowers said her goodbyes and walked away into retirement after 36 years of service in the Tribe.

The March 26 event brought out a gamut of emotions from laughter to tears as the Hard Rock played host to celebrating a woman most described as a strong, shrewd, stubborn, loyal, fearless and bold personality symbolizing great leadership for more than three decades. Bowers was also celebrating her 70th birthday.

"I want to thank everyone for coming out and supporting me; it has been a long 36 years," a moved Bowers said to guests in attendance.

Tribal Council and Board members as well as co-workers, friends and family were on hand with generous gifts and warm regards to Bowers on her future endeavors as she plans to travel abroad and enjoy her family.

Former Tribal Council Chairman James E. Billie emceed the event.

"You are going into a different world now or around it maybe. Since you are going to be home now you can take care of all the cows," brother and Brighton Tribal

Council Rep. Andrew J. Bowers Jr. jokingly said to his sister.

"I am going to miss you. You are my role model," an emotional Tomi Motlow said to Bowers in replacing her mentor. "I have some very big shoes to fill."

Tribal Council Chairman Mitchell Cypress said Bowers' impact and authority will be missed.

"Elsie has brought us a long way with the smoke shop and she has challenged us [as a Tribe] in a good way," Chairman Cypress said. "She has kept us in order in a good way and I am really going to miss her. You have been with us many years and I am going to miss you and your knowledge."

Tribal Board President Richard Bowers Jr. said Bowers will always be known for her no-nonsense demeanor.

"I have known Elsie all my life and she always kept you in line, and even when you were in line she made sure you stayed that way," President Bowers said.

Bowers began her career with the Tribe in 1974 as a part of the Health Department, taking on several roles over the years as a community health representative, field administrator and health director.

She said during her 19-year stint within the department, she developed many bonds and ties with the seniors, all while endur-

ing the emotional toll and devastation of the diabetes epidemic.

"It was one of the worst things to hit us during the early years, back in the early 70s," Bowers said. "We spent a lot of time focusing on the prevention, eating and lifestyle and it was hard but we [as a staff] did a good job with them."

She said sometime later she was approached by the late and former Board of Directors President Fred Smith to work for him in one of the Tribe's tobacco and cigarette smoke shops, which was one of the Tribe's early business ventures.

Upon accepting Smith's offer, Bowers made the calculated move of accepting an entry level position, working her way up the ladder.

"I told him [Smith] I do not know anything about the cigarette business, so what I want to do is work as a cashier, so I can learn how the shop operates," she explained.

Her earnings were \$4.50 per hour to start. Her hard work then paid off leading to a promotion as a manager months later and eventually to General Manager, spending the last 17 years overseeing several shops including Hollywood, Fort Pierce and Immokalee reservations.

"It was all hard work, but I did it."

Immokalee Celebrates 50th Harvest Festival

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Reporter

IMMOKALEE — It has been a half century since this small agricultural community in Collier County first celebrated a festival of the harvest. The Seminole were an integral part of the first celebration in 1960 and instrumental in coordinating the 50th on March 20.

Tribal citizen Grace Osceola Holdiness grew up in the little camp down on the curve of State Road 29. The first Seminole graduate from Immokalee High School, she was in the 11th grade when she was elected the Harvest Festival Queen in 1965.

Returning to participate in the 50th celebration, Holdiness was designated as Honorary Parade Marshall and led the long procession down the center of town in a vintage carriage drawn by two white horses.

The Immokalee Seminole Preschool entered an award winning float with a chickadee, garden and host of children. The theme surrounded the planting of the seeds of education and reaping the harvest of productive young minds.

"People keep asking me how Immokalee has changed over the years," said Holdiness. "Honestly, it hasn't changed much. Being a small farming community, it has always had approximately the same number of residents year round and seasonal workers to handle the harvest. It is nice to have them remember me."

Arriving at the Immokalee Seminole Ranch, the procession and its spectators were greeted by an open market place. The flavor, smells and sounds of the diverse ethnic cultures that make up the community filled the air.

Mountains of fresh produce, Seminole arts and crafts, homemade preserves, woodwork, jewelry, natural health supplies, and souvenirs with the flavor of more than ten different cultures awaited the participants. Traditional Seminole cooking, hot buttery corn, Ja-

maican jerk, Mexican, Guatemalan, Columbian and Southern specialties tantalized the appetites.

The great-granddaughter of an Immokalee pioneer, Pam Brown coordinated the Harvest Festival activities with Immokalee Council Liaison Elaine Aguilar and Seminole Ranch Director Kenny Joe Davis, Sr.

"My great-grandfather, Percy Brown, established Boat Landing, which was the first trading post at Big Cypress," said Brown. "He would collect the Seminole harvest of produce, hides, beadwork and plumes in trade for basic food staples, cloth, kitchen utensils, guns, knives and ammunition. We have had a long and wonderful relationship with the Seminole Tribe as they lived and worked beside us over the past century."

Seminole alligator wrestler Billy Walker gave two captivating exhibitions and then wowed the audience by allowing them to participate in some photographic opportunities. Joining him in the arena was the Blackwater Band, which gave the opening performance for the live music of the nationally acclaimed Confederate Railroad.

As nightfall descended upon the festival, a Working Ranch Rodeo provided the evening's entertainment. Six teams of five contestants each sponsored by local ranches competed in events representative of a daily ranch operation.

The teams participated in Breakaway Roping, Team Roping and Tying, Team Roping and Branding, Buddy Pickup and Barrel Racing. The Shoemaker Team from LaBelle beat out their competition for the grand prize. A Bull Riding exhibition followed.

"Regardless of different cultural backgrounds, everybody in the world has one thing in common and that is the need for clean air, water and a nutritious food supply," said Chairman Mitchell Cypress. "Our lives depend upon these things. Today's Harvest Festival recognizes the importance of agriculture in small town America, where the residents help to feed our nation. Like our ancestors, our economy and well being depends upon a good harvest."



Judy Weeks

The Immokalee Seminole Preschool float emphasizes planting the seeds of education in the Tribal garden at the Harvest Festival parade.



Judy Weeks

Seminole Tribal citizen Grace Osceola Holdiness was the first Immokalee Harvest Festival Queen in 1965.



Judy Weeks

Big Cypress Council Rep. David Cypress, right, and his son, Charlie, make friends with the wolves at the Sky Wolf Sanctuary Exhibit.



Judy Weeks

From left, Immokalee Council Liaison Elaine Aguilar, Seminole Ranch Director Kenny Joe Davis, Sr. and Immokalee pioneer resident Pam Brown coordinated the 50th annual Harvest Festival.

Tribal senior Elsie J. Bowers-Outspoken Seminole Leader

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — Those who know Elsie Jean Bowers cannot help but respect her, even if they may fear her in the process. For many the two go hand-in-hand regarding the wise 70-year-old leader.

Still with plenty to say and do, the outspoken Snake Clan member has ridden off into the sunset coming off a recent retirement after more than three decades with the Tribe — her last 17 as the Seminole Smoke Shop General Manager. All the while she has continued to speak her mind along the way.

“People have always been scared of me when I speak my mind because I do not beat around the bushes,” Bowers said. “People respect me for who and what I am.”

Among six siblings, including younger brother and current Brighton Tribal Council Rep. Andrew J. Bowers Jr., Bowers was raised on the Brighton Reservation in a chickee community living off the land with her grandmother Lucy Pearce, aunt Ada Pearce and great uncle Billie Bowles.

She said it was her grandmother, however, who set the tone for her disciplined, no-nonsense character and welded a major influence in her life.

“When you were told to do something by your elders you did it,” Bowers said. “She [Lucy Pearce] helped give me the strength to do and say what I need to now.”

While growing up, Bowers and her other siblings had neither parent in their lives as mother Annie Pearce died before she was 10 and father Andrew Bowers Sr. left the home.

“It was tough because we did not have anything,” Bowers said. “I did not know we were poor though, because I thought that is the way you were supposed to live.” “I knew if we needed anything though, she [Lucy Pearce] would provide it for us. She really cared for us,” Bowers continued.

Bowers also credits Pearce with helping her tap into her gifts as a medicine woman. She said it is an ability which has often remained unknown about her personality.

The mother of four officially began her career in the Tribe’s Health Department in the early 1970s as

a community health representative, transporter and interpreter for many of the Tribal elders in the clinics. She would also go on to perform field administrator work before eventually taking on the major role of health director for 19 years.

“I always wanted to learn, especially in administration,” Bowers said. “If somebody knew something more than me, I was going to find that person and start talking to them, which is how I have been able to build my knowledge.”

Hollywood Tribal Council Rep. Max B. Osceola Jr. spoke admiringly about Bowers and her work ethic at her retirement party in March.

“Our Seminole women possess a lot of qualities — beauty, strength, and wisdom. Elsie has shown if you have a goal and you want to achieve it you can,” Rep. Osceola said. “She has worked until the very end. She did not work for the fame and fortune; she worked because she loved it.”

Bowers now travels and spends time with her family — a choice Bowers said has been a long time coming.

“My family and my kids wanted me to leave and walk away for a long time,” Bowers said. “I have really slowed down. I just want to relax and enjoy my life, with my grandkids and great-grandkids.”



Chris C. Jenkins

Chairman Mitchell Cypress presents Elsie Jean Bowers with a gift during her retirement party on March 26.



Rachel Buxton

Team Swamp pulls hard during the tug-of-war competition. The team snagged first place.

Fort Pierce Hosts 2010 Family Fun Day Olympics

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Staff Reporter

FORT PIERCE — Roughly 40 community members and Tribal staff teamed up to compete in a water balloon toss, relay race and other activities during the first-ever Family Fun Day Olympics at the Chupco Youth Ranch.

The Seminole Tribe Family Services Department and Fort Pierce Reservation employees organized the March 20 event to strengthen relationships between Tribal families, employees and departments.

“It’s just a day for the community and other members from the other reservations to get together and compete in really non-athletic events that are fun and family oriented,” Fort Pierce Community Outreach Coordinator Stefanie Duda said. “It’s a kick-off to welcome Family Services back into the Fort Pierce community.”

Friendly trash talking between the teams stiffened competition. The pressure to win continued through the water balloon toss, which ended in a free-for-all water balloon fight.

“I think we knew what was going to happen,” Duda said. “We filled up 300 water balloons and were only going to use about 30 of them, but that’s okay because we wanted people to come out and have a

good time. The Family Services Department exists to help strengthen bonds...So, events like today is exactly how that happens.”

Teams also participated in a raw egg toss, tug-of-war and football throwing competitions. Everyone walked away with mul-

tiples medals, but it was Team Speedy that took the first place trophy, which will be engraved with the team members’ names.

“Hopefully the word will get spread that it was a fun event,” Duda said. “Hopefully next year the event will be even bigger.”



Rachel Buxton

From left, Shavonta Timothy, Jessie Allen and Tarvaris Moss participate in the egg toss.



Judy Weeks

Front, from left, Nehemiah Roberts, Troy Cantu, Zephaniah Roberts, Rosalinda “Mika” Lopez and Jessica Lopez. Rear, from left, Pete Aguilar, Immokalee Council Liaison Elaine Aguilar and Immokalee 4-H Leader Melonie Hamlet.

4-H Exhibitors Honored at Collier County Livestock Awards Banquet

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Reporter

NAPLES — An awards banquet was held in the Livestock Pavilion of the Collier County Fair Grounds to honor the 2010 4-H animal exhibitors.

Family members, sponsors and buyers joined volunteers representing numerous 4-H clubs throughout the county on March 27 in recognition of the memberships’ achievements.

4-H officers and supervisors Rhonda Ward, Shannon Hubbell, Scott Blocker and Curtis Blocker made presentations to the following categories: steers, swine, breeding cattle, goats, breeding sheep, poultry, rabbits, calves and peewees.

Immokalee Seminole 4-Hers were heavily invested in the steer projects and received all of the major awards in their division.

Steer Grand Champion Troy Cantu and Reserve Champion Nehemiah Roberts were given special recognition for their accomplishments and received large trophies and silver buckles. Both youngsters have completed 4-H projects in the past, but this was their first major win. They said that they are already planning to apply their new skills to next year’s competition.

Veterans of the Seminole 4-H program, Jessica Lopez and her sister Rosalinda “Mika” Lopez, started their careers as peewees and have raised successful projects for several years in a number of categories. These two

young ladies displayed outstanding qualities in the barn, as well as the show ring, and their efforts earned them the Senior and Intermediate Showmanship awards, respectively.

During the 2009-2010 Season, Zephaniah Roberts put an enormous amount of effort into raising his first steer project and it paid off with an honorable mention and second in class award. He has joined an elite membership in the family tradition of 4-H.

“The Seminole 4-H program celebrated its 50th year this past fall and has certainly come a long way from raising baby chicks and planting vegetables,” Immokalee Council Liaison Elaine Aguilar said. “I am extremely proud of all the exhibitors, their club leaders and parents who have made this possible. These youngsters have made a tremendous commitment and faced many challenges by submitting projects in more than one 4-H competition during the same year.”

Parent Pedro Aguilar Jr., whose eight children help each other raise animals, said the benefits of participating in 4-H projects are too numerous to count.

“When you take on the responsibility of animals it quickly becomes a family affair,” he said. “Some of my children have more than one project and with school, homework and barn activities, it makes for a very long but rewarding day. Every day has its rewards as the animals are instrumental in teaching patience, humility and respect.”

POEM - A TRIBUTE TO ELSIE J. BOWERS

A Tribute to Elsie
By Moses Jumper Jr.

Tonight we share in the celebration of a woman we can all call our friend.
She has always been to me a person I can call my kin.

Throughout the years I have seen her children love her as a mother. I know they too have loved her like no other.

She has been a woman, who has lived her life with devotion. Never backing down once she understood the notion.

There were times I know for her family she has shed many a tear. I know for them she has always held their love so dear.

To many I am sure you have seen that stare. You never wanted to be the one at the end of that glare!

To her people she has always walked with pride. A woman of integrity, she never had nothing to hide.

I’m sure tonight each one here could say there was a time she gave you a helping hand.
That was her life, she was a woman of the Snake Clan.

Tonight we all celebrate her change in life as she pursues another trail.
We all know she won’t just sit around and become stale.

She will continue her life as if it’s just another day. She will keep busy that has always been her way.

I know as a young man she always invited me into her home to eat. It was a place I could find a table of food and a seat.

Tonight Elsie, we say Mvto for the life with us you have shared. In our hearts you must always know we have cared.

We are here to say we wish you all the best for you hold a special place in all our hearts.
We don’t say goodbye for we celebrate with you a new beginning and a new start.

God will continue to guide you on this new journey for our prayers are with you every day.

Elsie, we thank and love you for you have helped us all along life’s way.

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4-H Holds 24th Annual Livestock Show and Sale

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — More than 100 Tribal youth from all reservations headed to the Brighton Reservation with their steers, swine and other animal projects for 4-H's main event, the annual show and sale.

The 24th annual two-night event was held at the Brighton 4-H barn April 1-2 with Kalgary Johns named Steer Grand Champion and Mika Lopez awarded Swine Grand Champion.

The Small Animal Club was the first

exhibitor to enter the arena to show off chickens, rabbits and dairy calves.

Steer exhibitors followed by the swine were next to show off their months of hard work.

"All the work I've put into this animal, feeding, spending time, getting him to know me," steer exhibitor Jewel Buck said. "I tried to get my sister and family involved with touching him so he would get used to all the people."

Exhibitors took turns by weight class leading their animals around the ring for the judges. The judges observed how the exhibitors handled their animals and felt each animal to determine the type of grade.

"We [were] looking for volume, we [were] looking for finish - that's the amount of fat on them; because if you don't have fat, you won't have any white specs in your meat, which is your marbling," steer judge Dale McQuillen said. "You're trying to estimate, do they have finish and will they marble."

Kailin Brown was

named Reserve Grand Champion for her 1,376-pound steer with Reserve Grand Champion Swine awarded to Issiah Alvarado for his 282-pound hog.

The judges not only critiqued the animals but also paid close attention to the exhibitors to determine the Showmanship winners. The judges spoke with the youth during the show offering suggestions on how to improve their overall presentation.

"I told the kids they should look at the judge and know where the judge is at all times," McQuillen said. "Look at the judge and move with the judge and go from there."

Jessica Lopez, Skyler Burke, Kalgary Johns, Garrett Thomas, Rosa Urbina and Troy Cantu were all given the Showmanship title for their show presentations.

The day following the show the youth washed and groomed the animals to look their best in hopes to entice a buyer during the sale. Tribal officials and local business owners came out in support of the Seminole Tribe 4-H.

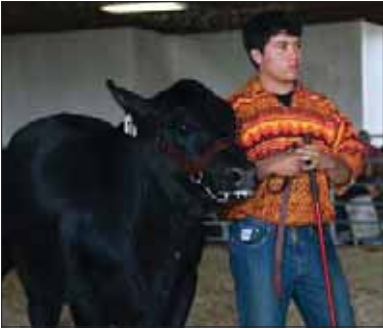
The Seminole Tribe recently celebrated the 50th anniversary of their involvement in 4-H. The Tribe encourages the youth to get involved in the organization that offers fun, hands-on learning focused in the areas of science, healthy living and citizenship.

"There are so many more kids involved in it now and it's evolved into this tremendous deal for the students of the Seminole Tribe," former 4-H member Emma Johns said. "I think that's great because we're getting people involved in livestock and that's kind of the heritage of the Seminole Tribe. So, I think that connection is really important."



Rachel Buxton

Jewel Buck brushes her steer Max for her last show as a 4-Her.



Rachel Buxton

Marshall Tommie sets his steer up.



Rachel Buxton

Ahnie Jumper shows her 1,160-pound steer.



Rachel Buxton

Priscilla Alvarado enters the ring with the Small Animal Club showing off her hard work in her dairy calf.

Steer Winners

Grand Champion: Kalgary Johns
Reserve Grand Champion: Kailin Brown
Senior Showmanship: Jessica Lopez
Intermediate Showmanship: Skyler Burke
Junior Showmanship: Kalgary Johns
Blue Ribbon 1st Place: William Bearden, Ahnie Jumper, Anthony Joe, Jessica Lopez.
Blue Ribbon 2nd Place: Erena Billie, Marshall Tommie, Ashton Baxley, Skyler Burke.
Blue Ribbon 3rd Place: Jewel Buck, Kenny Davis Jr., Andre Jumper, Blevyns Jumper, Jacob Cotton.
Blue Ribbon 4th Place: Nehemiah Roberts, Kelton Smedley, Chebon Gooden, Blake Baker.
Blue Ribbon 5th Place: Kenny Deschenne, Dayton Billie.

Swine Winners

Grand Champion: Mika Lopez
Reserve Grand Champion: Issiah Alvarado
Senior Showmanship: Garrett Thomas
Intermediate Showmanship: Rosa Urbina
Junior Showmanship: Troy Cantu
Blue Ribbon 1st Place: Alexis Aguilar, Rosa Urbina, Damian Escobar, Alexis Jimmie, Dennis Gonzales, Billy Yates, Spencer Jock.
Blue Ribbon 2nd Place: Aidan Tommie, Dayra Koenes, Jay Roberts, Oscar Yates, Brydgett Koontz, Deirdra Hall, Richard Smith, Troy Cantu, Preston Smith.
Blue Ribbon 3rd Place: Garrett Thomas, Edward Aguilar, Trystan Yzaguirre, Jenna McDuffie, Mailani Perez, Destiny Nunez.

Small Animal Blanket

Blue Ribbon 3rd Place: Trinity Williams, Jaden Puentes, Alexis James.
Blue Ribbon 4th Place: Keanu Correa, Trevor Thomas, Geneva Garcia, Aaliyah Mora, Courtney Gore, DanniLae Tommie, Kamani Smith, Jade Tapia, Madisyn Osceola.
Blue Ribbon 5th Place: Ruben Burgess Jr., Christopher Briscall, Dalton Koenes, Callie Joe, Quinton Smith, Justin Roff, Sabre Billie, Ashley Faz.
Blue Ribbon 6th Place: Rylee Smith, Hunter Strickland, Aliyana Tommie, Drake Lawrence, Larissa Delarosa, Aaron Alvarado, Chastity Harmon, Robert Fudge.
Blue Ribbon 7th Place: Keniya Yzaguirre, Ezekiel Roberts, Alyssia Fudge, Jack Aguilar, Camryn Thomas, Destinee Jimmie.
Blue Ribbon 8th Place: Nicholas Correa, Nikki Davis, Brian Bishop, Neo Motlow, Ashton Beer, Jon Lee Jimmie.
Blue Ribbon 9th Place: Rodni Mercer, Marquis Fudge, Cartaya Billie.
Blue Ribbon 10th Place: Annie Joe.

Small Animal Club

Jarrett Beecham, Santiago Billie, Aubee Billie, Mallorie Thomas, Kiowa Garcia, Creek Gopher, Justin Gopher Jr., Marcos Reyna, Heath Lawrence, Jayco Billie, Karilyne Urbina, Norman Osceola, Jacee Jumper, Tucker Johns, Kaleb Doctor, Taden Santiago, Laviticus Roberts, Spencer Aguilar, Caniah Billie-Aguilar, Priscilla Alvarado, Jaliyah Artega, Brianna Bowers, Cable Bowers, Harmony Cypress, Jalee Wilcox, Nick Andrews, Valholy Frank.

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Tribal Clubs Give Toward Haiti Relief

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — The Tribe's Hearts to Haiti fundraising campaign has continued to provide relief for the island nation's earthquake victims and now is being assisted by two Tribal recreation clubs - the Rez Dawgz Bike Club and the Warriors Car Club.

With the motorcycle and car world as its backdrop, both clubs joined at the Osceola Park softball fields to raise money for the cause and promote one another. The March 20 event featured a live deejay, a raffle of memorabilia items, trip giveaways, a youth bounce house, a stunt show, exotic custom-made cars and motorcycles on display, a car wash and food. All proceeds went to the Haiti relief effort.

"This type of effort will help the Haitian victims but benefited us as a club as well," said Reiz Dawgz Bike Club President Marlon Tommie, nicknamed "Coodahound" to his fellow bike mates. "Our main focus with any charity event we do in the future is to help Tribes in need. We want people to know that motorcycle clubs can be a positive thing."

Warriors Car Club President Eric Osceola said the idea for the charity event came from conversations between him and Tommie. Osceola saw the event as a good opportunity to help the earthquake victims and to get more Tribal youth involved with the club, which he started in 2009.

"We want to support Haiti and get our names out there. We want other Tribal members to know what we are about and what we represent," he said.

Tommie presented a custom-made biker jacket to Rez Dawgz Vice-President and Hollywood Tribal Council Rep. Max B. Osceola Jr. for his continued support of the group since its inception in 2007. Rep. Osceola also agreed to match the funds raised at the event.

"It is what you give that counts and the fact that you are here really matters," Rep.

Osceola said to those in attendance. Tommie also recognized Tribal Board President Richard Bowers Jr. for his generous individual donation to the cause.

Tommie and Eric Osceola said their clubs are open to Tribal citizens on all reservations, with certain membership restrictions.

The Tribe initiated its Hearts to Haiti relief program in late January to aid and assist those affected by the 7.0 earthquake. Public donations were accepted Jan. 19-31 on the Tribal reservations, including Hollywood, Immokalee, Big Cypress, Brighton, Tampa, Trail, Naples and Fort Pierce. Dozens of pallets of bottled water, baby supplies, toiletries, blankets, pillows, medicine, dry foods, canned goods and other items were collected.

Millions of Haitians are still homeless and the death toll exceeds 150,000 people.

For more information on the Warriors Car Club or Rez Dawgz Bike Club call President Eric Osceola at 954-744-4114, visit www.rezdawgzmc.com, or call Rez Dawgz



Big Cypress Holds Kattle Kids Day



During the storytelling segment of Kattle Kids Day, Moses Jumper Jr. reveals a stirrup as part of the horse saddle that Seminoles use to ride it effectively. Jumper later recites a poem entitled "Indian Cowboy Dreams," which talks not only about his cattle experiences, but about the significance the Seminole have on the cattle industry. The Tribe, according to Jumper, is among the top four cattle operators in Florida and among the top 10 in the United States.



As Nicholas Andrews gets ready to ride on a sheep, Josh Jumper explains to children that Nicholas is wearing a helmet and protective vest for body protection. They are preparing for a 'mutton bustin' ride during the second annual Kattle Kids Day event March 20 at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum in Big Cypress.

Seminole Coffee Company Gets Makeover at Tribal Headquarters

The Seminole Coffee Company is sporting a new look as employee Jay Haughwont stands ready for service. Located at the Hollywood Tribal headquarters in the second floor breakroom, the company provides an assortment of breakfast and lunch menu items, energy drinks and other beverages. Hours of operation are Monday-Friday from 8 a.m.-3 p.m.



Emergency Management Ready, Urges Preparedness for Busy Hurricane Season

The Atlantic hurricane season, which begins June 1 and extends through Nov. 30, is fast approaching. For many of us who remember the devastating storms of 2004 and 2005 – Charley, Ivan, Frances, Jeanne, Katrina and Wilma – it's time to make sure that we're well prepared as we approach that time of year when tropical storms and hurricanes are likely to develop in the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico. While 2009 was a relatively quiet year, the 2010 Atlantic hurricane season may not be so tame. Leading scientists and researchers are calling for an increased number of storms that include several major hurricanes.

Experts believe that several conditions are present this year that will contribute to increased tropical system development. First, the water in the Atlantic Ocean is warmer than usual. Generally, sea surface temperatures greater than 80 degrees Fahrenheit are needed for the formation of tropical storms and hurricanes, and already there are some areas in the Atlantic that are at or near that level. Second, El Niño, the unusual area of water in the Pacific Ocean that affects tropical storm development in the Atlantic, is expected to fade over the next few months. Coupled with the rise in sea surface temperatures in the Atlantic, the weakening of El Niño will help to produce a fertile environment in which tropical storms and hurricanes can develop in the Atlantic basin.

The Department of Emergency Management, reorganized over the past year with a staff that is skilled and experienced in disaster preparedness and recovery, is ready to help the Seminole Tribe's members and employees meet the challenges of the upcoming storm season. The staff includes:

- Director Bob Tarrant, a former officer with the Michigan State Police who has more than 35 years experience in law enforcement, emergency management and public safety communications. In Michigan he served as the Assistant State Fire Marshal, State Director of Emergency Management, Emergency Management Coordinator for the Department of Agriculture, and most recently the Director of the Michigan Public Safety Communications System.

- Assistant Director Lori Vun Kannon, whose 15 years of experience includes Assistant Director and Director of Broward County Emergency Management. Lori is also past president of the Florida Emergency Preparedness Association (FEPA).

- Jason Dobronz, Emergency Management Coordinator for Hollywood, Coconut Creek and the Trail, worked as an emergency management planner for the City of Delray Beach and Broward County Emergency Management. He has a Master's Degree in emergency management planning in public administration from Lynn University.

- Brian Barton, Emergency Management Coordinator for

Big Cypress, Immokalee and Naples, has over 21 years experience with the United States Coast Guard where he managed operations and emergency management programs for the Florida and Caribbean area of responsibility. Brian also worked for Broward County Emergency Management as an Emergency Management Coordinator where he specialized in inspecting and documenting hazardous materials sites.

- Carl Fowler, Emergency Management Coordinator for Brighton, Fort Pierce, and Tampa, has worked in emergency management at all levels of government for over 23 years that include the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management, and Broward County Emergency Management where he served as the agency's training coordinator and public information officer.

Throughout the coming weeks and months, the staff will be working with all of the Tribal communities on how to prepare for and survive a tropical storm or hurricane. During the past year, the department implemented several initiatives to safeguard both people and property during emergencies. These include an automated notification system that alerts Tribe officials and department heads of current or pending weather and non-weather events; the update of the comprehensive all hazards plan; the purchase of weather tracking and prediction tools; and the establishment of a greatly enhanced working relationship with state and local government officials to serve our mutual best interests in an emergency.

For more information on how to prepare for tropical storms, hurricanes, and other emergencies please visit the Department of Emergency Management home page at <http://www.stofemd.com/>

In addition, during a weather or non-weather emergency you can call the Emergency Information Disaster Hotline at 1-800-617-7514 to provide and get information.

– by Carl Fowler
Emergency Management Coordinator
Brighton, Fort Pierce & Tampa Reservations

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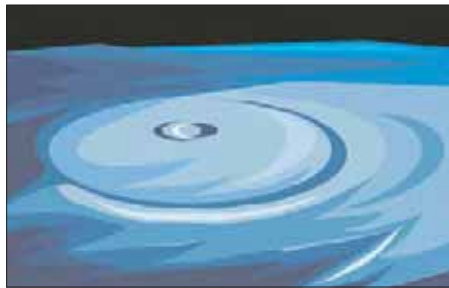
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Jorge Valdes/Seminole Fire Rescue

Seminole Tribe Fire Rescue Responds to I-75 Truck Fire

Seminole Tribe Fire Lt. David Coosaia stands on top of a charred tractor-trailer as he assists STFR firefighter Steven Luongo with hosing down the wreckage. As part of its mutual aid agreement with Broward County, STFR responded to a call for assistance on April 5 on Interstate 75/Alligator Alley at Mile Marker 47.5 to extinguish a large truck fire. The tractor-trailer was carrying 42,000 pounds of ground plastic from Chicago to Miami when the trailer caught fire.

SPD, Seminole Tribe Fire Rescue Host Spring Break Camp for Tribal Youngsters

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS – Spring break proved to be a fun yet educational experience for a group of Tribal children from the Big Cypress and Hollywood reservations.

With many Tribal students enjoying spring break from March 29-April 2, the Seminole Police Department

and the Seminole Fire Rescue hosted a week-long spring break camp that was geared toward the youth getting an in-depth look at their operations.

On March 30, the SPD/Seminole Tribe Fire Rescue Spring Break Camp began with the Tribal youngsters taking a tour of the Jimmie Cypress Public Safety Complex at the Big Cypress Reservation, as Seminole Tribe Fire Rescue showed the youth what it's like to operate in its field of work.



Naji Tobias

STFR's Jason Camardese, on ground, is rescued by Lt. Eric Fazzi, left, and backup diver Lt. Albert Quinones, during a demonstration.

Medius said to the Tribal youth during the presentation. "If you go by yourself, then the victim will use you as a flotation device. The victim is only thinking about his survival, so he'll end up dragging you down and both of you will die."

Once the dive rescue demonstration ended, it was on to the Public Safety Complex.

The time spent at the facility touched on a tour of the Seminole Tribe Fire Rescue emergency vehicles, a wild land firefighter demonstration, a search and rescue operation, a physical activity training course and an emergency management lesson.

The trip concluded with a brief tour of the Public Safety Complex.

"It's important for the kids to stay busy and open their minds up," Seminole Tribe Fire Rescue Inspector Bruce Britton said. "At the same time, the kids may want to become a firefighter one day. Hopefully, this can inspire their dreams, if this is what they want to do when they grow up."

On March 31, the Tribal youth embarked on a tour of the Broward County Sheriff's Office mounting stable. BSO deputies showed them how the BSO's mounting unit operates.

The spring break camp wrapped up April 1, as the roughly 15 Tribal youngsters went to the Broward College Institute of Public Safety in Davie. Throughout the day, they took a tour of the county's Police Academy, as the Tribal youth got to see for themselves what it takes to become an officer.

"I'm hoping the kids learn that, with goals and discipline, they can become anything they want to be when they grow up," Daza said. "As long as they make the right decisions and work hard, all things are possible."



Michele Daza/Seminole Police Department

Tribal youth pose with Broward Sheriff's Office deputies during the children's visit to BSO's aircraft hangar.



Naji Tobias

Tribal youngster Janessa Jones extinguishes a wildfire as STFR Lt. Mike Lohntsey assists her during a wildfire drill.

Tribe Recognizes Prayer as Strength in its 4th Intercessory Gathering

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS – Seminole Tribe of Florida Chairman Mitchell Cypress highlighted a group of Tribal officials who recently celebrated their passion for faith at the fourth Intercessory Prayer Gathering at the Big Cypress Kodeo and Entertainment Building.

Tribal and community members and employees from the Big Cypress, Brighton, Hollywood and Tampa reservations assembled at the entertainment complex March 20 to hear words of inspiration, prayers of encouragement and songs of joy from several Tribal ministers and youth leaders.

"It should be prayer every day," Chairman Cypress said. "It's through God's strength and knowledge we are here. The only reason why we're here today is because of the strength of God."

Chairman Cypress tapped Rev. Wonder Johns about two years ago to host a prayer gathering designed to bring together Tribal ministers from all reservations. Rev. Johns said he is grateful to the chairman for being able to organize the event.

"I thought this was a great opportunity for Mitchell to open the doors for all our ministers to start prayer for the Seminole Tribe of Florida," Rev. Johns said of the prayer gatherings, which first started in 2008. "The door is open to worship the Lord and pray to Him."

Rev. Johns opened the event with a prayer, and Chairman Cypress and Big Cypress Tribal Council Rep. David Cypress encouraged attendees to remain strong in their faith. Brighton Seminole Indian Baptist Church pastor Rev. Matt Tiger and Shelli Billie Tiger presented a series of English and Indian gospel hymns, and Tribal ministers read a chain of prayers.

Rev. Arlen J. Payne, the Big Cypress New Testament Baptist Church's pastor and the event's keynote speaker, said former Tribal leader Bill Osceola and others relied on a higher authority to help carry them through life. The reverend gave attendees advice on how to get through challenging situations and spoke of how Joshua, a war hero in Biblical times, was told to be strong and of good courage.

"The promise of an abun-

dant and eternal life, along with God's Word, will make you strong," he said. "Let God permeate through your heart through His Word. Don't turn away from it. Meditate on it. Don't get distracted. Stay in the book. Obey the Word of God."

The prayer gathering concluded with the attendees circling around Chairman Cypress and Rep. Cypress. Big Cypress First Indian Baptist Church pastor Rev. Bruce Pratt led everyone in a special prayer for the Tribal leaders.

The next intercessory prayer gathering will be at the Brighton Veterans' Building. Organizers are planning to rotate future sessions through all of the Tribe's reservations.



Naji Tobias

Shelli Billie Tiger leads the congregation in a slew of English hymns, including "Sweet Hour of Prayer," "How Great Thou Art" and "Victims in Jesus."

Tribal Citizens Support Music Foundation



Richard Osceola

Tribal citizen Richard Osceola and son Billy Frank, second and third from left, together with Bonita Springs Mayor Ben L. Nelson Jr., far left, and Deputy Mayor John Spear, far right, among the blues together at the fourth annual Bonita Springs Blues Festival. Osceola and son enjoyed the evening while giving their charitable support to benefit several local charities including Music for Minors Foundation. The event showcases local and national talent this year featuring acts such as Motor City Josh and the Big Three and Albert Castiglia.

SAFETY CORNER

Drivers Knowledge Review Safety Tips

Arriving on the scene of an accident that involves a death most often leads an emergency responder to believe that this tragedy may have been prevented if one of these following rules were heeded: Wear a seatbelt and DO NOT speed.

Nonetheless, Tribal members and employees have always expressed their interest in the dangers of driving and keeping up with the laws and penalties for various infractions. As a result, Seminole Tribe Fire Rescue and the Seminole Police Department have once again collaborated to design a presentation, based in part on the NFPA Risk Watch Program curriculum on "Vehicle Safety" that would answer most of these questions. Here is some of the basic information that was discussed. However, we are not legal experts and an attorney-at-law should be consulted for legal advice.

Laws and penalties

- Drivers License Renewal – You may renew a current Florida Drivers License online or via mail one time. After you have used either one of these methods, you are required to provide a primary form of ID, proof of social security number and two forms of proof of address.
- Seatbelts – ALL passengers must wear a seatbelt (\$30 fine). Motor vehicle crashes is the leading cause of death for children ages 1 to 14. Child restraint seats are required for children 3 years old and under and booster seats for children 5 years old and under. Children 12 years old and under are recommended to sit in rear passenger seats (due to the risk of death from the front seat air bag deployment which produces a deadly force).
- Move Over Law – Motorists must move out

of the lane next to the stopped emergency vehicle and reduce their speed 20 mph less than the posted maximum speed limit (\$120 fine and 3-point infraction). This is to prevent law enforcement officers and emergency responders from being killed or seriously injured.

- School Buses (stopped with lights), School Zones & Construction Zones – Speeding fines are doubled (More than 30 mph is \$500, 4-point infraction and court appearance).

- Vehicle Accident – The parties involved must stop, help injured, provide information (name, address and registration), do not leave the scene if injuries occurred (DL revoked), and report to police if damages are \$500 or more. One of the most common causes for accidents is cell phone usage/text messaging while driving.

- DUI – The "Implied Consent Law", which is a signed driver license, means that you agree to a blood, urine or breath test. The first refusal is a 1 year suspension and the second refusal is 18 months. This infraction remains on a DL for 75 years. A second DUI mandates an "ignition interlock" device on your vehicle. There is Zero Tolerance for drivers 21 years old and under with a 0.2 blood alcohol level and higher (which means not even a single drink). The average cost of legal fees, fines and insurance increase may be as much as \$8,000.

- Drivers Improvement Course, which is offered by Richard Smith, is free to Tribal members and discounted for Tribal employees 55 and older. The course can eliminate points, lower your car insurance by 10 percent for three years and requires no driving at all. Register at your local SPD station.

COMMUNITY EASTER

Seniors Celebrate Meaning of Easter

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — Tribal seniors took a little time for games, fun and to reflect on the sacred day of Easter with a party at the Senior Center.

The day included cash bingo, an egg hunt, a basket and egg decorating contest and lunch.

Tribal Board President Richard Bowers Jr. and Hollywood Tribal Council Rep. Max B. Osceola Jr. also provided generous monetary door prizes for the March 25 event.

"Easter means our savior Jesus Christ died on the cross for us and was resurrected," Tribal senior Jimmy Hank Osceola said. "People celebrate it different ways but it all goes back to our savior dying on a cross for our sins in the end."

According to Christian scriptures, Jesus was resurrected from the dead on the third day after his crucifixion. Many Christians celebrate this resurrection on Easter Day or Easter Sunday, which is also known as Resurrection Day or Resurrection Sunday. For

many Christians, Easter remains the most important annual religious date of the year besides Christmas.

"To me Jesus Christ was sent here as our supreme being. He died for everything and that is the way it was supposed to be. He was tortured for no real cause but to me it is all most holy and the most sacred cause there is," Alice Tucker added.

Falling two days after Good Friday and three days after Maundy Thursday, the chronology of Jesus' death and his resurrection has been interpreted to fall between A.D. 26 and A.D. 36. Easter also refers to the season of the church year called Eastertide or the Easter Season. It also marks the end of Lent, the season of fasting, prayer, and penance.

"At one time I thought it was about hunting eggs, and then missionaries came in my life and taught me what its true meaning is," senior Judy Baker said. "At one time we were all separated from God by our sins. He resurrected from the dead and showed us about true power. If people believe in Him, then they too will one day be resurrected from the dead by his power."

Results:

Golden Egg winner (Women): Maggie Osceola
Egg hunt contest (women): 1. Jane Doctor, 2. Maggie Osceola, 3. Betty Osceola
Golden Egg winner (Men): Johnny Tucker
Egg hunt contest (men): 1. Jimmy H. Osceola, 2. Paul Buster, 3. Joe P. Billie
Basket decorating (women): 1. Minnie Doctor, 2. Maydell Osceola, 3. Mary Gay Osceola
Basket decorating (men): 1. Stephen Bowers, 2. Johnny Tucker, 3. Paul Buster
Egg decorating (women): 1. Mary Gay Osceola, 2. Maydell Osceola, 3. Betty Osceola
Egg decorating (men): 1. Stephen Bowers, 2. Paul Buster



Chris C. Jenkins

The women and men race to gather the most eggs on the Hollywood softball fields as part of the senior egg hunt challenge.



Judy Weeks

The whistle blows and the 8- to 10-year-olds break from the starting line in the egg hunt competition in Immokalee.

Immokalee Celebrates Easter With Egg Hunt, Carnival

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Reporter

IMMOKALEE — A torrential downpour delayed the Immokalee Easter festivities for several hours but it didn't dampen the spirits of the community, which celebrated Easter with an egg hunt and carnival.

When the sun finally broke through the clouds, the field was cordoned off by age groups and the eggs were scattered across the ground. As the whistle blew, the crowd of spectators cheered and offered encouragement to the competitors.

Infants and 1-year-olds advanced in pushed strollers, while a young family member assisted in gathering the eggs on their behalf.

The scenario changed with the 2- and 4-year-olds. They could receive help with carrying the basket but frustrated family members couldn't touch the eggs. Laughter abounded as the little ones refused to give up their eggs and put them in the basket or began throwing them out on the ground to start over. One curious child at-

tempted to take a bite out of the egg and to his surprise, discovered that it wasn't real.

As the groups advanced in age, the competition became more intense. Stretching out and rocking back and forth, the egg hunters waited anxiously at the starting line. When the signal came, they were off to the races.

Cash awards were given to the top three egg collectors in each age group and a raffle

provided an opportunity to win several extravagant Easter baskets.

The Easter celebration was highlighted by a carnival with a wide selection of new rides. Custom T-shirts were designed and created on site while the group enjoyed a lunch served hot off the grill. A makeup artist transformed the younger generation with body painting artistry.

The Easter Egg Hunt resulted in the following winners:

Seniors: 1. Nancy Mollow, 2. Linda Frank, 3. Elaine Aguilar.
0-1: Girls: 1. Isis Rodriguez, 2. Shyla Mata, 3. Remy Rodriguez. Boys: 1. Elijah Yzaguirre, 2. Daniel Delacruz.
2-4: Girls: 1. Makayla Mata, 2. Denise Gonzalez, 3. Angelina Yzaguirre. Boys: 1. T.C. Sanchez, 2. Fredrico Martinez, 3. P.J. Rodriguez.
5-7: Girls: 1. Shyanna Escobar, 2. Ava Nunez, 3. Randan Osceola. Boys: 1. Haden Grimaldo, 2. Ozzie Garza.
8-11: Girls: 1. Haley Holloway, 2. Cartaya Billie, 3. Jillian Rodriguez. Boys: 1. Troy Cantu, 2. Dennis Gonzales, 3. (Tie) Ethan Aguilar and Jack Aguilar.
12-17: Girls: 1. Ashley Faz, 2. Alexis Aguilar, 3. Caniah Yzaguirre. Boys: 1. Michael Shaffer, 2. Kenny Joe Davis, Jr. 3. Trey Boone.
18-35: Women: 1. Victoria Mata, 2. (Tie) Cecilia Pequeno and Josie Davis. Men: 1. Michael Mata, 2. (Tie) Randy Osceola and Gil Yzaguirre.
36-54: Women: 1. Becky Yzaguirre, 2. Virginia Billie, 3. Amy Clay. Men: 1. Kenny Joe Davis, Sr., 2. Raymond Garza, Sr.

Big Cypress Preschoolers Participate in Egg Hunt, Party to Celebrate Easter

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Preschool students from the Big Cypress Reservation took part in the 11th annual Easter Egg Hunt and Celebration on April 1.

Focusing on finding Easter eggs on the playground, toddlers from the 1-, 2- and 3-year-old groups didn't take much time to snag all the coveted items their teachers hid from them.

At the conclusion of the 30-minute search from all three classes, the winners from each group were announced and they went on to eat a hearty lunch.

Orelia Hernandez, the preschool's lead teacher for the 2-year-old group, was all smiles as the toddlers enjoyed hunting for the missing eggs.

Hernandez offered her take on the event not long before the preschoolers were let out of school early.

"We're just celebrating Easter for the children,"

Hernandez said. "It's for them to have fun. You never know; some of them may not even get to enjoy the holidays at home."

The Preschool closed early on April 1 due to the observance of the Good Friday and Easter holidays. Their spring break was April 5-9.

Easter Egg Hunt Results

1-year-old class
Golden Egg: 1. Avahny Jim; Most Eggs: 1. Savanna Cypress - 19 eggs; Least Eggs: 1. Thelma Tigertail - 13 eggs.
2-year-old class
Golden Egg: 1. Solomon Stanly Cypress; Most Eggs: 1. Laylah Billie - 25 eggs; Least Eggs: 1. Gilbert Guerrero - 1 egg.
3-year-old class
Golden Egg: 1. Leighton Jim; Most Eggs: 1. Emma Dicarlo; Least Eggs: Aaliyah Billie - 13 eggs.



Naji Tobias

Reuben Billie counts the eggs his younger sister, Emma Dicarlo, 3, picked up at the Easter Egg Hunt.



Naji Tobias

Solomon Stanley Cypress, 2, picks up eggs with the assistance of his mother, Carmen Vasquez.

Brighton Seniors Celebrate Easter



Rachel Buxton

Alice Sweat reaches high to collect one of the many hidden eggs during Brighton's senior Easter celebration April 1 that included several games of bingo and a lunch held at the Senior Center.

Easter Brings Ft. Pierce Community Together



Rachel Buxton

Roughly 50 Fort Pierce community members gathered at the Chupco Youth Ranch to celebrate Easter as a family. The youth got in the spirit and colored over four dozen eggs before being set free to hunt Easter eggs filled with holiday stickers, candy and other goodies.



Big Cypress Youth Celebrates Amazing Teen Race EGGStravaganza

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS – Tribal youngsters from the Big Cypress Reservation took advantage of several Easter-themed activities at the first-ever Amazing Teen Race EGGStravaganza.

Six groups of Tribal youth loaded up in separate vans at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium parking lot April 8 as the race started to take full course.

The Tribal children took full advantage of their half-day at the Ahfachkee School, making sure to enjoy the event, which was made possible by the Big Cypress Y.O.U.T.H. (Youth Outreach United to Help) Committee.

The Y.O.U.T.H. Committee, which consists of a conglomerate of Big Cypress departments (Seminole Police Department, the Community Center, Recreation, Wellness, Library, Education, Boys and Girls Club, Tribal Council and the Ahfachkee Schools) geared toward enhancing opportunities for the Tribal youth, carefully assembled the Easter-themed activity aimed to increase their critical thinking, education and fitness abilities.

With stops at locations such as the Fitness Dome, the Big Cypress Senior Center and the Big Cypress Community Center, each team of

Tribal teenagers was challenged with a variety of clues for each of the race's nine stations. The clues were sealed in color coded eggs at all nine stations, with the teams trying to finish the race as fast as they could.

The teen race ended at the Community Center, where the "Eye in the Sky" Egg Drop was located at. Officials from SPD then raised the "Eye in the Sky" device up about 25 feet as they dropped each team's egg to the ground.

No group's eggs – Team Red, Team Orange, Team Yellow, Team Green, Team Blue and Team Black – were spared, as all of them were broken.

Team Red won the race as it blazed through the race in one hour, 18 minutes and 23 seconds.

"I'm very proud of the team and I'm really happy for our girls," said Lance Vaz, the Team Red van driver. "It took a lot of teamwork and they did it the right way. Not only was it fun, but we won. That's two important positives we got from this experience."

Also at the Amazing Teen Race

Amazing Youth EGGStravaganza Race Results

1. Team Red – 1 hour, 18 minutes, 23 seconds (1:18:23),
2. Team Orange – 1 hour, 19 minutes, 13 seconds (1:19:13),
3. Team Yellow – 1 hour, 24 minutes, 11 seconds (1:24:11),
4. Team Green – 1 hour, 24 minutes, 14 seconds (1:24:14),
5. Team Blue – 1 hour, 28 minutes, 48 seconds (1:28:48),
6. Team Black – 1 hour, 40 minutes, 22 seconds (1:40:22).

EGGStravaganza was a massive Easter egg hunt for the younger Tribal youth, ranging from pre-kindergartners to fourth graders. About 6,000 Easter eggs were collected by more than 60 Tribal youngsters outside the Community Center.

In addition to that, Mr. and Mrs. Bubbles the Clowns provided the younger group with a set of comedic performance inside the youth center, with face painting and Build-A-Bears.

"It's a positive thing for the kids to see all the departments working well together," Ahfachkee School ESE Teacher Aide Andrea Jumper said. "I've seen the older kids share their eggs with the younger ones. It gives all the kids a chance to interact with each other outside of school. With this event, the Y.O.U.T.H. Committee has a great opportunity now to reach out to reach out to all of our kids on a personal level."

In total, about 150 Tribal youngsters, primarily from the Ahfachkee School, participated in the festivities.

Boys and Girls Club coordinator Thommy Doud said he was particularly pleased with the way the Y.O.U.T.H. Committee exhibited a team effort at the event.

"We wanted to make sure the youth were given the opportunity to challenge themselves in a fun and exciting way," Doud said. "It was nice to see them get outside their normal routine."

The Y.O.U.T.H. Committee meets every first Thursday of the month to discuss about ways to provide the Tribal youth with the best services possible at the Big Cypress reservation. The next Y.O.U.T.H. Committee-related event is scheduled for Friday, May 14, as a program fair will be held at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium.

The Y.O.U.T.H. Committee is sponsored by the office of Big Cypress Tribal Council Rep. David Cypress.

Immokalee Seniors Celebrate Easter



Atillano Nunez

Visiting friends joined the Immokalee seniors for an Easter party on April 6 at the ballpark chickee. An egg hunt provided participants with an opportunity to seek out special eggs with cash prizes and gift cards. The seniors also participated in games of egg toss and musical chairs. After the lunch buffet, the partygoers shared colorfully decorated Easter desserts.

Big Cypress Community Celebrates Easter With Face Painting, Luncheon



Naji Tobias

Paul "Cowbone" Buster and the Cowbone Band sing Easter-themed gospel songs prior to the start of the Big Cypress Community Easter Luncheon on April 1 at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium.



Naji Tobias

About 6,000 eggs were hid outside the Big Cypress Community center for the Tribal youth to find during the EGGStravaganza Easter Egg Hunt on April 8.

Brighton Preschool Hosts Easter Festivities



Rachel Buxton

Brighton preschool students take off in search for colorful Easter eggs at the preschool March 25. Classes took turns searching for eggs including the winning golden egg, and then got a chance to visit and pose for pictures with the Easter Bunny himself.



Naji Tobias

Tribal members and employees, many with their faces painted, wait for lunch to be served.

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Big Cypress Seniors Celebrate Easter with Bingo, Egg Hunt and Party

Results

BINGO WINNERS
Game 1: 1. Jane Freeman (single bingo);
Game 2: 1. Bess Bowlegs (single bingo);
Game 3: 1 (tie), Peggy Osceola, Carol Cypress Claudia Doctor and Joe Billie (double bingo); Game 4: 1 (tie), Jane Freeman, Laura Clay, Judy Osceola, Bess Bowlegs and Ella Billie.

EASTER BASKET WINNERS
1. Mary L. Johns, 2. Carol Cypress, 3. Nancy Billie, 4. Louise Billie, 5. Claudia Doctor, 6. Ruby Osceola.

EASTER EGG HUNT WINNERS
Most Eggs – Women: 1. Lucille Jumper; Most Eggs – Men: 1. Paul Bowers Sr.

Note: Carol Cypress won the Easter candles guessing game, as she said there were a total of 425 candles in the candy jar. Of all the seniors, Cypress guessed the closest, without going over, to the actual number of 468.



Charlotte Linda Tommie, left, helps Big Cypress Board Rep. Paul Bowers Sr., right, count the eggs he gathered, which turns out to be the most in the men's category at the Big Cypress Seniors Easter Party on March 31.



From left, Tribal seniors and Easter basket winners Ruby Osceola, Claudia Doctor, Louise Billie, Nancy Billie, Carol Cypress and Mary L. Johns.

Brighton Community Hunts for Easter Eggs



Jaime Smith, left, and LaShae King were among the Tribal youth who celebrated the first day of Spring Break as they participated in Brighton's Community Easter Egg Hunt March 26 outside the Brighton Gymnasium. The children were separated into age groups and raced to collect as many eggs as possible all while looking for the prize-winning egg.



Daven Buck collects as many eggs as he can.



Kayven Osceola-Emily displays the eggs he collected.

Hollywood Youth Easter Egg Hunt/Dinner



Hollywood Youth Center Counselor and event organizer Patricia Stirrup, back left, with the Easter Bunny and community youth during the Easter egg hunt and dinner at the Seminole recreation gym April 2. The Youth Center sponsored the event and had more than 30 youth in attendance with festivities including an egg hunt, bounce house and Easter baskets.

Immokalee Preschoolers Participate in Easter Party



Following an Easter Egg Hunt on the lawn of the Immokalee Preschool on March 26, students gave a hearty welcome to Mr. and Mrs. Easter Bunny. Prizes were rewarded for the most eggs collected. Party favors and sweet treats accompanied a special holiday lunch.

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Education

B



Vicki Pratt, right, the wife of Rev. Bruce Pratt, engaged the Tribal youth in a book discussion at "Easter Story Time" April 1. With the Tribal youngsters listening intently to Pratt's storytelling session at the Big Cypress Library's Learning Resource Center, the story gave a depiction of such happenings as the Last Supper and the events leading up to after the death of Jesus Christ. Pratt showed the Tribal children plastic eggs, which featured such items as a sword and ear.

Students Enjoy Easter Story Time at Big Cypress Library



Big Cypress Library curator Gretchen Dehree, left, wished the Tribal youth a Happy Easter holiday weekend as they exited the Learning Resource Center with their arts and crafts in possession.



Big Cypress First Baptist Church pastor Rev. Bruce Pratt looks on as Vicki Pratt leads a group of Tribal youngsters in a word of prayer.

Ahfachkee School's Tequesta Tiger is First Student to Make Chairman's Honor Roll

Tribal School's End-of-Third-Nine-Weeks Awards Ceremony Honors Students in Multiple Categories

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS – The Ahfachkee School has made significant scholastic strides since the 2009-2010 academic year began last August.

In about eight months and three academic quarters, 76 students achieved honor roll status and one of them reached the highest academic recognition possible – the Chairman's Honor Roll.

All of the honorees were recognized at the Ahfachkee School's cafeteria on April 9, with Tequesta Tiger being the first Ahfachkee School student to have achieved this prestigious honor for the academic year this far.

For the third quarter, Tiger achieved a perfect 4.0 grade point average. As of this past grading period, the ninth-grade Tribal student has achieved a 3.66 cumulative GPA.

"I've been getting good grades the whole year," Tiger said. "But I knew in order to continue getting better, I had to be focused on my academics every day."

Considered by those close to her as a goal-oriented student, Tiger said she wants to keep her grades high so that she could gain acceptance into college. She wants to place her emphasis on becoming a cultural and animation artist someday.

"I knew Tequesta was going to get it this quarter," Ahfachkee Art Teacher Ivette Lopez said of her. "Tequesta demonstrates her art talents everyday. She's always creative and inspiring with her artwork."

All of that seemingly translates to the home as well, with her mother, Ahfachkee Pre-K Teacher Aide Kara Tiger, seeing that for herself on a daily

basis.

"When I ask Tequesta about her schoolwork, it's always already done," Kara Tiger said of her daughter. "She studies in the morning and does her homework before she gets home everyday. Tequesta works very hard on everything she does. It's always 100 percent for her."

In addition to earning the Chairman's Honor Roll, Tequesta Tiger received an Ahfachkee Warriors Chairman's Honor Roll commemorative shirt, a Warriors FCAT T-shirt and the Chairman's Honor Roll Tag. With the special tag, Tequesta Tiger gains special school privileges, including the right to get out of school early on Fridays.

Tequesta Tiger won the Citizenship Award and the Ela-pon-ke (Culture) Award for the third quarter to round out her academic honors.

In all, Tequesta Tiger and her fellow students capped a very successful nine-week grading period, to the delight of Ahfachkee School staff members, including ESE Coordinator Jillian Francis.

"I'm extremely proud of the progress that all of our students have made for the third nine weeks," Francis said. "I hope they continue on for the last nine weeks and end the year on a great note."

The 2009-2010 academic year for the Ahfachkee School ends June 3. The End-of-Fourth-Nine Weeks Awards Ceremony, as well as the eighth and 12th grade graduation ceremonies, will be held on that same day.

The kindergarten graduation ceremony will convene on Wednesday, June 2 – a day before the school year is completed.

Please see
AWARDS RECIPIENTS on page 4B



Tequesta Tiger displays an art engraving of a lone soarbird as she poses with Ahfachkee School teacher Ivette Lopez.

Tribal Youth Excels at State Science Fair

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — Tribal student Kirsten Doney impressed the judges at the State Science and Engineering Fair, bringing home the third-place ribbon in the junior chemistry division for her project "The Sports Drink Challenge: Just Do It!"

The state fair was April 7-9 at the Orlando Convention Center and consisted of two rounds of judging with a total of 850 contestants.

Doney, an eighth grader at Yearling Middle School, worked her way to the state finals after placing first in three consecutive fairs held in Okeechobee – the Yearling Middle School fair, the county fair held at Osceola Middle School, and the regional fair at the Brighton Veterans' Building. Doney said early on she set the goal for herself to make it all the way to the state competition.

"I studied my topic and did a lot of research," said Doney. "I conducted a total of 15 trials for the experiment."

The purpose of Doney's experiment was to determine which sports drink contained the highest concentration of electrolytes. Doney said she came up with the idea after searching online for sports-related projects that were challenging and interesting.

The electrolyte concentration was established by measuring the conductance of ions in the sports drink through the use of a device created from a 9-volt battery, battery clip, alligator clips, plastic tubing and copper wires.

Doney not only won first place at the school and county level science fairs, but also won Best in Show for her entire category at both.

Judges asked Doney questions regarding how she conducted her experiment and trials along with questions about her math calculations and standard deviations.

"The school one I was nervous," said Doney. "It was my first-ever science fair that I had to actually do as a project."

Being her first science fair project, Doney decided to pick a continuation project that she will be able to work on for next year's fair when she enters in the Senior division.

Doney's mother, Marilyn, said she is very proud of her daughter and was absolutely amazed at her hard work and dedication throughout the entire project.

"I think it is a great accomplishment for me," Kirsten Doney said. "I did get frustrated at times and wanted to quit, but my parents and tutors kept encouraging me on. Just like our Tribe, keep moving forward and success will come."

Tribal student McKayla Snow also attended the State science fair with her project "Plop, Plop, Fizz, Fizz: What Do You Think the Reaction Time is?" and received fourth place.



Kirsten Doney with Chairman Mitchell Cypress at the Regional Science Fair held at the Brighton Veterans' Building.

Pemayetv Emahavk Charter School Awards Recipients

Kindergarten Effort

Pherian Baker
Karlyne Urbina
Caleb Burton
Tatiana Torres
Caitlyn Olivarez
Hawk Micco
Jahcole Arnold
Diego Meras
Zion Romine
Jaime Smith
LaShae King

Kindergarten Citizenship

Tadan Santiago
Kayven Emley
Corey Jumper
Lupe Mora-Lara
Joss Youngblood
Mariah Garner
Kalyan Hammil
Kyra Toneyes
Leilani Burton
Dathen Garcia
Alice Osceola

Kindergarten Improvement

Warrik Billie
Reese Davis
Hannah Moss
Elle Thomas
Jason Webber
Alanis Baker
Tammy Martinez
Jaytron Baker
Tehya Howard

Accelerated Reader Buzzing Bees

Pherian Baker
Warrik Billie
Tatiana Torres
Karlyne Urbina

Brilliant Bears

Warrik Billie
Caleb Burton
Kayven Emley
Hannah Moss
Tadan Santiago
Elle Thomas
Karlyne Urbina
Tatiana Torres
Corey Jumper
Jahcole Arnold
Alanis Baker
Hawk Micco
Joss Youngblood
Leilani Burton
Tehya Howard
Tammy Martinez
Jaytron Baker
Diego Meras
LaShae King
Kyra Toneyes
Zion Romine

Fantastic Frogs

Elle Thomas
Hannah Moss
Tadan Santiago
Kalyan Hammil
Jason Webber

Dazzling Duck

Reese Davis

100's Club

Hannah Moss
Elle Thomas
Kalyan Hammil
Jason Webber

Kindergarten Creek Class

Lorene Gopher's Class
Most Improved – Warrik Billie
Best Writing Skills – Tatiana Torres
Effort – Kalyan Hammil
Best Creek Speaker – Pherian Baker

KG Jenny Shore's Class

Most Improved – Jaime Smith
Best Writing Skills – Zion Romine
Effort – Joss Youngblood
Best Creek Speaker – Jaytron Baker

Kindergarten Arts and Crafts Class

Nancy Shore's Class
Most Improved – Zion Romine
Craftsmanship – Alice Osceola
Effort – Karlyne Urbina
Best Creek Speaker– Dathen Garcia

First Grade Effort

Ramone Baker
Shanta French
Haylie Huff
Hyatt Pearce
Davin Carrillo
Jahbahn Arnold
Destiny Elliott
Kiowa Garcia
Daven Buck
Jagger Gaucin
Kanyon Billie

First Grade Citizenship

Heith Lawrence
Ryanna Osceola
Ivory Herrera
Kaiden Sampson
Ruby Osceola
Kobe Jimmie
Jayton Baker
Caylie Huff
Alyssa Gonzalez
Aubee Billie
John Beck

First Grade Improvement

Ta-Iv Harris
Billy Bailey
Jaylen Baker
Laila Bennett
Todd Pierce
Mariah Billie
Justin Gopher
Morgan Yates
Norman Osceola
Shaella French

First Grade Accelerated Readers (10 AR books or more w/ 80% accuracy)

John Beck
Aubee Billie
Kanyon Billie
Daven Buck
Dalence Carrillo
Shaella French
Jagger Gaucin
Alyssa Gonzalez
Hunter Howard
Norman Osceola
Morgan Yates
Haylie Huff
Billy Bailey
Ramone Baker
Hyatt Pearce
Ruby Osceola
Kaiden Sampson
Tanner Shore
Ivory Herrera
Heith Lawrence
Jahbahn Arnold
Laila Bennett
Davin Carrillo
Caylie Huff
Mariah Billie
Todd Pierce
Justin Gopher
Destiny Elliott

First Grade Creek Class

Lorene Gopher's Class
Most Improved – Billy Bailey
Best Writing Skills – Ruby Osceola
Effort – Kanyon Billie
Best Creek Speaker – Jaylen Baker

First Grade Creek Class

Jenny Shore's Class
Most Improved – Kiowa Garcia
Best Writing Skills – Jahbahn Arnold
Effort – Mariah Billie
Best Creek Speaker – Jagger Gaucin

First Grade Arts and Crafts Class

Nancy Shore's Class
Most Improved – Billy Bailey
Craftsmanship – Aubee Billie
Effort – Alyssa Gonzalez
Best Creek Speaker – Heith Lawrence

First Grade History Class

Most Improved – Jayton Baker & Alyssa Gonzalez
Effort – Laila Bennett & Ramone Baker
Achievement – Destiny Elliott & John Beck

Second Grade Effort

Jason Sampson
Burgundy Pierce
Edward Gaucin
Kamani Smith
Aubrey Pearce
Donovan Harris

Dante Thomas
Robert Harris
Kai Osceola
Jacee Jumper
Cailioul Smith

Second Grade Citizenship

Shyla Gopher
Nyah Davidson
Ozzy Osceola
Eecho Billie
Kaleb Doctor
Malcolm Jones
Dakota Micco
Mallorie Thomas
Katie Beck
Savannah Fish
Madysin Osceola
Silas Madrigal
Myron Billie
Keira French
Waylynn Bennett
Jarrett Bert

Second Grade Improvement

Araya Youngblood
Tavis Jumper
Tucker Johns
Kamani Smith
Luzana Venzor
Brienna Brockman
Robert Harris
Kai Osceola
Jacee Jumper
Aleah Turtle
Jarrett Bert

Second Grade AR (met 9week goal)

Jarrett Bert

Spelling Bee Classroom Winners

Tucker Johns
Shyla Gopher
Savannah Fish
Katie Beck
Dante Thomas

Second Grade Creek Class

Lorene Gopher's Class
Most Improved – Ozzy Osceola
Best Writing Skills – Nyah Davidson
Effort – Jason Sampson
Best Creek Speaker– Eecho Billie

Second Grade Jenny Shore's Class

Most Improved – Donovan Harris
Best Writing Skills – Kamani Smith
Effort – Jacee Jumper
Best Creek Speaker – Luzana Venzor

Second Grade Arts and Crafts Class

Nancy Shore's Class
Most Improved – Robert Harris
Craftsmanship – Burgundy Pierce
Effort – Savannah Fish
Best Creek Speaker – Silas Madrigal

Second Grade History Class

Most Improved – Blake Baker & Jarrett Bert
Effort – Jacee Jumper & Logan Ortiz
Achievement – Savannah Fish & Luzana Venzor

Third Grade Effort

Sheldon Garcia
Lucas Osceola
Alicia Fudge
Andrew Fish
Gage Riddle
Kano Puento
Lance Howard
Joshlynn Micco
Cady Osceola
Conner Thomas
Aidan Tommie
Ridge Bailey
Drake Lawrence
Joseph Toneyes



Chandler Pearce, Aiyana Tommie and Rudy Juarez are presented with the Gold award for earning all As.

Rachel Burston

Third Grade Citizenship

Oscar Yates
Satie Rico
Keely Billie
Tyler Howard
Drake Lawrence
Joshlynn Micco
Raeley Matthews
Alyke Baker
Aleina Micco
Krysta Burton
Lance Howard
Billy Yates

Third Grade Accelerated Reader (Met AR goal w/ 85% accuracy)

Drake Lawrence
Raeley Matthews
Aidan Tommie
Paige Micco
Krysta Burton
Alicia Fudge
Ridge Bailey
Keely Billie
Gage Riddle
Kano Puento
Oscar Yates
Satie Rico
Tyler Howard

Spelling Bee Classroom Winners

Kano Puento
Lucas Osceola

Third Grade Bronze Award (3.0-3.4)

Andrew Fish
Tyler Howard
Lucas Osceola
Oscar Yates
Gage Riddle
Ridge Bailey
Krysta Burton
Joseph Toneyes
Billy Yates

Third Grade Silver Award (3.5–3.9)

Keely Billie
Alicia Fudge
Kano Puento
Alyke Baker
Aleina Micco
Cady Osceola
Conner Thomas
Aidan Tommie

Third Grade Gold Award (4.0)

Satie Rico
Raeley Matthews

Third Grade Creek Class

Lorene Gopher's Class
Most Improved – Tyler Howard
Best Writing Skills – Satie Rico
Effort – Oscar Yates
Best Creek Speaker– Gage Riddle

Third Grade Jenny Shore's Class

Most Improved – Ridge Bailey
Best Writing Skills – Raeley Matthews
Effort – Cady Osceola
Best Creek Speaker– Lance Howard

Third Grade Arts and Crafts Class

Nancy Shore's Class
Most Improved – Cady Osceola
Craftsmanship – Aleina Micco
Effort – Joseph Toneyes
Best Creek Speaker – Alyke Baker

Third Grade History Class

Most Improved – Lance Howard & Keely Billie
Effort – Joseph Toneyes & Tyler Howard
Achievement – Aidan Tommie & Alicia Fudge

Fourth Grade Effort

Dalton Girtman
Cheyenne Fish
Chloe Chalfant
Isaac Osceola
Sumi Bearden
Morgan King
Elijah Billie
Richard Harris
Jalynn Jones
Bly Davidson
Pernell Bert

Fourth Grade Citizenship

Aiyana Tommie
Easton Moss
Marquis Fudge
Cyrus Smedley
Brady Rhodes
Logan Ortiz
Joseph Osceola
Rylee Smith
Camryn Thomas
Richard Harris

Rudy Juarez
Jalynn Jones

Fourth Grade Accelerated Reader (Met AR goal w/ 85% accuracy)

Logan Ortiz
Michael Girtman
Richard Harris
Rudy Juarez
Rylee Smith
Camryn Thomas
Brian Bishop
Chloe Chalfant
Cheyenne Fish
Marquis Fudge
Dalton Girtman
Easton Moss
Dyami Nelson
Isaac Osceola
Chandler Pearce
Brady Rhodes
Cyrus Smedley
Layne Thomas

Fourth Grade Bronze Award (3.0-3.4)

Brian Bishop
Chloe Chalfant
Dyami Nelson
Isaac Osceola
Brady Rhodes
Ivess Baker
Michael Girtman
Bly Davidson
Krystal Toneyes

Fourth Grade Silver Award (3.5-3.9)

Layne Thomas
Joseph Osceola
Camryn Thomas
Pernell Bert

Fourth Grade Gold Award (Straight A's 4.0)

Chandler Pearce
Aiyana Tommie
Rudy Juarez

Spelling Bee Classroom Winners

Michael Girtman
Krystal Toneyes
Chandler Pearce
Aiyana Tommie

Fourth Grade Creek Class

Lorene Gopher's Class
Most Improved – Krystal Toneyes
Best Writing Skills – Bly Davidson
Effort – Morgan King
Best Creek Speaker– Rylee Smith

Fourth Grade Jenny Shore's Class

Most Improved – Brady Rhodes
Best Writing Skills – Dalton Girtman
Effort – Marquis Fudge
Best Creek Speaker– Dyami Nelson

Fourth Grade Arts and Crafts Class

Nancy Shore's Class
Most Improved – Marquis Fudge
Craftsmanship – Camryn Thomas
Effort – Michael Girtman
Best Creek Speaker– Sunni Bearden

Fourth Grade History Class

Most Improved – Richard Harris & Dalton Girtman
Effort – Michael Girtman & Easton Moss
Achievement – Krystal Toneyes & Chloe Chalfant

Fifth Grade Effort

Drayton Billie
Demetrius Clark
Samuel Osceola
Lanie Sedatol
Trevor Thomas

Fifth Grade Citizenship

Jermaine Bennett
Bethany Billie
Jaden Puento
Bailey Tedders

Fifth Grade Accelerated Reader (Met AR goal w/ 85% accuracy)

Trevor Thomas
Bailey Tedders
Sean Osceola
Eric Puento
Demetrius Clark
Andrew Dobbs
Raylon Eagle
Erik Garcia
Odessa King
Samuel Osceola
Bethany Billie

Spelling Bee Classroom Winners

Crysten Smith
Andrew Dobbs
Raylon Eagle
Shae Pierce



Kindergarten students receive Creek Class awards.

Rachel Burston

Big Cypress Library Staff Engages Tribal Youth in Making Books

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS – Tribal youth from the Big Cypress Reservation created artist journals recently during a workshop as part of the Willie E. Frank Library's bookmaking series.

The March 25 workshop was geared toward encouraging the Tribal youngsters to develop a desire to read, according to Library Department curator Gretchen Debreë. They gained an opportunity to learn the art of making a French Fold book, a caterpillar book and an accordion book with a beaded spine.

The sessions were held Thursday afternoons from March 4-25.

Debreë, an avid book reader, said the bookmaking series concept was inspired by a trip she took to the Minnesota Center for Book Arts in Minneapolis about two years ago. While attending a library conference there, Debreë was captivated by a collection of book arts that depicted the forms of books she encouraged the Tribal youth to create.

"Reading and art are my two favorite things," Debreë said. "Combine the two and it will explain why I love book arts so much."

Tribal children Shana Balentine, 8, and Destiny Cypress, 9, were all smiles while working on their own artist journals. As Balentine meticulously crafted her work of art with a spring theme in mind, she made sure to place squirrels, butterflies and flowers on her journal. Cypress focused squarely on animals as she pasted items such as pictures of dogs, cheetahs and panthers onto her journal piece.

Fellow Tribal youngster Jaylee Cypress, 4, placed a logo on the back of her artist journal entitled "Think Spring," which featured a rainbow, flowers and Easter eggs in the highlighted background.

"Jaylees wanted to focus on Easter and spring," said Melissa Silva, a Big Cypress Library assistant. "She wanted to welcome in the new season and have fun. It was very colorful. I liked it."

The Willie E. Frank Library staff is hoping to have another children's bookmaking series in the near future.

"We had fun learning about making a book," Cypress said of the recent sessions. "We would like to try it again."



Naji Tobias

From left, Thomlynn Billie is focusing on the creation of her artist journal, while Big Cypress Library curator Gretchen Debreë offers her help to Cyah Osceola and Jalycia Billie on their works of art.

Pemayetv Emahakv Students Experience the Past at Culture Day

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — Students at the Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School learned about their ancestral past through traditional Seminole activities during the school's annual Culture Day.

The event at the Fred Smith Rodeo Arena Culture Camp included basic Seminole teachings such as cooking and carving.

Girls cooked fry bread from scratch. They made the dough and placed it into a pot over an open fire under the cooking chickee. Older boys carved wooden hatchets and younger boys created animals from bars of soap.

A new traditional and advanced activity was added to the camp this year organized by the Culture Department. Culture teacher Martha Jones demonstrated to the sixth graders the proper technique of butchering a pig.

"A lot of things that they are taught

now in class cannot be shown every day in class," culture history teacher Jade Braswell said. "They need more hands on and that's why we bring them here so they can learn about who they really are and where they came from."

The March 24 event also featured a scavenger hunt that was designed to test students' Creek language skills. Students had to translate clues written in Creek and then had to make their way around the arena looking for the next clue.

Tribal member Herbert Jim traveled from the Tampa Reservation to share legends with the students, an old tradition that was typically passed down from

grandparents and uncles. Jim spoke to the students about the lesson of the Creator and about giving thanks for all that they have.

"When you get older, you can pass it on to your children," student Rumor Juarez said about learning Seminole lessons. "If you forget, it just fades off."

The Culture Camp teachings coincide with what the students are learning in their culture classes. The Charter School recently added wood carving to their arts and crafts class, and planting a traditional Seminole garden activity to their culture history class.

Braswell said the Culture Department is trying to hit the students from all angles when it comes to Seminole culture.

"It's truly, truly important," Tribal member and Charter School volunteer D'Anna Osceola said about the students learning their heritage. "It's everything and anything to say you're Seminole, but if you don't live it and show it, then it's just kind of like, 'yes you are, but where is it?' This is a really good thing what we have out here."



Naji Tobias

From left, Tribal youngsters Shana Balentine, 8, and Destiny Cypress pick out and paste pictures from an animal magazine while they work on their artist journal in the March 25 children's bookmaking session.



Naji Tobias

Jaylee Cypress, 4, shows off her newly made artist journal.

Students Compete to Become Ultimate FCAT Survivor

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — After months of preparation and a week of intense FCAT testing, students at Pemayetv Emahakv left the classroom and teamed up with a parent or fellow student to compete in the school's annual FCAT Survival Day.

The event featured a football throw, bean bag toss, T-ball challenge and basketball throw. It was organized March 25 at the Brighton gym and softball fields by physical education teachers Pam Matthews and Chris Goodwin in an effort to get the students out of the classroom and involved in friendly competition and physical activity.

"It just gives them a chance to let off some steam," sixth-grade teacher Renee Finney said. "It is a really good stress reliever."

Teams competed in 10 challenges with the top 10 teams from each individual challenge racing in one final challenge in front of the entire school, all striving for the top honor of being named the "ultimate survivors."

The top teams raced by tying ropes, building bridges out of exercise mats, throwing bean bags through hula hoops worn by their teammate and then racing to the finish doing a three-legged carpet walk followed by a single basketball lay up.

Zeke Matthews, with the help of his uncle Raymond Lowe, beat out the competition and became the "ultimate survivors."

"This gives the students the opportunity to show parents what they've been doing in P.E.," Finney said. "It's a way to do fun things and to stay physically fit together."

Following a traditional lunch, sixth graders went head-to-head



Rachel Buxton

Diamond Shore, left, and mom, Farrah Jones work together in the football throw.

with Pemayetv Emahakv's teachers and staff in a kickball rematch.

It was a stiff match with the students holding the lead at 7-2 going into the eighth inning. The teachers however made a comeback tying the game 7-7 forcing the game into a 10th inning. Neither team was able to score a run and the 2010 students vs. teacher kickball game was called a tie.



Rachel Buxton

Caylie Huff and mom Tracy do the big foot walk.



Rachel Buxton

Aleah Turtle steps up to bat for T-ball.



Rachel Buxton

The young girls learn the trick to mixing fry bread dough properly.



Rachel Buxton

From left, Edward Gaucin, Tavis Jumper and Jason Sampson work on their soap carvings.

Health

D



Chairman Mitchell Cypress, fourth from left, and Brighton Council Rep. Andrew J. Bowers Jr., third from right, pose with Seminole Pathways participants.



Big Cypress Tribal senior Jonah Cypress examines a photo of a Seminole Pathways highlight.



Chairman Mitchell Cypress gazes at the accomplishments made by Tribal members during the Pathways program.

Tribal Participants Honored at Seminole Pathways Awards Ceremony

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS – Each Tribal reservation was recognized recently at the Seminole Pathways Awards ceremony, marking the end of a six-month walking program designed to promote a healthy lifestyle for Tribal citizens.

Chairman Mitchell Cypress spoke matter-of-factly of what it took for the Tribal participants to successfully complete the walk initiative.

"It's all in the mind and body," Chairman Cypress told the awards attendees March 24 at the Big Cypress Community Center. "Sometimes you just got to get over your laziness. You can eat, but you got to be careful of how much you do it. You have to discipline yourself."

Tampa Reservation senior Nancy Frank used laughter as a component in her efforts to take advantage of the Seminole Pathways Walking Program opportunities. Frank is a

cancer survivor who was diagnosed with breast cancer about five years ago. She said doctors told her that if she didn't exercise, they might have to amputate her limbs.

"It's hard and tough sometimes, but I want to move and keep exercising," she said in a jovial manner. "My life depends on it."

With two breast surgeries in the past few years, Frank has had a tumor removed from her left side. The Tampa senior suffers from high blood pressure and high cholesterol.

The tumor discovery forced Frank to take some time off from exercising. She participates in tae-kwon-do and kickboxing in addition to walking on a regular basis.

But when Frank recovered, she returned to action. Frank's exercise efforts, particularly in martial arts, have been assisted by her six children, with her four sons regularly working out with her fellow Tampa seniors. "When I'm working out with my kids, I feel better about myself because of it," she said. "It keeps me happy."

As for Frank's take on laughing?

"It's like medicine to me," she said. "I like to keep people laughing. I love my life." Tampa Reservation Department of Elderly Affairs project coordinator Lola Juarez couldn't agree more.

"Laughing keeps us young," Juarez said. "It's the effort the seniors put forth that makes us proud of them. It was hard for us to keep up with them."

In all, 262 Tribal citizens from Tampa, Brighton, Fort Pierce, Immokalee, Naples, Trail, Big Cypress and Hollywood participated in the Seminole Pathways Walking Program.

"Finding our path to wellness is what it's all about," Seminole Pathways Director Edna McDuffie said. "I'm proud of all the locations that supported their walks. It was great to see everybody making this program work."

Please see **PATHWAYS AWARDS RECIPIENTS** on page 6B



Tampa's seniors check out Tribal citizens' accomplishments made during the Seminole Pathways walking program.



Seminole Fitness gymnastics trainers Gina Allardye and Mike Iglesias look on as Tribal gymnasts work on backends.

Gymnastics Camp Focuses on Healthy Living

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS – The Big Cypress Fitness Dome opened its doors to the Tribal youth for several lessons in gymnastics throughout spring break week. With an emphasis on healthy living, Seminole Fitness trainers Gina Allardye and Mike Iglesias challenged the youngsters to moderate their eating habits, exercise on a daily basis and obtain a positive mindset in the process.

In addition to the daily grind on the gymnastics circuit at the Fitness Dome, the Tribal youth went swimming each day from March 29-April 1 to cool down and increase their flexibility.

"We wanted our kids to engage in high-energy and fun activities," Iglesias said. "When they're active like that, you can show them it's good to stay active while having fun."

All of that translated to the Big Cypress Community Center on the spring break camp's first day, when the Tribal youngsters were exposed to an in-depth health lesson from the Seminole Health and Wellness departments.

As the Tribal youth listened in on the importance of maintaining a nutritious appetite and regimen, they also got to play some games while learning about the aforementioned concept.

At the nutritional segment of the spring break camp, Sabre Billie was one of a few Tribal youngsters who engaged in a presentation hosted by Allied Health Manager Suzanne Davis and Seminole Wellness health instructor Lance Vaz.

Focusing on uniqueness in teamwork, the Tribal youth each took turns to present their health drawings – Billie drew up a Vitamin C illustration – and talk briefly about the positive effects the nutrient in question can have on their bodies.

While Billie showed off the Vitamin C nutrient, Emily Akin held up her carbohydrates drawing and spoke briefly about that. Gloria Brooks displayed a bone drawing, as it depicted minerals and calcium.

Taking all this in, the Tribal gymnasts spent the rest of the spring break week keying in on living a healthier lifestyle.

"I hope they learn to make better choices on what to eat, realizing there are many environmental factors," Vaz said. "There's more that goes into what they eat than just hunger. It's just important for them to stay healthy."



Tribal gymnasts work on some cartwheels at a gymnastics lesson on April 1, the last day of spring break camp.

Seniors Compete in Fitness Challenge

BY ADINA LOOCHKARTT
Editor

HOLLYWOOD – All Tribal seniors were winners at the awards luncheon ceremony that marked the end of the first Senior Fitness Challenge.

The challenge is a three-month program geared toward cultivating healthy habits among seniors.

Seniors are awarded one point – a smiley face sticker – for each fitness class and/or one-on-one personal training session they attend. Seventeen seniors participated in the program that started Jan. 4 and ended March 31, and they were all rewarded healthy fruit arrangements at the luncheon held April 7 at the Hollywood Senior Center.

A minimum of 30 points are needed in order to complete the challenge.

"We know that they have a competitive spirit. It was something that we thought we should bring back," said Jeff Garland, program director with the Fitness Department.

Garland said the seniors do chair exercises, ride on a bicycle, work out on the treadmill and resistance bands, lift light weights and walk a little in the parking lot in the morning.

He said the program reaches more than the elderly population.

"Young adults see their grandparents working out, being active. [...] It creates a good habit, a pattern to working out. They're in better shape and it inspires them to say, 'I was able to play longer with my grandkids.'"

The program makes the younger Tribal members not to have an excuse for not working out, Garland said.

Sally Billie, 72, is the winner for the ladies' category with 40 out of 60 points. She said exercising makes her feel better. She moves around better and she is more energetic.

The winner in the men's category with 54 points out of 60 was Tribal member Joe Paul. He has only missed two days in three months.

"He made sure he got in early. He did great," said Kenny Bayon, senior fitness specialist.

Paul said he has incorporated the fitness exercises in his daily routine.

"I'm diabetic. I have to go to the clinic, from there I go rest then I come here [the Senior Center] and go back [to the clinic] at 4 to get more shots."

He said he has been

walking, riding the bicycle, and sometimes working out on the stationary treadmill.

"I feel better," the 59-year-old Tribal member said. Bayon said the department wanted to do something to challenge seniors.

"We needed something to challenge seniors. They have a lot of fun walking, doing a lot of things, but we never had something fitness wise. We thought of doing something fresh and challenge them."

Recently retired Tribal citizen Elsie J. Bowers said she loves the idea of the challenge and loves to exercise.

"I walk every time I get the chance," she said. "Now I can do what they did. I didn't get the chance to do it." Bowers is planning on attending the following challenge when she comes back from the trip she had planned after her retirement.

"I think there are a lot of diabetics," she said "As long as they're doing their exercises, they'll be good."

"I've been a diabetic and I try to do exercises just about every day. A lot of them have arthritis and I always tell them, 'You need to exercise to feel better,'" Bowers said.

A second Fitness Challenge is planned to start in May, also for a three-month period.

"I want to thank the [Tribal] Council for pushing this [program]. They want us to help you to have a long, healthy life," Bayon said to the seniors.

For more information, call Kenny Bayon at 954-665-3299.



Sally Billie, left, and Joe Paul are the winners of the first Senior Fitness Challenge that started in January and ended March 31.

Adina Loockkardt

The Seminole Police Department Citizens Police Academy

BY SGT. GEORGE GONZALEZ
Seminole Police Department

This Citizens Police Academy is provided to the Seminole Tribe members located at various reservations in Florida. The program is a curriculum designed to educate and assist the Tribal members within the community, to help them better understand what police work is, and the many challenges that law enforcement officers are faced with.

Participants will have the opportunity to gain knowledge in the procedures, responsibilities, and day-to-day operations of the Seminole Police Department. The goal of this program is to build new and improved trust, communication, and a partnership between Tribal members and the Seminole Police Department. To reinforce those relationships already established, and ultimately create a natural bond striving towards mutual goals.

How it works: Tribal members attend a ten [10]-week program. Classes are held once a week on a designated evening, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. A staff member of the Seminole Police Department, usually a sworn law enforcement officer, teaches each class. The curriculum covers a variety of areas, to include Organization and Structure of the Seminole Police Department, Crime Prevention, Community Policing, Drug Awareness and Enforcement and Domestic Violence, to name a few. A different instructor, having a strong background and specializing in the particular field, usually teaches each block. This ensures that the students will be receiving excellent information, and more importantly, the opportunity to meet a new officer each time. The lectures are all designed to be interesting, and instructors are encouraged to solicit inter-

action from the students. Students will have the chance to participate in scenarios, as this will allow them to have the hands on experience of role-playing as police officers. The purpose for this is to hopefully provide the student with an insight and feel of the job. The curriculum is concluded with a graduation, and each student will receive a certificate. However, more importantly, students walk away with new friendships, a bond and a completely different perspective on police work and the Seminole Police Department.

Eligibility:

- Must be at least 16 years of age.
- Must fill out a registration application.
- Have no criminal record involving crimes of violence or recent arrests.
- Must be a Tribal Member or family of Tribal Member.
- Employees of the Seminole Tribe will be considered based on the availability of slots.

Service area: Due to our unique geographical structure, the Training Unit, along with the Youth and Elder Unit, will work together to coordinate each Citizens Police Academy. This will include the start date, location as to where the Academy will be conducted, and all announcements prior to the commencement of the academy. Those that register are given contact information, so that if any questions or issues arise, there is always someone available that they can speak with. The goal of the Seminole Police Department is to have an academy put on at the different reservations, so that all Tribal members are given the opportunity to be part of this educational and exciting program.

Seminole Pathways Awards Ceremony Results

BIG CYPRESS RESERVATION

Senior Male: 1. Harley Roberts, 2. Jonah Cypress, 3. Rudy Osceola; Senior Female: 1. Edna McDuffie, 2. Mary Tigertail, 3. Louise Billie, 4. Violet Jim, 5. Carol Cypress; Adult Male: 1. Byron Billie, 2. Michael Onco, 3. Marquise Wiggins, 4. Jose Herrera, 5. Alvin Buster Jr.; Adult Female: 1. Marilyn Jumper, 2. Clarissa Bowers, 3. Sara Osceola, 4. Carol Osceola, 5. Barbara Billie.

BRIGHTON RESERVATION

Senior Male: 1. Billie Micco; Senior Female: 1. Connie Whidden, 2. Patty Waldron, 3. Jenny Johns, 4. Oneva Baxley, 5. Louise Gopher; Adult Male: 1. Ken Doney, 2. Duane Jones, 3. Leon Jose, 4. Ignacio Orozco, 5. Wayne Nelson; Adult Female: 1. Liz Johns, 2. Michele Thomas, 3. Stacy Jones, 4. Suraiya Smith, 5. Grace Koonz and Ginger Jones; Youth (12-17): 1. Brydgett Koonz, 2. Wade Micco and Huber Leon Lara, 3. Cyprus Smedley, 4. (tie) Jaden Puente and Erik Garcia, 5. (tie) Michael Garcia, Breanna Billie and Erena Billie; Youth (6-11): 1. Kamani Smith, 2. Kano Puente, 3. Trevor Thomas.

HOLLYWOOD RESERVATION

Senior Male: 1. Stephen Bowers, 2. Robert North, 3. Paul Buster; Senior Female: 1. Elsie Bowers, 2. Judy Tiger, 3. Juanita Osceola, 4. Wanda Bowers, 5. Jo North; Adult Male: 1. Mike Tiger, 2. Terry Tartash, 3. Tony Willis, 4. Leon Wilcox, 5. Nathan Doctor; Adult Female: 1. Yvette Jumper, 2. Shantilly Williams, 3. Francine Osceola, 4. Jennifer Osceola, 5. Rhonda Bain; Youth (12-17): 1. Elden F. Osceola, 2. Hunter Osceola; Youth (6-11): 1. Chayse Billie, 2. Grant Osceola, 3. Skyla Osceola, 4. Matthew Osceola Jr.

TRAIL RESERVATION

Men (18-54): 1. Andrew Bert Jr., 2. Michael Cantu, 3. Miguel Cantu, 4. Richard Keyser, 5. Kenny Cypress; Women (18-54): 1. Chawndra Billie, 2. Marcella Billie, 3. Alicia Willow, 4. Crystal Tortice, 5. Caryn Billie; Youth (12-17): 1. Margie Tortice, 2. Lois Billie; Youth (6-11): 1. Dion Bert, 2. Cassidy Bert, 3. Morgan Bert.

IMMOKALEE RESERVATION

Senior Male (55 and up): 1. Pedro Aguilar Sr.; Senior Female (55 and up): 1. Elaine Aguilar, 2. Linda Narck; Adult Male (18-54): 1. Edward Aguilar, 2. Kenny Davis Sr., 3. Raymond Garza; Adult Female (18-54): 1. Mary Lou Alvarado, 2. Jennifer Ramos, 3. (tie) Cindy Aguilar and Demi Garza, 4. Celeste Billie, 5. Virginia Billie; Youth (12-17): 1. Kenny Davis Jr.; Youth (6-11): 1. K.J. Davis, 2. Edward Jon Aguilar, 3. Spencer Aguilar.

NAPLES RESERVATION

Senior Male (55 and up): 1. Lee Zepeda Sr., 2. Douglas Osceola; Senior Female (55 and up): 1. Wanda Zepeda, 2. Maggie Porter; Adult Male (18-54): 1. Douglas Zepeda, 2. Pedro Zepeda; Adult Female (18-54): 1. Jessica Osceola, 2. Connie Slavik, 3. Naomi Walden, 4. Kari Jo Osceola, 5. Sandy Osceola; Youth (12-17): 1. Marissa Osceola, 2. Kennedy Huggins; Youth (6-11): 1. Nicole Slavik, 2. Martin Slavik Jr., 3. Dominic Lugo-Osceola, 4. Joseph Lugo-Osceola, 5. Alexis Walden.

TAMPA RESERVATION

Senior Male (55 and up): 1. Bobby Henry; Senior Female (55 and up): 1. Nancy Frank, 2. Peggy Cubis, 3. Susie Doctor, 4. (tie) Annie Henry and Linda O. Henry, 5. Maggie Garcia; Adult Male (18-54): 1. Terrance Simmons (non-tribal), 2. Richard Henry, 3. Herbert Jim, 4. Eric Cypress, 5. Wilson Bowers; Adult Female (18-54): 1. April Simmons, 2. Debbie Henry, 3. Gladys Guzman, 4. Kaylin Henry, 5. (tie) Colleen Henry and Linda J. Henry; Youth (12-17): 1. Phaydra Clark, 2. Christina Clark; Youth (6-11): 1. Male or Female) 1. (tie) Tyrek Laxane and Azaria Simmons, 2. Carrisa Colon, 3. Cavan Guzman.

FORT PIERCE RESERVATION

Adult Male: 1. Remus Griffin, 2. Alex Tommie, 3. Jarvis Frierson; Adult Female: 1. Shirley Sotello, 2. Sylvia Tommie, 3. Tracey Tommie, 4. Margaret Wilcox, 5. Aryandea Griffin.

Overall Pedometer Winners - All Reservations

1. Ashley Burnett (Big Cypress), 2. Kenny Davis Jr. (Immokalee), 3. Yvette Jumper (Hollywood), 4. Stacy Jones (Brighton), 5. Debbie Henry (Tampa), 6. Jessica Osceola (Naples), 7. Ebony Tommie (Fort Pierce), 8. Karyn Billie (Trail).

Tribe Co-Sponsors Relay For Life in Clewiston



Taking a walk around Clewiston High School's bus loop on March 13, Big Cypress dental hygienist Veronica Lopez, right, along with Clewiston career service case manager Mannie Guzman, center, and Alhachkee School aide Patti Rodriguez represent Team Seminole in this year's Relay for Life cancer awareness event. The three women were in the walk for all of the Tribal cancer survivors.



Immokalee nutritionist/health educator Charlotte Porcare, left, Big Cypress health transporter Harley Roberts and Seminole Pathways director Edna McDuffie take a stand for the Seminole Tribe of Florida (co-sponsor for Relay for Life with the Hilliard Brothers) as they came to the Clewiston Relay for Life event in an effort to fight cancer. "That's the reason we're here," McDuffie said of the Relay for Life event. Relay for Life was the next-to-last walk that Seminole Pathways has on its 2009-2010 season schedule.

Learn How to Preserve Food, Avoid Poisoning

Let's face it; sometimes it's just easier and more enjoyable to let someone else do the cooking. However, there are food safety implications that you need to be aware of.

Restaurants and delis follow important sanitation rules during food preparation, to ensure a safe and wholesome product to the customer. Once that food is purchased or delivered, it is your responsibility to keep it safe. Hot or cold takeout meals are perishable and can cause food borne illness when mishandled. Proper handling is essential to ensure that food and left over's safe to eat. Harmful bacteria can multiply in the "Danger Zone" (between 40 and 140°F). So remember the two-hour rule and discard any perishable foods left at room temperature longer than two hours.

What is the 2-Hour Rule?

The two-hour rule recommends to keep hot foods safe, keep them at 140°F or above, also cold and potentially hazardous foods must be kept at 40°F or below. Bacteria grow rapidly between 40 and 140°F ("danger zone"). Discard all perishable foods such as meat, cold slaw, eggs, and potato salads left at room temperature longer than two hours; one hour in temperatures above 90°F.

Cold Take-Out or Delivered Food

Cold foods should be kept at 40°F or below. Refrigerate perishable foods as soon as possible, always within two hours after purchase or delivery. If the food is at temperatures above 90°F, refrigerate within one hour. When take-out or delivered food is purchased cold for an outdoor event, a cooler with ice is a practical alternative to a refrigerator. The cooler should be packed with plenty of ice or frozen gel packs, and kept in the shade when possible. Remember the

two-hour rule when food is removed from the cooler.

Hot Take-Out or Delivered Food

Once food is cooked, it should be held hot, i.e. at an internal temperature of 140°F or above. Just keeping food warm (between 40 and 140°F) is not safe. Use a food thermometer to monitor the internal temperature of the food. If you plan to eat at a later time, take-out or delivered food should be divided into smaller portions or pieces, placed in shallow containers, and refrigerated.

Reheating Leftovers

Reheat foods containing meat or poultry to an internal temperature of at least 165°F. Always use a food thermometer to verify the internal temperature of the food.

Reheat sauces, soups, and gravies to a rolling boil.

If reheating in the oven, set oven temperature no lower than 325°F.

Reheating in slow cookers is NOT recommended because foods may stay in the "Danger Zone" (between 40 and 140°F) too long. Also when heating in a microwave oven, cover food and rotate the dish so the food heats evenly and doesn't leave "cold spots" that could harbor bacteria. Always allow standing time before checking the internal temperature of the reheated food.

REMEMBER, most food poisoning bacteria cannot be seen, smelled, or tasted. If in doubt, throw it out!

Please call the Environmental Health Office at 954-965-1300 ext. 10325 should you need more information

—Submitted by Nicholas Persaud
Seminole Environmental Health Program.

Depression - How is it Different from Normal Sadness?

For people who have struggled with mood-related issues, one of the most difficult decisions to make is when to consult professional help. We all know that sadness, grief, disappointment and loss are all a part of the normal life cycle. So, how is depression different from all of these other normal life experiences? The distinction is often subtle and difficult to qualify for several reasons. Human behavior is not an exact science. Individuals differ in their reactions to situations based on many of the factors that make the individual unique. Culture and upbringing will have a great impact on a person's response to different circumstances, but there are some objective distinctions that separate depression from our individual sadness reactions.

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Psychiatric Disorders or DSM IV R is the manual used by mental health professionals to diagnose psychiatric and psychological problems in their clients. When it comes to depression, there are very specific symptoms that the mental health professional is looking for. Some examples include feelings of sadness that persist beyond a few weeks, changes in appetite and sleeping patterns; feelings of worthlessness, hopelessness, and inappropriate guilt; loss of interest or pleasure in formerly important activities; fatigue; inability to concentrate; overwhelming sadness; disturbed thinking; physical symptoms such as headaches or stomachaches; and suicidal thoughts or behaviors.

Combinations of four or more of these symptoms over a two-week or longer period can result in a diagnosis of depression.

Depression is a very common and treatable problem. According to the National Institute for Mental Health, as many as 12 million adults in the United States are affected by depression. While the exact causes of depression are not known, depression is thought to be related to imbalances in brain chemistry. There are medications known as antidepressants which impact the specific brain chemistry involved in depression by increasing the amount of neurotransmitters that are often too low in depressed individuals. Psychotherapy or talk therapy has also been found to be effective in treating depression.

Depression, when left untreated can snowball into a number of serious issues and is associated with suicide, substance abuse and host of physical health problems. This is why early intervention is very important.

The Seminole Tribe of Florida Family Services Department employs professionals who are able to evaluate depression and assist in its treatment.

If you suspect that you or a loved one may be in need of treatment or assessment for depression, you can contact the Family Services Department professionals at the following locations:

- Hollywood - 954-964-6338
- Immokalee - 239-867-3480
- Fort Pierce - 772-461-7363
- Brighton - 863-763-7100
- Tampa - 813-246-3700
- Big Cypress - 863-902-3206

—Family Services Department
Seminole Tribe of Florida

Tribal Members and Employees Recognized for Weight Loss Achievements

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS – All Issiah Billie has wanted to do over the past several months is lose weight and work toward a healthy lifestyle.

His efforts have paid off as he placed in the top three in the Tribal men's category at the Seminole Weight Loss Awards Luncheon on March 25 at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium.

Billie, who weighed in at 275.5 pounds this past August, lost 29.5 pounds as of March. He has shed 16.5 pounds at the November 2009 weigh-in session and trimmed off another 13 last month.

Since last summer, the 24-year-old has been regularly running three miles on the Seminole Fitness walking trail at the Big Cypress Reservation.

Billie, who has two children – Louise, 2, and Tatum, 1 – said that after dropping them off at the reservation's preschool each weekday morning, he goes straight to the trail and runs.

Weight Loss Awards Luncheon Results (Nov. 17-18, 2009-Mar. 9-10, 2010)

Tribal Men:

Danny Tommie, 2. Cicero Osceola, 3. Issiah Billie, 4. Charlie Cypress, 5. Josh Jumper;

Tribal Women: 1. Donelda Mercer, 2. Meredith Bullard, 3. Sheila Aguilar, 4. Pauletta Bowers, 5. Kayla Bowers;

Non-Tribal Community/Employees – Women:

1. Valerie Whiteside (Afhachkee School), 2. Michelle Walker (Afhachkee School), 3. Angie Hurt (Big Cypress Education Dept.), 4. Jennifer Defalco (Afhachkee School), 5. Evelyn Mata (Big Cypress Trading Post);

Non-Tribal Community/Employees – Men:

1. Gary Yebba (Big Cypress Housing), 2. David Lee (Seminole Police Dept.), 3. David Rojas (Cattle and Range), 4. William Engel (Afhachkee School), 5. Stephen Ast (Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum).

The running has also helped him on the basketball court. He plays at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium at least three times a week.

"I've been working out and running around a lot lately," Billie said. "I feel lighter and I have more energy."

Eating his lunch of pork, mixed vegetables, fruits, salad, iced tea and water at the awards ceremony, Billie viewed a PowerPoint presentation by Seminole Wellness health educator Lance Vaz. The presentation focused on the Body Mass Index chart for adults and the importance of limiting fat content in the body.

"You only need a little bit of fat, but everybody needs it to survive," Vaz said.

Too much of it, Vaz said, is not conducive to an individual's health. And that's what Billie said is important to him.

Billie said he would like to change his eating habits and to continue the same workout regimen he has in place now.

At 5-foot-11, Billie's current weight of 246 pounds would be considered obese, according to the Body Mass Index chart for adults. Billie said he wants to lose at least another 20 pounds for the next weigh-in in July.

The Seminole Weight Loss weigh-in/weigh-out



Naji Tobias

Four Tribal women receive special recognition at the Weight Loss Awards Luncheon: from left, Meredith Bullard, Sheila Aguilar, Pauletta Bowers and Kayla Bowers.

functions are held every 16 weeks.

"I'm going to do the same routine, but I want to eat better," he said. "Instead of eating fried chicken, I'm going to grill it. And I'm going to eat more vegetables than before."

Billie, along with more than 40 other weight-loss participants, received encouraging words from Seminole Wellness Director Edna McDuffie at the conclusion of the Weight Loss Awards Luncheon.



Naji Tobias

Lance Vaz shows off a Ziploc bag of fat that weighs 10 pounds during his health presentation.



Naji Tobias

The Weight Loss Awards Luncheon highlights the male employee and community member winners: from left, Gary Yebba, David Lee, David Rojas, William Engel, and Stephen Ast.



Naji Tobias

Seminole Wellness Director Edna McDuffie addresses the attendees at the Weight Loss Awards Luncheon on March 25.

Seminole Tribe Raises HIV/AIDS Awareness



Barbara Boling

The Brighton Education Department shows off its winning door in the Native HIV/AIDS Awareness door decorating contest held March 16. The contest was sponsored by the Seminole Tribe Health Department in efforts to promote the National Native HIV/AIDS Awareness Day that was recognized on March 20. Participating departments included the Fred Smith Rodeo staff, the Brighton dental department and the Brighton medical clinic. The winning department received a catered lunch for their hard work and creativity. From left, Education Department's Susan Kuipers, Becky Bowers, Vickie Stuart and Emma Johns.

Preschoolers Participate in March of Dimes Wonder Walk

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — The Seminole Health Department and the March of Dimes teamed up to help stress to the Brighton preschoolers the importance of living a healthy lifestyle as well as giving back.

Members of the Health Department and the March of Dimes stopped by the preschool April 9 to put on the fourth annual March of Dimes preschool Wonder Walk that included physical activity stations.

Edna McDuffie of the Seminole Health Department led classes by age one at a time through the stations and got the preschoolers stretching, marching, hopping and walking.

"If we show them the healthy ways now hopefully they will keep it up and I believe they will because they see the parents and learn from them what they are doing," said McDuffie.

The March of Dimes staff brought tunnels for the little ones to crawl through along with bubbles to enjoy after participating in their physical activities. Students also got a chance to cool off while enjoying a nutritious snack provided by the March of Dimes.

Prior to the Wonder Walk students with the help of their parents raised money that went toward the Seminole Tribe's contribution to the March of Dimes Walk for Babies that was held March 6 in Okeechobee.

The Seminole Tribe Health Department continues its efforts to start the children young at living a healthier lifestyle and McDuffie

said she has noticed a change since they started the Wonder Walk four years ago.

There is more participation and we do it a little bit different each year so the kids have fun," said McDuffie. "We don't really preach to them that this is for your health and all that, but I think they know."



Rachel Buxton

Preschoolers enjoy the fun of bubbles.



Rachel Buxton

Edna McDuffie leads the preschoolers in a march.

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SportsC

Son, Daughter Celebrated in Memorial Tourneys

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

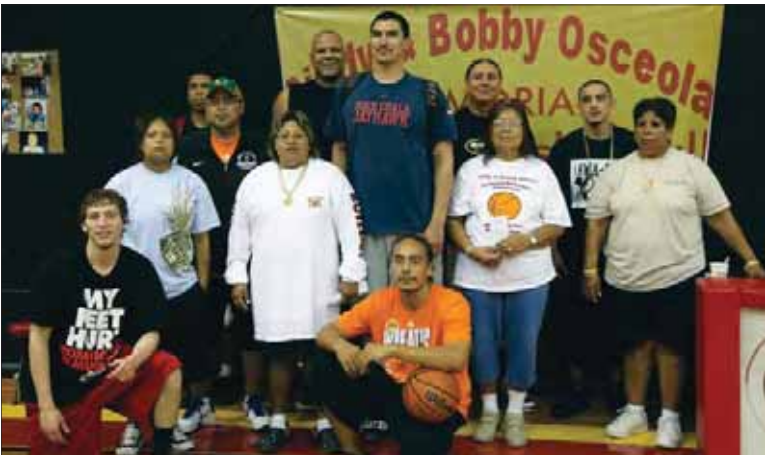
HOLLYWOOD — Old and new traditions combined on the basketball court in the memory of Tribal citizens Cindy and Bobby Osceola in the seventh and inaugural editions of the Cindy Osceola Legends Memorial and Bobby C. Osceola Memorial Basketball Tournaments.

The Seminole Gym hosted the two All-



Chris C. Jenkins

Betty Osceola concentrates on her shot in the seniors free throw contest.



Chris C. Jenkins

Bobby Osceola Tournament men's champion Big Town with members of the Osceola family.

Team Records – Women's and Men's Games Played March 27.

Women: 1. No Pressure (3-0), 2. Big Cypress Women (1-2), 3. Herrikanez (0-2); Men: 1. Big Town (3-0), 2. Tony Billie's Team (2-2), 3. Big Cypress Men (1-2), 4. Trail Kings (0-2).

Team Records – Women's and Men's Legends Games Played March 25

Women: 1. Native Ladies (2-0), 2. Young Legends (0-2); Men: 1. Still Got Game (3-0), 2. Big Cypress Men (1-2), 3. Brighton Throwbacks (0-2).

Notes: With the exception of the women's Legends games, the tournament was played in a double-elimination format. Each game was played in two halves, as opposed to four quarters. Hollywood, Brighton and Big Cypress were the three reservation representatives on the 12 total competing basketball teams.



Naji Tobias

Team Big Cypress' Greg Carter prepares to take a long jump shot.

Indian events running April 8-10 with participants from around the reservations and out of state competing for bragging rights, cash and trophies.

"We got a good turnout and it ran very smooth. Everyone had respect for everyone and it was just our way of honoring them," said event co-organizer Donna Turtle, the older sister of Cindy and aunt of Bobby.

Prior to the tournament's opening tip, family members gathered for prayer and to share their thoughts on the lives of the two passionate fans of the sport.

"I am just glad everyone came out to celebrate the life of these two. I want everyone to play hard and enjoy themselves," said Eric Osceola to the players and guests on hand. He is the brother of Cindy and uncle of Bobby.

As mother and son, Cindy and Bobby were known throughout the community as avid sports enthusiasts. Relatives said Cindy, who wore jersey No. 24, excelled in many sports including volleyball, softball and bowling while staying devoted to cooking. Bobby enjoyed billiards but also shared a love of basketball, Turtle said.

She said she will always remember Bobby's loving spirit.

"He was always very helpful and loving. He always told us as his family that he loved us, it is something I will always remember about him," Turtle said.

Chairman Mitchell Cypress also made an appearance in support of the family.

Game action kicked off with legends play as Still Got Game faced B.C. (Big Cypress) on the men's side. SGG led the entire way but B.C. came out on a 16-8 run in the second half to cut into the SGG lead at the 3:30 mark. SGG held on to win in a close 41-38 final. SGG's Milo Osceola led the way for his squad with eight points.

In his second year as a participant in the tournament, Osceola said he has enjoyed the experience.

"I like it and it is a respect thing to play in each year," he said.

The team Rez Runners would take home the men's Legends title.

On the women's side, the ladies of Southern Smoke dominated Young Legends, going on an 18-2 run to start the game enroute to a 38-8 blasting. They would also go on to win the womens Legends championship.

In its first year as a full scale memorial tournament, the Bobby C. competition featured five men's and women's teams with a double-elimination format in the championship round.

The women's championship was decided in a three-game series between the Lady Redskins and Lady Ballers. After splitting two previous match-ups a one game grudge-match decided the championship as the Ballers went on a 9-0 run early in the game and would go into the break leading 34-24.

The Lady Redskins would go on a 12-6 run to start the second half to cut into the lead, although it was not enough as Bobby C. women's tournament MVP Misty Dale and the Ballers won 65-51.

The men's championship pitted perennial tournament front-runners Big Town against Don't Worry About It. Coming in DWAI needed to win two straight over BT to win the championship while BT came in undefeated at 3-0.

DWAI kept it close going into halftime only down by six, 42-36. The Bobby C. men's tournament MVP Amos Huggins lead the way for BT with 30 points and his team would pull away in the second half for an 82-74 victory.

Other festivities scheduled over the weekend included a senior men's and women's free throw shooting contest, the shooting game "knock out" for men and women and a 3-point contest. Seniors Mary Gay Osceola and Big Cypress Tribal Council Rep. David Cypress took home winning honors while Nora Billie and Neal Vaughn won in "knock out." Leslie Osceola and Alfonso Tigertail were the 3-point contest winners.



Rachel Buxton

Thomas Bearden represents his team in the 300-yard swim.

Recreation Has Biggest Turn Out Ever for Spring Break Triathlon

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — Nearly 40 Tribal members and employees competed in the third annual Spring Break Triathlon Relay Race sponsored by the Brighton Recreation Department.

In order to compete, all teams had to have at least one Tribal member on their team. This year, 30 Tribal members participated – the largest number to date.

"It took us three years to get here," Recreation Department's Kai Setty said. "Now we have the momentum and just have to keep it going."

The Tribal youth kicked off the two-day triathlon on March 26 on the Brighton Reservation with four teams competing. The youth triathlon consisted of a 300-yard swim, one-mile run and a five-mile bike ride.

Swimmers took their marks and started off the competition. In the youth 11-13 age division, the competition was heated with teams finishing just minutes after each other.

The next day the competition was on

with four senior teams competing: two men's and two women's teams. The women were neck-and-neck finishing only three seconds apart.

The seniors had a 175-yard swim, one-mile run/walk and a three-mile bike ride.

The five adult teams kicked up the physical fitness following the seniors with a 300-yard swim, two-mile run and a five-mile bike ride.

Teams showed much camaraderie as they cheered their fellow teammates and community members on.

After the race, raffles and door prizes were given away, including a skateboard for the youth and a heart rate monitor watch for the adults.

"The triathlon is an event that gives the community an opportunity to participate in an activity that helps to improve their overall health," Setty said. "The more active we can help the community to become, the greater chance we have to improve the health of the members of the Seminole Tribe and their communities."

See results on page 2C



Tom Riser

Ebert Snow and Jack Smith Jr. slap hands to signal the start of the third leg of the race.

Big Town, No Pressure Cruise Past Competition at the Herman L. Osceola Basketball Tournament

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS – Eric Beatty and his Big Town teammates had just one goal in mind – to win the 26th annual Herman L. Osceola Basketball Tournament with ease and on their terms.

Big Town blew by Tony Billie's Team 92-52 in the men's final on March 27 at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium, a win that was called with 10 minutes left in the second half. Beatty, who scored 13 points in the game and all of them in the first half, said it was a matchup his team had been looking forward to.

"We always play against these guys," Beatty said of Tony Billie's Team, a team Big Town beat twice in the tournament. "So we just came out here to do what we always do."

That was to assemble a high-tempo game from the opening tipoff, won by Big Town. With just less than five minutes into the game, Big Town cruised to an 18-5 lead over Tony Billie's Team.

The lead quickly swelled to 29-10 with 10:02 left in the half after Big Town's Jerome Davis (18 points overall; 11 in the first half, including three overall 3-pointers) converted on his first uncontested 3-point shot.

Tony Osceola (23 points, six 3-pointers) and his teammates, Tony Billie (11 points, three 3-pointers) and Trevor Williams (three points) combined for seven first-half 3-pointers to cut the halftime deficit to a 59-31 margin. But Tony Billie's Team would not get any closer than that, as Big Town used its combination of size, speed and sharp shooting to end the final in

blowout fashion.

"All we wanted to do was make them play our style of ball," Beatty said. "If we get going early, it's tough for teams to stop us."

No Pressure carried that same mindset in the women's final as they overcame a slow start and defeated the Big Cypress Women 53-23.

The Big Cypress Women kept the game close in the first half, leading by as much as six points most of the way – an 8-2 margin with 10:08 left after a layup by Terri Baker. The Big Cypress lead evaporated for good toward the end of the first half as No Pressure took an 18-12 lead at halftime on the No Pressure's Tasha Osceola.

It was all No Pressure in the second half, as they hit a flurry of 3-pointers while clamping down on defense, holding the Big Cypress Women to 11 second-half points.

"We started out slow, but when we got into a rhythm in the second half, that's when we really played our game," Tasha Osceola said. "Big Cypress is a young team. They play with each other very well. But we knew we were going to beat them. We just played lazy in the first half, that's all."

Big Cypress Women's Baker congratulated No Pressure on the win.

"We stopped trying as hard as we did in the first half," Baker said. "We thought we had the game won, but No Pressure out-busled us. It was hard for us to stay up with their speed in the second half. They earned the win."

Meanwhile, the Legends basketball tournament, played on March 25, featured the Native Ladies and the Young Legends on the women's end. Playing in a best-of-

three series format, the Native Ladies won both games, including a 31-21 win in Game 2.

The men's Legends tournament was won by Still Got Game, which squeaked past the Big Cypress in a 35-34 overtime win in the title game.

The tournament was named after Herman L. Osceola, who was killed as a 24-year-old in 1984 during a U.S. Marine Corps helicopter mission to Japan. Herman L. Osceola, who enlisted in the military in 1983, was instrumental in the 1980 construction of the gymnasium named in his honor. He served a few years as a Big Cypress Recreation Department employee before joining the armed forces.

The gymnasium, where Herman L. Osceola played a lot of basketball, was dedicated to him shortly after he died.

Herman L. Osceola is best known for his advocacy of the Tribal youth, as he helped usher in the desire for young people Tribalwide to obtain an interest in the game of basketball.

"It's a lot of love and respect for the sport because of Herman's efforts to better the young people, the community and the Seminole Tribe of Florida," Tribal citizen Paul "Cowbone" Buster said during the three-day tournament, which lasted from March 25-27.

"I see a lot of enthusiasm, talent, teamwork and effort at this tournament. And that's what Herman would like to see. He's smiling right down on this tournament from heaven, as we speak."

See more photos on page 2C



Allen Huff accepts award of sponsorship from Beth Ficquette at the Centre for Women Golf Classic

Bellair Hosts 11th Annual Centre for Women Golf Tournament

BY RYAN WATSON
Staff Reporter

BELLAIR – The Seminole Tribe sponsored the 11th annual Centre for Women Golf Tournament in Bellair on April 1. More than 120 golfers turned out for the event on a beautiful 77-degree day with proceeds going to the Centre for Women. The Centre for Women is a non-profit organization, established in 1977 to serve individuals and families in Hillsborough County. Services provided include substance abuse counseling, job placement programs and the Senior Home Improvement Program, also known as S.H.I.P.



From left, golf tournament participants Ken Campbell, Lawrence Osceola, Allen Huff, and Kyle Doney.

The 26th Annual Herman L. Osceola Tournament



The No Pressure women's team celebrates their championship win with Ruby Osceola, center, the mother of Herman L. Osceola.



Tony Billie's Team tries to defend Big Town's Jerome Davis in the men's title game.



No Pressure's Tasha Osceola, left, drives her way past Big Cypress Women's Darlah Cypress.

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Big Town's Eric Beatty drives through three Tony Billie's Team defenders.

Results for the Third Annual Spring Break Triathlon Relay Race Sponsored by the Brighton Recreation Department

Youth Boys 11-13	
First Place: Thomas Bearden, Donovan Osceola, Michael Garcia: 46:24; Second Place: Daniel Nunez Jr., Joshua Boromei, Isiah Thomas: 49:30; Third Place: Erik Garcia, Joshua Madrigal, Yo Osceola: 53:50	
Youth Boys 16-17	
First Place: David Gonzalez, Reese Bert Jr., William Bearden: 42:59	
Adults Men 18-54	
First Place: Dallas Nunez, Ignacio Orozco, Howard Jimmy: 42:50; Second Place: George Micco, Elton Shore, Richard Osceola: 44:43	
Adult Women 18-54	
First Place: Larissa McDuffie, Dinorah Branch, Reina Micco: 52:06; Second Place: Kathleen Hauser, Rosetta Bowers, Andrea Holta: 57:16; Third Place: Shelby Brady, Candice Simmer, Loretta Peterson: 59:04	
Senior Men 55+	
First Place: Willie Johns, Jack Smith, Jr., Elbert Snow: 42:41; Second Place: Amos Tiger, Billie Micco, Parker Jones: 47:49	
Senior Women 55+	
First Place: Connie Whidden, Edna McDuffie, Patty Waldron: 33:53; Second Place: Alice Sweat, Helene Buster, Jenny Johns: 33:56	

Seminole Bass Fishing Triple Crown Series Goes Into Full Swing

Multiple entrants compete in Howard Tiger and Seminole Recreation Fishing Tournaments

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS – For fishermen competing in the Seminole Bass Fishing Triple Crown Series, two things came to mind when they navigated the Big Cypress L-28 canal – relaxation and bragging rights.

In the case of Kassim Stockton, it was more of the former.

"I came out here to fish and just have fun doing it," Stockton said at the 10th annual Howard Tiger Memorial Fishing Tournament on March 19.

Stockton, a Big Cypress Tribal citizen, teamed up with Ryan Washington for this year's Triple Crown Series. The tandem finished in second place at the Howard Tiger competition with a combined bass weight of 13.88 pounds.

The same mindset held true for the team of Josh Jumper and Dustin Lowman, which took the tournament series as a time for recreation.

"Everyday you can get out here to fish is good," Lowman said. "It allows me to take a break from everyday life and relax by doing what I love to do."

Though the tandem didn't place in the top three for the Howard Tiger fishing tournament, Josh Jumper chose to look at his team's finish from a positive perspective.

"The fish were on and off, but it was a great day to go out," Jumper said. "The weather was beautiful; we had a good time."

The team of Frank Marrero and Mario Posada caught the heaviest bass of all entrants, with a weight of 18.91 pounds.

Marrero and Posada also ran away from the competition in the second leg of the Triple Crown Series, known as the 30th annual Seminole Recreation Fishing Tournament, which was held April 9.

The tandem caught five bass, the maximum amount, with a weight of 22.51 pounds, more than six pounds heavier than the rest of the field.

"It's humbling because not everyday you can catch 22 pounds with five fish," Posada said. "We just tried a couple of different lures to figure out what fish would bite. We were just fortunate to catch the large ones. Usually they get away, but we were able to hold on to them in our boat."

Marrero and Posada were not considered the favorites going into the Triple

Crown Series. Rather, it was Tribal Pro Bass fisherman Tyrone Cypress, one of only three solo entrants in this fishing competition.

While Cypress did not place in the top three of the first two fishing tournaments, he's still satisfied with how things turned out.

"It doesn't bother me that I don't have [a partner]," Cypress said. "It's game time, so I'd rather be by myself. I could concentrate on every bite better that way."

As the Triple Crown Series goes into its final leg, the Bass Busters Fishing tournament – the name of the last fishing competition – is expected to have a clear-cut winning team.

Moses Jumper Jr., the Triple Crown Series founder/organizer, believes that Marrero and Posada have what it takes to pull off the overall victory. He adds emphatically that "it's a pretty solid bet they'll win."

"It looks like Frank [Marrero] and Mario [Posada] are running away with it," Jumper said. "I don't see anyone catching them unless they don't show up. They're more than 10 pounds ahead of the next group. Even if they get their limit and catch one pound of fish each, they still will win the series."

Posada somewhat agreed with that prediction, but did his best to keep the entire series into perspective.

"Nothing's guaranteed, but as long as we catch five fish, we have a chance," Posada said. "All we have to do is catch our limit and not lose the big ones."

The Bass Busters Fishing Tournament will be held on Friday, May 7 at the Big Cypress L-28 Canal. The tournament begins at 6:30 a.m., with the final bass weigh-in to convene at 2 p.m. at the L-28 canal docking area.

The top overall team will win gift certificates from Bass Pro Shops and the Sonny DiCarlo Trophy.



Naji Tobias

The fishing team of Leon Wilcox and Greg Thomas placed second in the 30th annual Seminole Recreation Fishing Tournament.

Results from the 10th Annual Howard Tiger Memorial Fishing Tournament – 1st Leg

Note: All results are based on pounds of bass fish caught

1. Frank Marrero and Mario Posada – 18.91, 2. Kassim Stockton and Ryan Washington – 13.88, 3. Tom Koenes and Walter Summeralls – 13.23.

Results from the 30th Annual Seminole Recreation Fishing Tournament – 2nd Leg

Bass fish: 1. Frank Marrero and Mario Posada – 22.81, 2. Leon Wilcox and Greg Thomas – 16.57, 3. Tom Koenes and Walter Summeralls – 15.61; Big Bass fish winner: Frank Marrero and Mario Posada;

Mud fish winner: Fred Phillip and Marie Phillip; Gar fish winner: Frank Marrero and Mario Posada; Other fish: Frank Marrero and Mario Posada.

Standings after two legs

1. Frank Marrero and Mario Posada – 41.72, 2. Tom Koenes and Walter Summeralls – 28.84, 3. Kassim Stockton and Ryan Washington – 22.86, 4. Josh Jumper and Dustin Lowman – 22.36, 5. Vincent Micco and Charlie Cypress – 20.76, 6. Tyrone Cypress – 20.27, 7. Marie Phillip and Fred Phillip – 18.76, 8. Leon Wilcox and Greg Thomas – 16.57, 9. Moses "Big Shot" Jumper – 16.10, 10. Chucky Osceola and Fred Haberman – 16.02, 11. Lenny Jim and Cicero Osceola – 12.52, 12. Howard Tommie and Tony Tommie – 11.41, 13. Naha Jumper – 9.27, 14. Nolan Rudd and Arlen Payne – 8.62, 15. Joe Ferrero and Joel – 5.70.



Naji Tobias

Hollywood Recreation Coordinator Steven Young holds up a big bass with Tribal entrant Josh Jumper after the weigh-in segment of the 30th annual Seminole Recreation Fishing Tournament on April 9.



Naji Tobias

The team of Kassim Stockton, left, and Ryan Washington, fish their way to a second place finish at the 10th annual Howard Tiger Memorial Fishing Tournament on March 19.

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Tribal Youth Skate Away in 3rd Annual Rally at the Ramps

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS – The third annual Rally at The Ramps event brought a sense of camaraderie among Tribal youth participants at the Big Cypress Skate Park. About 80 Tribal youngsters from Big Cypress, Brighton, Hollywood and Immokalee took to the skating ramps March 31 and showed off their moves in efforts to put their athleticism and confidence on display. Immokalee Family Services Prevention Specialist Fred Mullins said he believes a function like this can increase self esteem in the Tribal youth. With the Tribal youth competing against themselves instead of each other, Mullins said a personal sense of confidence will build amongst them. “It provides a really conducive environment in seeing the kids connect with each other,” Mullins said.



Gerard Cutschall performs a backside feeble grind trick.

Naji Tobias

“When they have their challenges in completing a trick, they are encouraging each other to reach their goals. It’s a positive peer group we have going on here.” Big Cypress Skate Park manager Ryan Washington, 21, worked closely with the Tribal youngsters in making sure they improve on their skateboarding craft. A 2008 All-Nations Skate Jam participant in Albuquerque, N.M., Washington began skating when he was 14 years old. He used his experience to teach the Tribal youngsters tricks such as the kick flip, the heel flip and the half cap flip. Washington, a Lakota Sioux Indian from South Dakota, has been active with the Big Cypress Skate Park since last year, when he moved to Big Cypress from his home state. “It’s fun to pass my knowledge to those learning to skate,” Washington said. “The opportunity presented itself for me to come down here and teach. I wouldn’t trade this for anything.”

With ramp activities such as the disc golf throw and a game of skateboard H-O-R-S-E available for the Tribal youth at this function, Washington said he saw Rally at the Ramps as a great way to get up and excited about the sport. “I would love for us to have this more frequently,” Washington said. “Since I like to skate, I think it would be good for those kids who are interested to get more opportunities to do so.” A sports survey was conducted at the function, which was geared toward building a core group to reach out to the youth Tribalwide, as far as skateboarding is concerned. Big Cypress Recreation Department Assistant Director Stan Frischman, who hosted the event, offered his assessment of how the Tribal youth responded to Rally at the Ramps. “There was a lot of enthusiasm and sportsmanship from all the kids that came to the skate park,” he said. “They had a great time here.” Hollywood Tribal youngster Travis Baker has been skateboarding for about two years. The 12-year-old said he would like to come back next year. “It’s not about competition so much for me,” he said of his experience with skateboarding. “All I want to do is have fun.” The Big Cypress Skate Park is open from 1 p.m. to 9 p.m. Monday-Saturday. It is closed on Wednesday and Sunday. For more information, call Washington at 863-228-2089.



Ryan Washington is attempting a board slide trick on his skateboard.

Naji Tobias



Aspiring Tribal skateboarders learn about a few tricks from Ryan Washington, right, during the third annual Rally at the Ramps event on March 31.

Naji Tobias

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Tribal Fair Hoops Tourney Crown Men and Women Champions



Tribal Fair Basketball Tournament women's champion-No Pressure. They won the championship 44-37 versus Heat.

Chris C. Jenkins



Tribal Fair Basketball Tournament men's champion-Big Town with their championship trophy. The men won 84-67 versus Scrubs in the championship game. The event had an all-Indian, two-day, double-elimination format held at the Hollywood Recreation Gym March 19-20.

Chris C. Jenkins



Chairman Mitchell Cypress lines up a shot during the men's 8-Ball competition.



Tribal Chief Operating Officer Elrod Bowers, left, and Big Cypress Recreation Director George Grasshopper.



Demi Garza, niece of the late Genesis Osceola, lines up her shot.

Tribal Competitors Celebrate 2nd Annual Genesis Osceola Pool Tournament

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS – Tribal pool players competed recently at the second annual Genesis Osceola Memorial Pool Tournament.

Held at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium, the family of Genesis Osceola came out in full force to honor its loved one, who was born on Sep. 2, 1953 and passed away on Dec. 4, 2004.

Nancy Osceola-Garza, who is the older sister of Genesis, remembered him as an individual who made himself available to those around him.

"It's something that Nancy said she cherished about her younger brother.

"Genesis was always there when I needed him, even just to talk," Nancy said of Genesis. "He wasn't someone who had a whole lot all the time, but he always gave whatever he had of himself. My brother was an inspiration to my life."

Jay Osceola, a nephew of the late Tribal citizen, recalls his uncle as one who always found a way to play the game of pool, even after a hard day's work.

The Immokalee High School graduate frequented a formerly popular pool hall in Clewiston called R & R – one of Genesis' favorite places for recreation.

He would regularly play pool at the now-defunct facility after working by day as a dump truck driver for Jake's Trucking, a business owned by Genesis' older brother, Jake.

Genesis also spent several years working

for the Lykes Brothers as a cowboy, according to Jay.

And the pool tournament honoree found a way to make time for conducting mechanical work on vehicles, Jay remembered vividly. "If Genesis wasn't driving trucks, he would either tend to cattle or work on mechanics," Jay Osceola said of his uncle. "He was the jack-of-all-trades."

Chairman Mitchell Cypress couldn't agree more with the assessment of Genesis, as he recalled the Big Cypress-born and Immokalee-bred Tribal man frequently translating his work ethic from the workplace to pool halls throughout South Florida for many years.

In addition to being a popular pool player at the R & R, Genesis participated in many pool tournaments in Fort Myers, Naples, West Palm Beach and Hollywood, and other cities.

Though Genesis was considered to be active in multiple sports, Chairman Cypress said that pool was his favorite game to play.

Those close to Genesis, including Jay Osceola and Nancy Osceola-Garza, were in unison when it came to that part about him. It all showed in the two-day tournament, April 2-3, as family members and Tribal citizens from the Big Cypress, Brighton, Hollywood and Immokalee reservations reminisced on the impact Genesis had on them – primarily in reference to his love for the sport.

"We all grew up together and knew each other," Chairman Cypress said. "The Seminole Tribe is just one big family, so whenever we have a tournament, we all just get together and enjoy each other's company."



Brighton Tribal citizen Alice Sweat shows off her billiards skills in the Second Annual Genesis Osceola Memorial Pool Tournament.

Genesis Osceola Memorial Pool Tournament Results

FRIDAY, APRIL 2

Senior 8-Ball Division

Women: 1. Laura Clay, 2. Juanita Osceola, 3. Rena Blissett, 4. Dale Grasshopper, 5. Jane Freeman;
Men: 1. George Grasshopper, 2. Billy Brown, 3. Roy Snow, 4. Mike Dewitt, 5. Russell Osceola.

Youth 8-Ball Division

Girls: 1. Jessica Osceola, 2. Alaina Sweat, 3. Talia Rodriguez, 4. Caroline Sweat;
Boys: 1. Joshua Boromei, 2. Cisco Rodriguez, 3. Aaron Cypress, 4. Daniel Rodriguez, 5. Colby Cypress.

Senior Scotch Doubles

1. Joe Billie and Diane OnlyAChief, 2. Russell Osceola and Juanita Osceola, 3. Mike Dewitt and Louise Billie, 4. Randy Coyle and Linda Billie, 5. Billy Brown and Esther Buster.

SATURDAY, APRIL 3

8-Ball

Women: 1. Virginia Billie, 2. Diana OnlyAChief, 3. Felicia Garza, 4. Phalyn Osceola, 5. Theresa Nunez;
Men: 1. George Grasshopper, 2. Elrod Bowers, 3. Mario Posada, 4. Roy Snow, 5. Jack Billie.

Scotch Doubles

1. Charles Osceola and Phalyn Osceola, 2. Carl Yazzie and Evelyn Yazzie, 3. Vincent Villalobos and Pualetta Bowers, 4. Josh Garza and Felicia Garza, 5. Cicero Osceola and Virginia Billie.

9-Ball

Women: 1. Laura Clay, 2. Evelyn Yazzie, 3. Bess Bowlegs, 4. Theresa Nunez, 5. Phalyn Osceola;
Men: 1. Charles Osceola, 2. Mike Dewitt, 3. Mario Posada, 4. Tony Bert, 5. Billy Brown.



Talia Rodriguez shoots her way to a third-place finish in the girls' youth division.



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Tribal senior Louise Billie takes some time to reflect on her late husband, John Billie Sr., as she gazes at a few of the pictures featuring him just before the horseshoe tournament begins.

4th Annual John Billie Sr. Horseshoe Tournament Results

Tribal Women – Individual Play:
1. Daisy Jumper, 2. Loraine Billie, 3. Almira Billie, 4. Louise Billie, 5. Ruby Osceola, 6. Mary Jo Micco;
Tribal Men – Individual Play:
1. Ronnie Billie, 2. Billie Micco, 3. James Cornelius, 4. Earl Kirkland, 5. George Billie, 6. Jonah Cypress;
Team Play: 1. Loraine Billie and Carol Osceola, 2. Joe B. Osceola and Violet Jim, 3. Billie Micco and Mary Joe Micco, 4. Ronnie Billie Sr. and Almira Billie, 5. Louise Billie and Ruby Osceola.



Naji Tobias

Tribal senior Earl Kirkland throws his horseshoe in the John Billie Sr. Horseshoe Tournament.

Big Cypress Seniors Compete in 4th Annual John Billie Sr. Horseshoe Tournament

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS – Tribal elders from the Big Cypress and Brighton reservations assembled behind the Big Cypress Senior Center recently to compete in the fourth annual John Billie Sr. Horseshoe Tournament.

Moments before the competition began, Louise Billie took some time to reflect on the memories she had with her late husband, who the event is named for. Louise Billie talked about how he used to like driving tractors as a Seminole Lemon Groves Department employee and enjoyed horseshoes.

"John used to like playing with horseshoes," Louise Billie said. "He had a lot of people come over to our home and play."

John Billie Sr. was born on Feb. 5, 1939 and passed away on March 24, 2006 at age 67.

Billy Walker remembered John Billie Sr. as someone who lived an active lifestyle. Cleaning some fish for the seniors prior to the contest's start, Walker talked about how John Billie Sr. used to like eating traditional foods such as garfish and brim. John Billie Sr. also "was really good at horseshoes," Walker said.

"He loved the great outdoors, like all Indian men," Walker said. Almira Billie, a daughter of John Billie Sr., called the honoree a loving father who was a friend to everyone. She touched briefly on why Tribal seniors from the Big Cypress and Brighton reservations came out to pay tribute to her late father.

"It's a chance for our friends and family to get together and remember him in his honor," Almira Billie said.

After a practice round with her horseshoes, Louise Billie took some more time to reflect on John Billie Sr.

"He was a good husband to me and a good father to his kids," Louise Billie said. "I miss him so much and when I look at his pictures, it makes me cry."

Tribal seniors Daisy Jumper and Ronnie Billie took home the horseshoe tournament titles for the women and men, respectively. The tandem of Loraine Billie and Carol Osceola won the team competition.

Jumper briefly reflected on her win in this year's competition shortly after it wrapped up.

"It was fun, we all had a good time," Jumper said. "I'm glad I won, but all that mattered was having fun with my friends."



Naji Tobias

Tribal senior Jonah Cypress focuses on his throw.



Naji Tobias

Tribal senior Billie Micco makes the most of his throws at the John Billie Sr. Horseshoe Tournament on March 25.



Naji Tobias

Tribal senior Ruby Osceola competes at the John Billie Sr. Horseshoe Tournament.

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Naji Tobias

The Seminole Lightning softball players prepare to celebrate their first win of their young season in the top of the third inning.



Naji Tobias

Seminole Lightning's Sabre' Billie gets ready to run from third base.



Naji Tobias

Tribal parents Emilia Jumper, left, and Carol Osceola are among the scores of fans that came out to the game in support of the Seminole Lightning softball team.

Seminole Lightning Softball Team Starts Season with Strong Start

**Tribal softball team routs
Clewiston ELKS 1853, 19-1, in its first-ever game**

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

CLEWISTON — Three innings and 19 runs defined how the first-ever softball game went for the Seminole Lightning at the Clewiston Ball Field Complex.

Playing against the Clewiston ELKS 1853 softball squad on April 12, Lightning pitcher Darlah Cypress torched through her opponent's batting lineup as she registered five strikeouts in just two innings of her team's 19-1 blowout victory. Cypress, an eighth-grader who also stars on The Sagamore School's softball team, allowed one unearned run and a walk in the triumph.

In a game that's normally supposed to last six innings, the Lightning scored 14 of those runs in just two innings, including home runs from Cypress and teammate Kalgary Johns. The other five runs were scored in the third inning. After that, the umpires called the game.

Seminole Lightning Season Schedule (as of April 30)

All games are played at 6:45 p.m. in Field 2 of the Clewiston Ball Field Complex

Friday, Apr. 30 — at Clewiston ELKS 1853
Tuesday, May 4 — Wedgeworth's Inc.
Thursday, May 6 — at D & J Machinery
Tuesday, May 11 — Roland Martin Marina
Monday, May 17 — Clewiston ELKS 1853
Friday, May 21 — at Wedgeworth's Inc.
Tuesday, May 25 — D & J Machinery
Thursday, May 27 — at Roland Martin Marina
Friday, June 4 — at Clewiston ELKS 1853

"We jumped out with a whole lot of runs early, so pretty much it was over with," Seminole Lightning softball head coach Josh Jumper said.

Batting in the leadoff spot was Sydnee Cypress, who managed to eke out an extra-base hit to ignite the seven-run scoring blitz in the first inning. Ahnie Jumper then connected on a run-scoring double to easily send home Sydnee Cypress for a Lightning 1-0 lead.

Sabre' Billie drew one of the team's eight walks in the inning and later scored a run of her own to put them up 7-0.

The second inning was more of the same, with Ey-anna Billie leading off with a walk, followed by another hit by Sydnee Cypress and a two-run double by Ahnie Jumper for a 9-0 Lightning lead.

Immediately after that, Johns smacked a double through the infield to drive in Jumper and put Seminole up 10-0.

Tribal fans from the Big Cypress and Brighton reservations were cheering their team on throughout the game, with Tribal parent Emma Johns among those who were happy with the game's turnout.

"They're [the Seminole Lightning] showing evidence that they're going a really strong team this season," Emma Johns said. "Every parent is excited and no one is taking anything for granted with what's going on here. This game was a good motivator for the girls for the rest of the season."

The Seminole Lightning is one of five teams that comprise the City of Clewiston's Softball League. The Lightning, which play three more games against Clewiston ELKS 1853 this season, has dates with fellow league teams D & J Machinery, Roland Martin Marina and Wedgeworth's Inc. Each of the softball league's five teams has a 13-game schedule.

"We plan on getting first place this season," Darlah



Naji Tobias

Seminole Lightning starting pitcher Darlah Cypress produces a gem in her first game with the team, striking out five batters, while allowing just one unearned run, a walk and a hit in the team's 19-1 blowout win over Clewiston ELKS 1853 on April 12.

Cypress said, "We're just trying to get better each game. That's our goal here."

Josh Jumper said he wants to push his players to their potential.

"Every one of them wants to give 110 percent to it," he said. "I'm so glad for their win here. This is our first game ever in Clewiston."

Josh Jumper said this year's Seminole Lightning softball team is the first Tribal program ever to play in

the City of Clewiston's softball league. The team's participation in the league this season was approved by the Hendry County Commission.

When asked about the prospects of having an undefeated season, Josh Jumper chose the bold yet humble route to his response.

"I expect nothing less," Josh Jumper said. "I hope we can do it."



Naji Tobias

Seminole Lightning softball head coach Josh Jumper, right, rounds up the girls as they get ready to start their first game against Clewiston ELKS 1853 in Clewiston.



Naji Tobias

Seminole Lightning's Sabre' Billie slides home for a run in the second inning as she helps her team take a 14-0 lead heading into the third inning.

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NEW BABY



Congratulations to Tampa Tribal Member Kaylin Henry and Mark Holmes. Kaylin gave birth to a healthy baby boy Friday April 2 at 7:20 p.m.

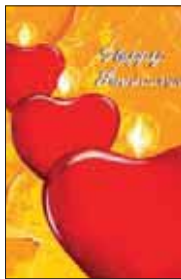
Anthony Richard Holmes came into the world tipping the scales at 7 pounds, 10 ounces.



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!



Happy Anniversary!
Tampa Community members Eric and Barbara Cypress celebrated their 9th Wedding anniversary on April 1, 2010.



Greeting from Mitchell Cypress, Chairman of the Seminole Tribe of Florida

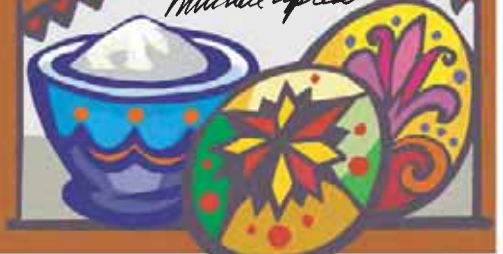
Easter is a time of resurrection and a time to honor our Creator for the sacrifices made so that we may live. It is a salute to spring with the arrival of the ever-beautiful white Easter lily and a marking of rebirth with Christ's resurrection, and to our children it is a mystery, how those colorful eggs hide so cleverly.

Take some time to color eggs with the kids and share peaceful moments with our elders. Let us put a smile on every face, of joy and laughter with the fresh new season.

Remember to give thanks to our Lord Jesus while you enjoy your fry bread, pumpkin bread, deer meat stew and sofkee. Easter feast with family and friends after church, within your chickadee, is one of the greatest ways to say thank you and share time with those you love.

Have a Blessed and Happy Easter!

Mitchell Cypress



POEMS

You Made Us Strong

"You" made us strong with all of your love,
Then ... "You" made us understand with all your love,
"You" even loved those who didn't love you and you told us so ...
"I" couldn't understand just how you could do that so ...
But even when you've gone, I can still feel your mighty love ...
Even when you've gone,
how amazing just how you can still make us strong ...
"You" even loved us all, NO matter who we were ...
"You" made us strong with all of your mighty love!

This is dedicated to my loving father; Bill McKinley Osceola, Bird Clan (A.K.A. Wild Bill Osceola, and Grandpa). He left to go to Corn Dance Heaven on Feb. 10, 2010. Shonabish; to all of whom supported the family in one way or another during our time of great loss. And a great "THANK YOU" to his family, the Bird Clan, for all the love, respect and hard work that everyone contributed without any hesitation during his passing.

Peace and thank you.

— By Jane Wood Osceola Billie, Panther Clan.

WORDS

— By Elgin Jumper

Words. They took everything and left the words. Words are nothing; Words are everything. *Ma-too-se-gai-yeh, oni-ah-tah-thun-gai-li. And words of light! And yes, that was me under a chickadee, reading words, writing my name to serve some purpose in the world, stirring throughout the land!

For within and without, words are nothing; words are everything! I invite you to write them down, hear them sing! for words cascade and cleanse. Words taint. Sometimes words become unnerved by rustling leaves, but other times, words can become immovable, unshakable, and courageous.

So I walk beside the ruins of spoken words, the historic remains of a great empire of words, broken words crying out, screaming nothing, leaving nothing but everything. Yet a word expressed can be a tiny spirit departing a sacred cathedral, or a word said can be a slayer fleeing a tragic scene.

If words became angels, they'd shield us in the night. And if words resorted to pillage and plunder, they'd take everything and leave us nothing. But then, words are nothing; words are everything! And yet, nothing is heard but the weeping words or singing words, soaring on the wind, or else they sparkle and shimmer like precious diamonds, or spring and leap like radiant deer in the Everglades.

O, yes, they haunt the eerie night like armies of ghost orchids in a mythology of flowers sketching battles in the air! Even so, words can have the texture of cypress bark or hang from prose poems, as if shards of Spanish moss.

And though, words can be crystal-clear and glitter so, they are invariably coupled with a shadow, old and new at the same time. They dwell in the sticker patches, and in the tragic Florida wildflowers, shaken forth from palmetto fronds down into the fibers, down onto the Earth and then trampled underfoot.

O, luminous words! and in their dynamic ranges! taking everything, leaving nothing, leaving everything! For Words are nothing; and yet Words are everything ...

*I know the night (Miccosukee-language translation).

Angelic

You are the prettiest woman that I've ever seen,
God had to take a little more time when he made you,
Cause you really are the most beautiful African Queen.

Salena you are my world and my everything.
You taught me how to love,
Baby you've shown me the true meaning of heartstring.
This time spent away from you
our love has grown more than words can tell.

You brought me happiness,
And your loyalty is worth more than uncalculated wealth.
I love you with everything inside of me.
Thank you Salena, I know you are my destiny.

We met at ten thousand feet in the air.
You were just so beautiful – Angelic even.
Baby I love you and I promise we will never come down.
I smile at every thought of you.

I can stand tall and proud, the way I always wanted too.
No longer lost I can fulfill my journey through life.

Thank you for leading me to my soul mate,
Lord thank you for my beautiful, beautiful wife.

— Forever yours,
Myron Cypress

MOTHER'S DAY GREETING

Mother's Day Greeting from Mitchell Cypress, Chairman of the Seminole Tribe of Florida

Wache'
Happy Mother's Day to Mothers all over the world.

In my language the word for mother is "wache", pronounced as watch. Its sound is appropriate, as it reminds me of they watch over their children, whether she has given birth to them or cares for them in her chickadee. It isn't always the woman that gives birth to you but the woman who cares for all children, as if she bore them naturally.

To the women that care for our children, I honor you and pray that our creator delivers you a lifetime of blessings for your great deeds.

Mothers, please be sure to teach your children the ways of our ancestors, and bear in mind that when we had no money, we always had love. Remember to tell your children that you love them every day, after all it's free.

I remember my Mom this day and every day, as an adult I know of her many sacrifices for my brothers, sisters and me. I am wishing her the best and confessing our love, as well as wishes for many more Happy Mother's Day!

May the Creator continue to bless all of our Seminole mothers and Mothers all over the world.

Wache, Mvto, Shonabish!!!

Mitchell Cypress

REQUEST FOR BIDS

The Seminole Tribe of Florida Workers' Compensation Department is accepting bids for excess insurance coverage for the W/C Program. Please contact Margaret Lange at mlange@semttribe.com or ext. 10201 for additional information.

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Our Deepest Appreciation

We would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one for the many acts of kindness shown during our time of bereavement. We truly appreciate the prayers, words of comfort, calls, cards, visits, food and flowers. Your thoughtfulness will never be forgotten.

Special thanks to family and friends, Pastor Bruce Pratt, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, Max Osceola, Jr., Marcellus Osceola, Jr., Delores Jumper, Barbara Butera, Diane Buster, Seminole Police and many more that helped.

Special thanks to First Seminole Indian Baptist Church, Pastor Paul Buster, and Jarrett Elder of Fred Hunters.

We especially want to thank all those family and friends who came to visit our mother during her illness, showing your love and concern, giving words of encouragement and prayers.

Words cannot express how much we appreciate the expressions of sympathy, and all the help you provided us during our most difficult days. We're deeply grateful for your prayers and continued prayers. With the Lord's help, we are making it one day at a time.

*We thank you and God bless you
The family of Annie Jumper*

THINKING OF YOU

Ta-hi, Thitch, Na-hoy and Ocatch, I want ya'll to know that I think about ya'll everyday, take care of each other, stay strong and keep your heads up. I LOVE YALL AND MISS YALL VERY VERY MUCH!!!
LOVE,
Daddy and Uncle Ram

THANK YOU

We the family of Agnes Irene Jumper would like to thank each and everyone that came out and gave us their support in the time of our loss of our Beloved Mother Agnes.

We would also like to thank you for the beautiful flowers that were sent.

Thank you to all the ladies that helped prepare the meals and the people who brought food over to the house.

Thank you to each department who also lent a helping hand, especially Building and Grounds, you guys did a wonderful job!

Thank you Mr. Richard Bowers Jr., Mr. Andrew Bowers Jr., Mr. Mitchell Cypress, Mr. Paul Bowers Sr. and Mr. Johnnie Jones Sr. Thank you to Pastor Tiger for a wonderful and beautiful service.

Thank you to all and God bless you!


From,
Joyce & Matt Piz and family, Claudia & Joe Olivarez and family, and Roy Jumper

BIRTHDAY WISHES

Happy Belated Birthday mom (Addie Osceola).

Thank you for everything that you've done And everything that you continue to do, especially the little things.

I LOVE YOU AND MISS YOU VERY VERY MUCH!!!
Your son,
Ramsey



New Album Features Seminole Star Search Grand Prize Winners

BY ERICA BARRIOS

The Seminole Tribe of Florida has signed a distribution deal with a major music record distributor, Fontana Distribution/ Universal Music Group. Thanks to the deal, the Seminole Star Search Grand Prize Winners Volume One album featuring 2008 winners Paula Bowers-Sanchez, David Billy and Hank Nelson, Jr. is available worldwide through iTunes, Amazon, Rhapsody, Napster, BestBuy.com and Walmart.com.

Seminole Star Search Grand Prize

Winners Volume Two, featuring 2009 winners Tori Osceola, Preston Osceola and Sherree Sneed, is currently under production. The album will include a plastic case, thank you booklet and compact disc.

Seminole musicians' names and likenesses will be posted on music download Web sites.

As the music industry evolves, expect to see the Seminole Tribe of Florida and its musicians continue to make headlines and break new ground.






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IN MEMORIAM

Dear Angie,

Here I am again writing a letter to a daughter I have lost. Gone is Mary your mother, Michele your sister and now God has taken you away, long before you should have gone.

All I can do is remember... We've been together through good and bad. You were with me to say goodbye to your mother and sister and now I had to say goodbye to you. I will always remember your wonderful laugh. You had a way of making me feel better by laughing and giving me a smile. I have great memories to keep me whole until we meet again.

Remember when mom was on dialysis at Jackson Memorial in Miami at Christmas time? I didn't have much money, all I had was \$10.00. We needed gas so we could get back home and I really didn't have any money for Christmas gifts. I was feeling pretty bad when we pulled into a Hess station. I saw they were selling toy trucks for \$2.99 and I asked if you and your sister if you would like to have the trucks for Christmas. You were so happy about getting a gift, I bought one for each of you and had just enough money to pay for gas. We were happy to be together and this gift made you both feel good even though your mother was not with us.

I will also remember the day you begged and pleaded for a pair of "Jordache" jeans, and I'll never forget nearly passing out when I realized they were \$30.00, that was a lot back then, in fact it was almost my whole paycheck. But, it didn't matter because you were my little cow girl and worked hard helping me in the cow pens to earn those tiny pair of jeans.

These moments in time have left me with memories I will never forget. You have given me three grandsons whom I love with all my heart. Thank you, for they are part of you and part of your mother and me. I will watch over them and see them grow into men. They are old enough to remember the love you have given them.

Angie, you will always be in my heart, right next to your Mother and Michele. Every time I think of you, I will smile and remember all the wonderful times that we've shared.

My dear daughter, may you find peace in your heavenly home.

Love, Dad

In Loving Memory
of Devin Mindy Cypress-Kimble

On April 22.

Devin, it's been nearly three years without you and yet I still can't believe it's true. Pain has consumed my area of being inside and out. It's a pain I cannot describe, all I can say, it feels like I lost my total pride. You were my rock, my inspiration, and my heart. Our friendship and family ship was so strong. No one, I mean no one could tear us apart. My cousin, my one true friend, the only one who truly believed in me, you are never forgotten and always with me mind, body and spirit. I love you cuz.

Love always, Carolee Anderson.



Seminole Police Explorers Up and Running

BY LT. JERRY MEISENHEIMER

Over the past several months, the Seminole Police Department has been busy reaching out to Tribal youths with a new program called Explorers.

The program has already attracted more than 70 members from all the Seminole Reservations. Any Tribal boy or girl, ages 6 to 19 years old, can join. Membership has also been extended to descendants and other children who reside in the various Seminole communities.

In general, meetings are held every other week on each reservation. A different educational, law enforcement related topic is presented at the meetings. Some of these include fingerprinting, crime scenes, first aid, the court system, the jail system, crash investigation, report writing, leadership, and other interesting subjects. Several field trips are also being planned.

A special uniform has been designed, consisting of a light blue polo shirt with the police department badge

embroidered on it. The pants are a navy blue twill, along with a navy blue web belt and buckle. Each member supplies a pair of black boots or work shoes.

Once in uniform, the Explorers will assist the police department at Tribal functions. Already, the Tampa unit has recited the Pledge of Allegiance at a community meeting. Tampa also had an overnight camp out at the Lakeland property.

Each Explorer unit has a police department advisor and adult volunteers who monitor the groups' activities. Eventually, the Explorers themselves will conduct their own meetings and will have members promoted to the rank of sergeant and lieutenant. A set of rules and regulations will also be enforced, including standards for maintaining good grades in school.

Most regular meetings are accompanied with snacks and drinks.

If you'd like more information about the Seminole Police Explorers, contact Lt. Jerry Meisenheimer at 863-697-9577.



Seminole Police Department

Meet the 2010 Tampa Seminole Police Explorers: first row is Desmond Miller; second row is Miguel Dillon, Julian Dillon, Azaria Simmons, Angel Dillon, Libby Awonohopay; third row is Ryanna Thomas, Ricky Dillon, Tyrek LeSane, Ruby Thomas and Regina Awonohopay. The following members were not in the picture: Dante Henry, Ohana Henry, Carissa Colon, and Cavan Guzman.

Tyrek LeSane is being fingerprinted by PSA Brian Signore while Desmond Miller looks on.



Seminole Police Department

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May 19, 12:00pm - 1:00pm

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Navigating Grants.gov

June 3, 2010 1:00pm-5:00 pm

This 4 hour course gives a detailed and in-depth overview to Grants.gov, the portal for accessing most federal grant funding. Participants will be coached through setting up their organization to apply for Grants.gov funding, getting a Data Universal Numbering System number (DUNS), designating an AOR (Authorized Organizational Representative), identifying an E-business point of contact (POC), searching/applying for available funding opportunities. The class will be taught online (webinar).

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Native Learning Center (NLC) provides learning opportunities free to Natives who want to tap into the valuable world of Grants. We provide Native and Indigenous people with the knowledge and skills that improve quality of life through housing related education programs, and to date NLC has partnered with and assisted several tribes to secure funding totalling millions of dollars.

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NAT GEO WILD TO FEATURE PROFESSIONAL SWAMP MEN AT BILLIE SWAMP SAFARI STARTING MAY 3RD

In the Everglades' Big Cypress Swamp, more than 1,600 animals roam wild on thousands of acres in a park run by the Seminole Tribe of Florida. Best described as controlled chaos, the Billie Swamp Safari offers visitors face-to-face encounters with ostriches, American bison, African elan, wild alligators, venomous snakes, wild hogs, raccoons and virtually every other animal found near the swamp. The goal is to immerse visitors in the wild, in accordance with the Seminole's love of harmony with nature, but sometimes these close encounters can mean trouble for people and wildlife. It's up to the park's director, Ed Woods, and his tough team of self-described **Swamp Men** to patrol the land, relocate animals from dangerous situations and rescue animals in need.

Nat Geo WILD's new series **Swamp Men**, premiering Monday, May 3, at 10 p.m. ET/PT, rides along with Ed and his staff as they work to maintain safety at the Safari. They are considered among the best wild animal wranglers, and each day brings new tests of their skills with bears, alligators, wild hogs and panthers that inhabit the Everglades. Ed's dedicated staff includes Paul, expert alligator catcher; Cory, animal trapper; and newbies Matt, Lawrence and Shea. All share a passion for wildlife and a willingness to get down and dirty, as they face new swamp adventures every day.

Premiere episodes include:

Swamp Men: Newbies

Monday, May 3, 2010, at 10 PM ET/PT

Park director Ed Woods responds to an emergency call — an imposing 11-foot alligator camped under a dock where guests are coming to visit — and calls in Paul, expert alligator catcher. On the other side of Billie Swamp Safari, a razor-toothed wild hog tests Cory's animal-trapping skills. And, newbies Matt and Shea learn how to capture trespassing raccoons and tackle alligators. Their skills are quickly put to work as they rescue a clutch of baby alligators from being eaten by a hungry bull gator.

Swamp Men: Croc Escape

Monday, May 10, 2010, at 10 PM ET/PT

Houdini is a 9-foot-long Nile croc that earned his name from being a renegade on the loose for more than 12 years! Ed and his team head deep into the swamp in an all-out effort to catch this legendary escape artist. Their plan includes blocking his escape by building a fence along a canal bottom, even as they dodge rattlesnakes and a 700-lb bull gator. Then, Shea, Lawrence and Matt are finally initiated into the **Swamp Men** team — but not before spending the night alone in the swamp with only a knife and one other item each. Watch the boys learn from Ed as they build their own shelter and fire, and scavenge for "survival stew."

Swamp Men: Break-In Bear

Monday, May 17, 2010, at 10 PM ET/PT

The staff at Billie Swamp Safari is faced with the challenge of capturing a black bear threatening the food source for other animals in the reservation. When the bear doesn't fall for a bait of peanut butter and molasses, Ed has to up the ante to attract the hungry menace. Then, a dangerous cold front means animal wranglers John and Hans must move tropical reptiles indoors, which is no easy feat with a monitor lizard that lashes out with formidable claws. Finally, the team must work together to relocate a herd of ornery American bison due to a population explosion.

Swamp Men: Panther Down

Monday, May 24, 2010, at 10 PM ET/PT

Field Ed gets an emergency call regarding one of the swamp's most endangered predators, the Florida panther. Field officers worry that the panther might be in distress from its radio collar, or may have died from a lethal encounter of another sort. Across the park, a barred owl has been hit by a car and rushed to the nearest clinic with multiple life-threatening injuries. Back at headquarters, the nuisance hogs are at it again — destroying property and vegetation, and gorging on animals' feed. Cory and the guys try to catch them, but instead find their traps attract a massive bison that wasn't part of the plan.

For more information, visit www.natgeowild.com.

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